

ACCOUNT OF THE SHARPLIFTERS' 1969 U.S.O. FAR EAST TOUR

SATURDAY - SUNDAY, AUGUST 16 & 17, 1969

Our Far East U.S.O. tour officially began, after months of preparation, processing and anticipation, at 8:25 A.M. EST as we left Detroit Metropolitan Airport via American Airlines for San Francisco. The weather was warm, muggy, and overcast but soon cleared and the 4½ hour trip was pleasant as we whiled away the time wondering if all this was really happening to the Sharplifters and reading over the telegrams of well wishes from from our Detroit Chapter and the International Office. Breakfast and a snack were served on flight and we arrived in San Francisco at 10:54 A.M. Pacific Coast Time-- temperature 67° and sunny. Nancy from the U.S.O. met us at the airport, took us to the U.S.O. lounge and got us on our own privately chartered bus for the trip to Travis AFB some 75 miles away to the south. Our bus driver must have been watching a great many Mario Andretti races for he covered the distance in an hour and ten minutes. After being processed for the flight at Travis, we were belatedly located by the protocol officer and given the pampered treatment (air-conditioned lounge, beer, booze, colored TV, private escort to the plane before all other passengers, Customs bypass, etc.). We departed for Tokyo aboard a stretched out Trans International Airways DC 8 with 220 other servicemen, military family and government personnel at 4:00 P.M. PCT, flew up the coast and over the desolate, snow and glacier covered mountains of Northern California (Mt. Shasta), Oregon (Mt. Hood), Washington (Mt. Adams and Mt. Rainier), Western Canada and Alaska, and touched down at Anchorage for a 30-minute fuel stop at 6:20 P.M. PCT. We gave a brief impromptu concert in the airport lobby and met a former Utica-Rochester Sweet Adeline (who is the sister of the former tenor of the Tantalizers) from Warren who was on the flight with us to Japan for a U.S. Government teaching position. We left Anchorage at 6:45 P.M. and arrived at Yokota Air Base,

Japan (a Tokyo suburb) at 8:15 P.M., Sunday, August 17. Dinner, snack and breakfast were served on the 7 hour flight over the Pacific, during which we crossed the International Dateline and finally watched the sun set at 4:10 A.M. Detroit time. We whiled away some of the time playing cards and the other members of the group finally discovered that John, unlike most baritones, has a heart after all. As a matter of fact, during our card game we realized he got most of the hearts. Upon landing we were met at the plane by a protocol officer who ushered us off the plane first while all other passengers waited and guided us into the Yokota Airport lounge where we met and were briefed by PACOM Coordinator Bud Hayes and Jim Fukusaki, Japan U.S.O. Coordinator. As we left the base with another Coordinator, Jim Baggs (great guy), we talked briefly with the "SIX OF ONE", a mixed rock group who were just concluding the tour we were about to begin. We boarded a base station van and were driven by a Japanese auto jockey through the unbelievable suburban and urban vehicle glutted thoroughfares to our hotel (THE SANNO) in the heart of downtown Tokyo (the world's largest and most crowded city with a population of over 11½ million). The 35 mile trip took approximately 1½ hours. We checked into our air-conditioned, share-the-bath rooms at 10:45 P.M., unpacked, reviewed this truly energy draining, mixed up day (we actually lost most of a day and wound up 14 hours ahead of Detroit due to time changes and crossing the International Dateline) and finally retired at 12:30 P.M., Sunday, Tokyo time for the first real sleep since 6:00 A.M. Saturday morning in Detroit.

MONDAY, AUGUST 18, 1969

We awoke at 6:30 A.M., lolled about until having a good and substantial breakfast of eggs benedict (75¢) in the hotel at 8:30, followed by a tour of the area immediately surrounding the hotel. We visited an old imperial temple (very ornate) on a promontory overlooking the SANNO and TOKYO HILTON hotels and strolled by the Japanese Parliament and other Government buildings (DIET) as Joe took still and motion pictures. After lunch back at our hotel, we met our Coordinator, Jim Fukusaki, at 2:00 P.M. who arranged a car for our ride out to TACHIKAWA AIR BASE. We arrived at 3:15 P.M. and spent the next 2½ hours shopping for gifts at the Base Exchange. Joe was the big spender purchasing 2 fine cameras, a slide projector, a tripod and other photo equipment, while Bill purchased a large wall clock (with pendulum and chimes), 2 water color prints in frames, 2 baseball gloves, a chromatic harmonica, and costume jewelry. John obtained a tripod for his camera and Lowell was content to window shop. After packaging some of our purchases for mailing, we struggled with our bundles 3 blocks to the surprisingly pleasant base Civilian Club complete with Chamber Music Orchestra for drinks and dinner from 5:30 to 7:00 P.M. with our U.S.O. guides. Then a 5 minute ride to the hospital--warm up--and a 45 minute show for about 50 ambulatory patients and attendants in one of the wards followed by an hour long handshake tour (one patient from Dearborn and a male RN named Teesdale from Muskegon). Then the long trip back to the hotel, arriving at 10:30 P.M. The day was very warm and muggy and we had had it.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1969

