

of the first stocks we bought, Chromolloy, doubled in price within six months. We were certain we were following in the footsteps of Hetty Green.

According to the articles of agreement we paid monthly dues of fls 27.00. Membership was to be made up of female U.S. citizens. Meetings were held at 7:30 p.m. after payday each month at the homes of the members.

When we left in February of 1962, the club's shares were worth almost \$6,000. There was a net profit of 9%. Considering that for a couple of years the club experimented only with "cats and dogs," that was a good showing.

EXERCISE CLASSES

We had an exercise class with about 30 members. The meetings of which were held at 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. every other morning in the patio of Dr. Brace's house. Marian Brace conducted the exercises and we kept records. The first order of business was everyone weighed in.

Of course, we came in all ages and sizes. The rumor was that the renovations on the next door houses of Jack Friel and Les Seekins took just a little longer than normal because of the interest the workmen took in our efforts.

INDONESIAN COOKING CLASSES

Indonesian cooking classes were conducted by Mrs. Bartels who, with her husband, operated the floating Bali restaurant in Oranjstad. Her husband at one time operated a tourist bureau there. Both were in concentration camps in Indonesia during the Japanese occupation of that country.

We were first introduced to the spices used and the Indonesian method of preparing foods. No mixers, or blenders were allowed. All chopping of the foodstuffs had to be done by hand, even red hot peppers. When some complained about the burning of skin and eyes experienced when handling red peppers, Mrs. Bartels said anyone could become accustomed to eating them uncooked. She credited the great nutritional value in them as saving their lives while they were on the starvation diet they endured in the concentration camps.

In addition to the chopping and slicing we learned how to obtain real coconut milk (not the juice) by cleaning and chopping the meat of the coconut. After learning the tedious methods of food preparation by the Indonesians we felt like real natives.

One result of these classes was that we wound up with some 50

recipes. We also learned how to cook rice and "put it to bed." This was a way to keep rice warm for up to 12 hours when all burners on the stove were needed to cook other dishes for East Indian Rijstaffel. After completing these classes we put on a Rijstaffel for our husbands and had a great party.

A number of times over the years, some of us have prepared a Rijstaffel for about 30 persons. Cooks were Phyllis Boyack, Ans Schindeler, Jeannette Faucett, and Rose Jackson. Today we are able to get all of the spices, even the "krupak" (dried shrimp). It's lots of work, but Indonesian cooking can be fun.

ART CLASSES

Art classes were given by John Pandellis, a Greek, who was our local professional artist. He was married to an Indonesian lady. John's daughter, Lislotte, worked in Fanny's shop in the village. A number of colony residents took lessons from him and many had John's paintings on their walls.

One of John Pandellis large paintings shows the Sea grape Grove during its better days. It has the sea as a background, and a moon peeps through the branches. This painting was seen hanging on a wall in the hall of the colony service administration building in March of 1985.

Dr. Stritch, who was on the Lago hospital staff, gave up his medical practice and became a full time painter. A number of his paintings were sold to colony residents.

For a time there were annual art shows held at the Esso Club.

The Rudolph J. Janecek Story

Rudy said his degree was in forestry and he really liked the outdoors. He was a teacher before coming to Aruba. He was a very nice fellow, soft spoken and I could see where he would make a good teacher. He seemed out of place in a refinery crowd; he was just too nice. His wife, Letty, was very knowledgeable. Rudy had a very thin head of brown, hair and wore wire rim glasses. He was a lanky built individual.

Red Ward, the brother of his wife, Letty, was instrumental in getting him down to Aruba in the first place. Red was in the Aruba refinery Engineering Department. He had been discharged from the army after 30 months in the European Theatre of Operations and Red asked if Rudy would be interested in a job in Aruba. After much talk, Letty and Rudy agreed that it would be nice for a couple of years. Red had the New York office contact Rudy. After a long wait during which Letty and Rudy packed their car in preparation for returning to his old teaching job at Oregon State College, a letter finally arrived from New York. He was told to report to the New York office for an interview. All went well and he was soon on his way to Aruba.

He said he could still feel the heat that assailed him upon descending from the KLM plane at the Aruba airport. At the time he remembers thinking how dry the island is. Prior to arriving, he heard about the beautiful beaches and blue waters surrounding the island and the picturesque Divi Divi trees.

Rudy Janecek appeared upon the scene in Aruba in April of 1946 and was assigned as a Field Engineer to "Pop" Hudson. Pop was an older fellow with grey hair.

Rudy's first few days were spent in the *sheep sheds* as was the policy for young engineers in those days. When Letty arrived, a few weeks later, they were assigned one of the barracks at the east end of the colony. They were called the "Sea View Apartments". They had been converted into small homes and used as temporary housing because of a shortage of regular bungalows.

Letty was pregnant at the time of her arrival so they made arrangements with Frank Flaherty to stay in his assigned bungalow while he and his wife were on vacation in the states. This worked out so well that they made similar arrangements with others several times. Sixteen

months later they were assigned bungalow #641, which was located near the hospital. It was their home for the rest of their stay in Aruba. Just about all of the bungalows were sitting atop concrete supports on top of hard corral. Each support had built around it an oil pot to keep out the insects such as cockroaches which thrived on the island. Colony Service people would occasionally come by to refill these pots.

Their son, David, was born in