Breakfast at the SANNO at 8:00 A.M., followed by shopping in hotel stores. Purchases included: THOMAS--2 alarm clocks and a large wood laquered jewel case; SEEMAN--a Canon FTQL Camera (which didn't work properly and had to be exchanged later) with flash attachment and a set of stainless steel service for 8; JOE--camera flash attachment; and BILL--3 brass candlesticks (2 small and 1 large) and candles for large stick. We skipped lunch and joined Army special services aide Mike Benton for the 1 hour 10 min. trip to CAMP DRAKE. We arrived at DRAKE HOSPITAL at 1:45 P.M., warmed up, and then performed on 6 wards for approximately 200 patients until 4:15 P.M. It was a satisfying day of rewarding performances and good feelings of a job well accepted. Following the trip back to our hotel we played the slot machines in the hotel basement casino and had a couple of beers. Next we changed into our suits for a trip to a good Japanese restaurant (SUEHIRO) for a dinner of KOBE beef, rice and wine (the food was excellent). We returned to our hotel, then set out for a trip to downtown Tokyo for sightseeing on the GINZA. We walked the strip and observed and took pictures of the incredibly beautiful and ornate neon signs and the hundreds of quaint and very cluttered nightclubs (similar to the New Orleans Latin Quarter). During this trip we were propositioned by merchants and other characters and finally succumbed due to Lowell and John's urging to being lured into a B-girl bar where we were quickly and royally clipped. We also experienced considerable trouble in obtaining a taxi back to our hotel at midnight from the strip since all of the taxis at that hour demanded exorbitant scalpers rates. We finally procured a ride after another hour (and refusal from a number of empty taxis) with the aid of the police, and returned to our hotel for the night. It was another hot and humid day.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 1969 (cont'd.)

NOTE: The extent of our shopping and purchases of merchandise and services was largely the result of the very attractive low cost of almost all items throughout our tour. Some idea of the variance with current prices in the U.S. can be gleaned from the following costs: cigarettes 15¢ a pack; haircuts 30¢; laundry 4¢ per shirt and 20¢ for dry cleaning trousers; taxicab fare about 80¢ across Tokyo (11½ million people); appliances--top grade cameras selling for \$400 in the U.S. were \$250 here; food prices--a complete filet mignon dinner for about \$2.00; liquor prices--90¢ for a fifth of Imperial, \$4.10 for a full quart of Chevas Regal Scotch, 75¢ per six pack of premium beer; \$125 wrist watches for \$53.00; etc.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 1969

Joe, Lowell and Bill arose early at 4:45 A.M. on this day and took a taxi to visit the famous Japanese Fish Market called SKIGI. We arrived at 5:30 and Joe took pictures of the sights and operations as Lowell and Bill took in the scene. The market is almost $\frac{1}{2}$ mile square and operations begin at the docks where the fishing boats (about 125 to 150 ft. long) unload their cargo of tuna, red snapper, blue fin, bonita, squid, snails, clams, octopus, cels, shrimp and everything else that can be eaten from the sea. The fish are then arranged in various places on the docks alongside each boat by kind. Then they are tagged and numbered for sale and next are inspected by hundreds of prospective wholesale-retail buyers (SKIGI proprietors). The fish are then auctioned off in individual lots (the large tuna are auctioned off one by one) by leather lunged auctioneers on platforms to buyers usually standing on other platforms which look like steps or chorus risers. This process takes over an hour and involves several hundred people. Buyers and workers numbering in excess of one thousand then transport their purchases on wagons, carts and lift trucks to the shopowners' warehouse sheds a few hundred feet further inland from the dock for processing (cleaning, slicing, icing, etc.) and readying for resale to local stores and individual families. The sight of these workers plying their ages-old trade was very interesting and the sight and smell of the myriad of different products of the ocean was a real experience. The three quartet members, all dressed in bermuda shorts with long socks, were also an unusual sight to the Japanese workers who furtively snickered, pointed at and commented on the hairy legs and form of dress. John was awakened at 7:15 A.M. upon return to the hotel, and after showering, shaving and breakfast, the quartet toured the famous Tokyo

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 1969 (cont'd.)

Tower in the heart of town which is about 55 feet taller than the Eiffel Tower. After viewing the smog shrouded city from enclosed and air conditioned platforms high in the Tower, we returned and took time exposure pictures of the quartet in the rear garden of our hotel. We met Army special services guide Bob Scoursi at noon for the hour trip to KISHINE ARMY HOSPITAL at YOKOHAMA. We toured the wards (6) until 4 P.M. singing for perhaps 200 severely wounded servicemen (many were badly burned, were double and triple amputees, had severe bullet and shrapnel wounds). This was easily our most trying emotional experience in terms of doing our thing in the presence of such stark evidence of the horror of war. It really brought Vietnam into our presence in its most awful reality to be face to face with these brave kids, most of whom will be badly maimed for life. After returning home to the SANNO Hotel we had dinner and then each of us had our initial experience with the famous Japanese turkish baths which we took individually by appointment in the hotel bath house. A true description of these baths will be left to the discretion of each member of the quartet, but suffice it to say that they are a marvelous experience, are very satisfying, and are a great way to rid oneself of the cares of a trying day. Joe retired at this point, while John, Lowell and Bill repaired to the hotel casino for another brief go at the slot machines before calling it a day (John was the first of the group to hit a jackpot). The day was a little cooler, but still warm and muggy. It became overcast late in the afternoon and we had our first rain in a brief and mild thunderstorm for an hour between 7:30 and 8:30 P.M. One of the unusual things we were beginning to notice here was the almost total absence of flies and mosquitoes, and that as a consequence there were almost no screens on doors and windows of homes and buildings. This is all the more remarkable in view of the myriad of odors constantly bombarding the nostrils, the hot, humid summer climate and the prevalence of open sewage drains still in use in all but the center business sections of the country's principal cities.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 1969

We slept in late this morning and had breakfast at 9:30 A.M. We spent the rest of the morning in the hotel shopping (Joe purchased a silver serving dish, antique vase, and jade earrings for his wife), putting clothes in the cleaners, mailing packages home, writing cards, etc. Lowell visited the barbershop for a shave and Bill followed for a shave and a facial (who could need one more!). At noon we were met once again by our special services representative Bob Scoursi for the trip to ZAMA HOSPITAL. We arrived at 1:15 P.M. and sang in 6 or 7 wards for some 200 to 250 appreciative wounded and sick servicemen (Bill Newville from Muskegon--Oakview School area). We finished at 4 P.M. and returned to our hotel, arriving at 5:30 P.M. At 6:30 we began a Grayline sightseeing tour which included an authentic SUKIYAKI (beer fed beef, rice and saki) dinner at a Japanese restaurant where we all (15 people from New York, Nebraska, California, Michigan, Bombay, Madrid, Portugal and Brazil) sat around in our stocking feet on floor mats before a low table with built in cooking pits. Our guide was UKITO KUBAIYASHI, an engaging 23 year old Japanese college student who spoke English well. After dinner we visited the famous KUBUKI theatre for a concert by Japan's number 1 male singer (a sort of Japanese Mario Lanza or Enrico Caruso). Following this we briefly visited a swank nightclub and saw a Japanese floor show (John danced with an attractive young Brazilian member of our party) and then were taken to an authentic Geisha House for a party with 3 Geisha girls as our hostesses where we munched on snacks, had drinks and watched and listened to our hostesses as they put on a traditional song and dance show for us. Our quartet also performed for the party and we were well received. A few party games were also played. We returned by bus to our hotel at midnight and had another go at the one-armed bandits in the casino.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 1969 (cont'd.)

Both John and Bill hit the jackpot and Bill continued a hot streak to be the night's big winner at +10.20 on the nickel machines. Lowell did well at first but tapered off and Joe again failed to have much luck. We returned to our room and retired for the night at about 1:15 A.M. The weather continued warm, sunny and pleasant. We learned to count to 10 in Japanese (taught by our Grayline guide) -- ichi,¹ nee,² sun,³ she,⁴ go,⁵ rocko,⁶ shichi,⁷ hachi,⁸ cu,⁹ ju.¹⁰ Also by this time we had learned a few common Japanese greetings such as: "Hello" -- Ohiyo; "Good morning" -- Ohiyo Gadāymus; "Good afternoon" -- Kohneecheewa; "Good evening" -- Konnbahnwa; "Goodbye" -- Sayonara; "Thank you" -- Arigato; "Thank you very much" -- Domo Arigato; "Yes" -- Hae; "Toilet" -- Benjo.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 22, 1969

Joe awoke early again at 4:45 A.M. and returned to the SKIGI Fish Market for more pictures. The rest of the group awoke at 7:30 and joined by Joe had breakfast in the hotel, cleaned up (shaved, etc.) and then all except Bill visited the TOKYO HILTON Hotel about a block away to shop in that hotel's stores (John bought a wireless microphone), while Bill mailed more packages home. We were met at 12:30 by Army special services representative Bill Berry for the trip to our last Japan Army Hospital at OJI. We arrived at 1:15 P.M. and sang on 7 wards for another 200 wounded servicemen (one of the Red Cross volunteers is from NANTIKORE, Pa. near Lowell's birthplace of Warrior Run, Pa., 2 veterans were from Detroit, 1 from Grosse Pointe and 1 from Escanaba). We finished at 4:15 P.M. and returned to our hotel for an early dinner, after which we packed a few things and took a cab to the Tokaido Railroad station for a trip to KYOTO aboard Japan's new super express BULLET (130 MPH). We left at 7:38 P.M. and covered the 300 mile trip in less than 3 hours (1 stop at NAGOYA) arriving at KYOTO (pop. 1,400,000) at 10:30 P.M. in a heavy rainstorm caused by approaching typhoon CORA. After checking into the large, modern and swanky International Hotel, we window shopped at the several hotel stores and then retired to our rooms. Lowell and John watched a little Japanese TV (girl wrestlers and Japanese version of the Virginian) while Joe and Bill (over 2 very large bottles of beer) reviewed the day and planned for Saturday's picture taking tour of this famous city's centuries old historic temples. We are now finding ourselves mimicking the Japanese trying to speak English in our conversation with each other, using such words and phrases as "UNBERIEVABLE"; "WE NOW GO TO PRAY SROT MACHINE, YES?"; "YOU JUST TAKE ROOK, YOU NO RIKE, YOU REAVE"; "OJI", meaning ancient grandfather (a term used to describe or introduce Bill to Japanese); etc. The rain and wind continued at a fierce pace throughout most of the night as typhoon CORA swept in from the ocean. Arrangements were made for the hire of a car and driver for Saturday's tour of the city's historic sights.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 1969

We awoke at 6:30 A.M. to a very overcast, cloudy and rainy morning, and looking out of our 6th floor rooms at the International Hotel in the heart of KYOTO, we could see over the building and house rooftops the fog, mist and cloud shrouded black craggy mountains which were a sight to behold. A few minutes later as the sun tried to peep out we were treated to an unexpected and spectacular rainbow of which Joe and John got pictures. We had breakfast in the hotel dining room and then after checking out, were picked up by our hired Japanese car and driver for a tour of 6 or 7 old historic Shinto and Buddhist temples and shrines and shogun castles and palaces. Our driver was very pleasant, attentive and helpful in showing us only the most fantastic scenes and places to visit, photograph and record on movie films. We stopped for lunch at the TOZANKAKU Hotel in KYOTO midtown and then spent the early afternoon continuing our tour. We did some intermittent shopping along the way and Lowell purchased a framed picture of one of the temples (in gold relief) while Bill bought a matching dish and vase (china pottery) for his mother and a brass bud vase for his wife. Joe, after having read up on it, gave a demonstration on how to barter with the native shopowners when making a purchase and saved Bill 250 yen (about 20%) on one of his purchases. Upon completion of our tour at 3:30 P.M. we returned to the railroad station, bid goodbye to our hired chauffeur (his cost including the car and heavy tip--\$4.50) and returned to Tokyo on the 130 MPH super express, leaving at 4:35 P.M. and arriving in Tokyo at 7:30 P.M. We saw some spectacular scenery (mountains, villages, valleys, farmland, etc.) on the way and had our first look at majestic MT. FUJIYAMA (13,600 ft. high) at dusk. Joe went directly to the GINZA for more pictures and the rest of us returned to the hotel. We all had dinner again at the

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 1969 (cont'd.)

hotel and afterward did some gambling at the hotel casino (slot machines). John lost a little, Joe lost a little again, Bill left early after winning \$5.70 and Lowell, who stayed the longest, had a hot streak and hit 3 jackpots to wind up with about +16.00 which he claimed brought him to about breaking even for the tour to date. After returning to our room we all labored mightily (esp. Joe and Bill) at packing all our belongings for the Sunday trip to Okinawa.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 24, 1969

We arose again at 6:30 A.M., showered and shaved and went down to the SANNO Dining Room for breakfast at 7:30 A.M. Our Japan U.S.O. Coordinator, Jim Fukusaki, joined us at 8:00 A.M. and also had breakfast while we checked out (room cost for our stay in Tokyo at this U.S. Government operated hotel was a staggering \$1.00 per day). We left by Army Personnel Carrier for YOKOTA Air Base shortly after 8:30 A.M. and arrived about 9:30 A.M. We were ushered into the high ranking officers' and VIP civilian's private lounge for processing and relaxation until our military flight to OKINAWA at 12:30 P.M. We left promptly after being again escorted aboard the plane ahead of all other military and civilian passengers. Shortly after takeoff we flew almost directly over the 13,600 foot MT. FUJIYAMA. It was a spectacular view and Joe and John got some excellent photos of it as we passed (we hope). We were fed dinner aloft and crossed over the Pacific to OKINAWA in 2 hours 15 minutes (865 miles), touching down at 2:45 P.M. We were escorted off the plane as the first passengers and were again ushered into the high ranking (colonel and above) and civilian VIP lounge where we were met and briefed by our OKINAWA U.S.O. Coordinator, Logan Walker, and his assistant Bob Topping. We were then taken to our lodgings in officer country on FORT BUCKNER. Joe took some informal, time exposure shots of the quartet near our living quarters after we had unpacked. After having a beer at the officers' club, we visited a small post exchange nearby for some shopping and we discovered the extremely low prices of beer, whiskey, wine, etc. We lolled about until after sunset and then returned to the officers' club (LITTLE CLUB) for dinner at 8:00 P.M. After eating, we moved over to the slot machine room there for a go at the one-armed bandits. We weren't so fortunate this time for no one won and only John broke even. We all retired for the night about 11:30 P.M. The weather was very hot and muggy and breezy.

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 1969

We awoke at 7:40 A.M., had breakfast at the LITTLE CLUB, and caught a cab to the main Fort Buckner Exchange. John attempted to buy a slide projector but was unable due to a \$10.00 purchase limitation per item regulation. Joe bought a bud vase and Lowell finally broke down and spent 16¢ for some thongs (which turned out to hurt his feet). Bill mailed some packages home which had been bought in Japan while the other fellows visited the Armed Forces Museum on the Island. We returned to our quarters and readied for our hospital ward tour. We were picked up at 12:30 P.M. by Bob Topping and arrived at KUE Hospital (the most modern high rise medical structure we've visited to date) and sang on 5 wards until 4:30 P.M. (125 patients). Several of the servicemen were from Michigan (mostly Detroit area). After exploring several ceremonial cliffside gravesites, set in caves which were probably used as pillboxes by the Japanese during the Battle of Okinawa, and taking a taxi to and from MOON BEACH where we climbed along the rocky shore, watched the waves and collected coral and shells on the beach, we returned to our quarters and found a note from a barbershopper, TOM DEMERY (UTAH, FLORIDA, and SEATTLE) who arranged for us to meet several other barbershoppers the next evening for a visit and some woodshedding. We then dressed formally and had dinner (KOBE BEEF SUKIYAKI and SAKE) at OZEKI Steak House, the best restaurant in KOZA, second largest city on OKINAWA which is very garish and Honky Tonk with nightclubs, souvenir shops, etc. Each table at the restaurant had its own large metal place in the center of the top and we watched our own personal chef prepare our meal in front of us. The food was excellent and among the best of the trip. We toured the shops nearby afterward and Joe purchased 2 children's kimonos and a Chinese collar dress, while John bought a frilly brief nightgown for Joy and Bill obtained some firecrackers for Randy. The old Okinawan lady proprietor was very entertaining as she balked at Joe's and John's

MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 1969 (cont'd.)

bartering efforts. We returned to our quarters and played the one-armed bandits again. Joe, Lowell and John lost again (John the heaviest as usual) while Bill continued his lucky streak winning \$13.65. The day had been very hot and humid.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 1969

Joe, John and Bill awoke at 6:30, had breakfast at 7:00 A.M. and then set out by taxi for a 45 minute trip to ISHIKAWA BEACH on the eastern side of the island for pictures, beachcombing, and a glass bottom boat trip to view the coral ocean floor. Lowell slept in this morning. The day was beautiful early and the heat came on strong about 10:00 A.M. We hiked along the beach taking pictures, collecting coral and shells, and climbed along and through some picturesque rock caves formed by the surf (which were dry because of low tide). We lunched at a beachside snack shop at 11:00 A.M. (the hamburgers were terrible) and returned to our quarters, arriving at noon. The glass bottom boats were grounded due to surf conditions and contamination resulting from typhoon CORA. Bill got a beauty of a sunburn on the tops of his feet. We dressed and returned to the hospital at 1:00 P.M. for another singing tour of more wards (5 wards, about 100 patients). We met Tom Demery, the barbershopper who had contacted us the previous day; Mary Van Horn, a Lt. Colonel Physio Therapist from Zeeland; Steve Connett (the son of Floyd Connett) who was attached to the KADENA AIR BASE and was visiting the hospital; and Marian Smith, a woman patient from Toledo who was in school (DEVILBISS) the same time John attended WAITE. After singing, we visited the officers' wives gift shop where Joe bought another pair of jade earrings for Mary Ann and Lowell bought an antiqued brass bud vase for his mother while John arranged for and purchased a projector. We returned to our quarters at 5:30 and Bill took a brief nap and rested his badly sunburned feet while the other three had an abortive go at the adjacent miniature golf course. All then dressed for a trip to the officers' dinner club called TOP OF THE ROCK, where we gave a 20 minute show for about 200 dining officers, wives and children, and were treated to a free mongolian barbecue dinner and drinks. We

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were joined by Tom Demery and 2 other barbershoppers, now officers in service (one Dixie District member from Tennessee and one from Napa Valley, California). After dinner we returned to our BOQ lounge and gave an informal concert for these and 3 other former barbershoppers (one was oldtimer H.H. Copeland, former Washington, D.C. Chorus Director who is now 29th Army Bandmaster) and 3 or 4 BOQ residents. During our performance and tag woodshedding with these men we suffered a disrupting but also humorous experience with a very drunk fellow BOQ resident (retired army officer). Lowell and Joe retired at 11:15 P.M. and Bill and John both had another go at the slot machines until 12:30, each losing a couple of dollars.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27, 1969

The quartet slept in late, arising about 9:00 A.M. breakfasting at 9:30 A.M. and showering, shaving, etc. afterward. Joe, Lowell and John finished ahead of Bill, as usual, and returned to the Little Club game room for still another brief go at the slot machines. Lowell in a very few minutes won \$8.00 on the quarter machine while the others lost minimal amounts. All then packed and Joe took a few final pictures of the immediate area. We were picked up by Bob Topping at 11:45 A.M., driven to the airport and taken to the distinguished visitors and high ranking officers' protocol lounge. The plane was late and we chatted there with Topping and our Okinawa U.S.O. Coordinator Logan Walker while we waited. The THREE PARTY LINE, a mixed folk-rock group from California (college kids) came in for a 3-day tour of the island and we met and chatted with them briefly. They were the fifth other U.S.O. Hospital Tour group we had seen to date, others being the SIX OF ONE (a mixed rock group), PROHIBITION '69 (a mixed college folk group of six also from California who we were immediately following), SARA WINTERS and THE ARIZONA JAMBOREE (rock), FLOYD BIBINS and THE UNITED NATIONS (a racially and sexually mixed rock group of 7) and the DEEP RIVER BOYS (a famous Mills Brothers type Negro rhythm group). Our flight left at 1:45 P.M. and we flew on to CLARK AFB in the Philippines. We serenaded the 2 attractive stewardesses during the trip, were served a snack and Joe and John took a few pictures of cloud formations and islands we passed. Our landing at CLARK AFB at about 3:10 P.M. Philippine time (we gained an hour on the trip) was rough and hairraising, so much so in fact that the plane behind us was waved off because the tower thought we might not make it safely (we bounced, skidded and careened crazily for awhile because of our pilot's sloppy handling). We were given the 'first off' VIP treatment again and taken pass a sign at the air terminal which read "Welcome to the Philippines the

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27, 1969 (cont'd.)

Sharplifters" to the protocol lounge by 3 aides (Coordinators Joe Morse and Blake Smith and civilian barbershop enthusiast Ernie Schuldaski, a Wilkes Barrie, Pa. native). After briefing, we were taken to our Air Base Motel (nice place). Blake and Jose and Filipino aide Nestor saw to our needs (laundry, etc.) and left Ernie with us. After unpacking and talking barbershop and conditions in the Philippines, Ernie took us shopping at the base exchange and Philippine wood carving shop. Joe, Bill and John browsed while Lowell purchased a wooden salad bowl set for someone at his office. Bill later bought a pair of sunglasses at the exchange. The five of us then went to dinner in the base-ment dining room of the officers' club. Afterward we went to the base theatre to take in the hour long U.S.O. show performance of the "PROHIBITION '69" who roomed next to us at the base motel. All except Bill stayed on for the movie (a picture about auto racing) afterward. It was a loser. Bill returned to the motel, watched some television, showered and did a little reading and report writing till the others returned and all packed a few things for the next day and night at SUBIC BAY and performances at the hospital and theatre there. The day had been hot and we found, as warned, that the Philippine weather was hotter than either Japan or Okinawa. Bats are almost as plentiful and regular a sight around street lights here as the moths and other nocturnal insects they hunt as food.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 1969

We arose at 6:15 A.M., breakfasted at 7:00 A.M. and were picked up at 8:15 A.M. by Nestor for the personnel carrier trip to SUBIC BAY. The day was again hot and humid (93°). We began the 2½ hour trip (about 50 miles) at 8:30 and journeyed through towns, cities, farmland and mountains along the famed MacArthur Highway (route of the Bataan Death March led by Gen. Johnathon Wainwright during World War II), the only road to SUBIC BAY on Bataan Peninsula near OLONGAPO. The road was unbelievably rough and crowded with jeepnies, horse drawn 2 wheel carriages, trucks and cars, and the scenery was among the most interesting we had seen on the trip (Filipino shacks and the indescribable squalor of native living conditions in residential areas, sugar cane and rice fields, carabao (Philippine oxen), mud flats, garbage polluted yards and streams, flimsy sharecropper hillside dwellings, banana and coconut groves, beautiful mountains and narrow winding roads, old Spanish mission type churches, etc.). We arrived at SUBIC BAY and went through a rigorous security check before being finally admitted to the base and escorted to our BOQ (Bachelor Officers Quarters) motel. We were met by our area coordinator George Hertzog who saw to our needs and introduced us to our personal host, Lieutenant Dave Roebuck (a doctor, U. of M. graduate and barbershop enthusiast) who remained with us the rest of the day. We lunched and then changed into casual uniforms for a 2 ward singing tour of the Navy Hospital at SUBIC POINT (about 100 patients, attendants and dependents). Then we were taken to Dr. Roebuck's home for a brief rest and met his lovely wife Pat and the 3 small Roebuck children. After a cool drink, Joe, Bill and Lowell accompanied Dave on a picture taking tour of the hospital and the bay (several ships including the Carrier Hancock CVE 19, Hospital Ship SANCTUARY, 3 destroyers, a tanker, several supply and repair ships and merchant vessels were anchored there and an aircraft landing field and helicopter strip were

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 1969 (cont'd.)

also included). The day was beautiful for picture taking and the surrounding mountains and jungle were breathtaking. We returned to the Roebucks for drinks and an authentic Filipino dinner of LUMPIA, a shrimp and pork fried rice concoction and other native dishes (it was delicious) and wine and iced tea. Afterward we returned to our room, changed into formal wear and walked across the street to the SUBIC BAY THEATRE, where at 8:15 P.M. we put on an hour long U.S.O. show (15 songs) for about 450 base personnel and families. We did what we considered a very good job and afterward returned to the Roebuck's home for some pie, drinks and an informal afterglow with about 5 couples (all physicians at the hospital and their wives). We were returned by our driver to our BOQ at 12:15 P.M. and turned in for the night. The quartet slept in 2 tier bunks with Joe and Bill having the uppers. Joe talked in his sleep (picture taking talk) and once during the night when he rolled over, John, half asleep himself, rushed to his side thinking he was going to fall out of the bunk.

NOTE: The Roebucks have 2 Filipino maids (whom they pay \$20.00 a month each and provide with private living quarters in their home) who take care of the children, cook and do all of the housework--and yet even though always there, flit silently about and are almost never noticed.

SUBIC BAY is the sight of the Navy inquiry into the sinking of the Destroyer EVANS by an Australian aircraft carrier while on maneuvers a few weeks ago.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 29, 1969

Lowell, Bill and John awoke at 6:45 A.M. and had breakfast in the BOQ dining room while Joe slept in. An early phone call to Coordinator George Hertzog in an attempt to obtain passage on a 3 or 4 day a week DC 3 military flight at 9:30 A.M. from SUBIC BAY to CLARK AFB (a 20 minute flight) met with no success. Hertzog met us at 8:45 A.M. and saw us off with our Filipino driver who chauffeured us in an air-conditioned chevy on the 50 mile, 2 hour trip back across the mountains and flatlands to CLARK AFB. The return trip, though not pleasant and rough going most of the way, was considerably more endurable than the day before. We arrived back at our base motel at 10:45 A.M., showered, shaved and rested (Joe and Lowell got haircuts at 30¢ per) till 12:30 when we lunched at the Kelly Cafeteria next door. We changed into an informal quartet outfit and were met by Ernie Schuldaski who drove us to the Base Hospital Lounge for our 45 minute performance (11 songs) at 2:15 P.M. for about 100 patients, hospital attendants and visitors (the six member KINGSTON TRIO type folk singing group called "PROHIBITION '69" which was also on U.S.O. tour took in our show). Ernie Schuldaski taped our complete show. We returned to the motel, had a beer with Ernie while Bill got a haircut (a what?) then the 3 others took a nap while Bill caught up on the daily logging of events. At 6:15 Ernie returned and the quartet, dressed formally, returned to the hospital for a 20 minute performance for 25 patients in the casualty staging area. The group later joined Blake Smith, Jose Morse and Mrs. Delores Schuldaski at the Base Officers' Club for drinks, a 45 minute bandstand performance (11 songs) for about 200 dining officers and wives, and dinner on the house. A 16 piece Filipino orchestra with 3 vocalists and dancers played throughout the evening for dining and dancing. The band was excellent, had a fine, polished big band sound and played a wide variety of numbers. John danced several dances with Jose while the other 3 quartet members drank and chatted with Blake

FRIDAY, AUGUST 29, 1969 (cont'd.)

and the Schuldaskis. All 4 played the house slot machines and each lost a couple dollars a piece and then returned to the party. Blake presented us with a beautiful plaque in appreciation for and as a memento of our Philippine tour. Just before the evening get together ended John returned to the one-armed bandits and on his last quarter won the big \$50.00 jackpot. The party broke up at about 12:30 and we returned to our motel and turned in. The day had been partly cloudy and it rained briefly in the afternoon. (It is now the beginning of the rainy season in the Philippines. The season lasts till mid November.)

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY, AUGUST 30 AND 31, 1969

The quartet arose at 7:30 A.M., showered, shaved, etc. and then took a taxi back to the base officers' club for breakfast. While waiting to be met by Ernie Schuldaski, John and Bill put a few more coins in the slot machines (Bill parlayed 3 nickels into \$1.65 and John quickly won another \$4.00). Ernie and Delores arrived at 9:45 A.M. and took us off the base for a shopping tour of one of the Phillipine's famous woodcarving and art (vibrantly colored velvet pointings) shops in the heart of Angeles which is adjacent to CLARK AFB. Bill was the only purchaser, obtaining a wooden salad bowl set. We returned to the base for a fast and final shopping tour of the base exchange shops as the rain started again. Lowell exchanged an earlier purchased wooden salad bowl set and bought a baseball glove for his son Rudy, while John and Joe each bought toys for their children and Bill purchased a set of mother of pearl cuff links for his assistant and a white briar KAYWOODIE pipe for his father-in-law. All four of us were then taken back to our motel where we did our final packing for the trip home, arranged for baggage pickup to the airport and checked out of the motel (rates \$4.00 a day per person). We were next taken to the Schuldaski's home for drinks and a lunch with Jose Morse and Blake Smith. We also recorded a few songs on Ernie's tape recorder and listened to his tapes of shows by the CAVALIERS from Wichita, Kansas, the FREELoadERS from San Antonio, Texas, the RENEGADES from Chicago and the CIRCLE W FOUR from Pittsburgh. We also met his 5 small children and family dog (German Shepherd). He has a very attractive home, the meal (breaded pork chops) was delicious and the Schuldaskis' were wonderful hosts. We also woodshedded a few tagw with Ernie and had our picture taken with Jose and Blake. At 5:30 P.M. we took Joe to the emergency entrance of the base hospital for an examination and diagnosis of a lump in his left armpit which was causing him some discomfort.

From there Ernie drove us to the Special Services Office where we were given final briefings by Jose and had more pictures taken of us near the USO sign of our show. From there we were driven to the airport for our 7:30 P.M. flight home. As we arrived at the CLARK AFB field the sun was setting behind the mountains and Joe and John got movies and slides of our first really beautiful oriental sunset. We then each bought 4 fifths of duty and tax free alcoholic beverages and returned to the private VIP lounge to await flight boarding. We left on time after saying goodbye and thanks to our wonderful escorts, Ernie and Jose, and began the first leg of our return home aboard a giant (230 seat) stretched out DC 8 Trans-International Airways plane. Dinner was served in flight and we made the trip to YOKOTA AIR BASE in Japan (near Tokyo) in $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours, arriving at midnight. During the $1\frac{1}{2}$ hour refueling stop we again were given the now familiar but never gotten used to VIP treatment by special personnel assigned to greet, and brief us and see to our needs. Shopping in the terminal stores netted Joe a jade choker necklace for Mary Ann, John a necklace and earring set for his secretary and Bill jade earrings for Maureen. We left Yokota at 1:30 A.M. Sunday, Tokyo time and returned to Anchorage, Alaska, a $6\frac{1}{2}$ hour trip which saw us re-cross the International dateline, watch Saturday, August 30th dawn again at 2:30 A.M. Sunday Tokyo time and 4:30 P.M. Saturday Michigan time. This second leg of the trip, during which we were served a snack and slept, terminated at Anchorage for another hour's refueling stop. We left Anchorage at 5:00 P.M. Saturday, Anchorage time (7:00 P.M. California time and 9:00 P.M. Detroit time), watched the sun set again (the same sunset we had seen 14 hours earlier in the Philippines) and arrived at Travis AFB at 10 P.M., California Coast time. At TRAVIS AFB we were again given the first served, escorted VIP treatment as GS 15's and were ushered through Customs while all other passengers waited in line. To our dismay we learned that our alcoholic beverage purchases were not duty free after all and we had to pay import taxes on 4 of the 5 bottles each of us was carrying. After Customs check and some fun with the

agents over our name (they laughingly threatened to "throw the book" at us due to the "SHOPLIFTER'S" sound of our name) we waited in the protocol lounge for our bus to arrive to take us to San Francisco Airport (1½ hours drive away). Upon learning much to our chagrin that no arrangements for our commercial flights from this point had been made, we each obtained our own flight reservations to our next destinations (Joe and John to Detroit, Lowell to Wilkes-Barrie and Bill to Houston). Because of the busy Labor Day weekend none of us were able to make immediate connections, we we took rooms in the VIP BOQ for the night at Travis and retired at 1:30 A.M. until awakened at 4:00 A.M., Sunday. We left by private USO bus at 4:30 A.M. and arrived at Frisco Airport at 6:00 A.M. where we confirmed our flight reservations, had coffee and rolls in the airport restaurant (the price of 60¢ each told us we were back in the states) and then each went our separate ways (Joe and John at 7:30 A.M. to Detroit via United; Bill at 8:00 A.M. to Houston via National Airlines and Lowell at 8:15 A.M. to Pittsburgh via United and then on to Wilkes-Barrie via Allegheny).

Thus ended the SHARPLIFTERS' memorable U.S.O. sponsored singing tour of military hospitals in the Far East--a trip encompassing 16 exciting and unforgettable days, 17,695 air miles, stops at San Francisco and Travis Air Force Base in California, Anchorage Alaska, Tokyo, Yokahama and Kyoto in Japan, Okinawa, Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay in the Philipines, and then back again to Tokyo, Anchorage, Travis AFB and San Francisco, visits to 13 military hospitals and other Armed Forces installations and 48 singing performances¹ (332 songs) in 9 working days (plus 6 travel days and 1 day of rest) before an estimated audience of 2,450 military personnel and their dependents. The greatest compliment paid the quartet on the trip (made on two separate occasions by barbership society members stationed on Okinawa and in the Philipines who make it a point to catch at least one performance of every visiting quartet) was that the SHARPLIFTERS were, in their opinion, second only to the RENEGADES as the best all-around group making the tour to date².

1. 28 shows in 5 days in Japan, 13 shows in 2 days on Okinawa, and 8 shows in 2 days in the Philipines.

2. The SHARPLIFTERS were the 15th quartet to make the tour. Some other groups besides the RENEGADES have been the CIRCLE W FOUR, CAVALIERS, FREELoadERS, UPSIDE DOWNEYS, SALT FLATS, HUT FOUR, KIPPERS, MERRY MUGS, MIDNIGHT OILERS, FOUR NUBBINS and the PITTSBURGERS. Note the accent on comedy groups. The next two quartets scheduled to make the tour are the FOUR DOMATICS and the FOUR STATESMEN.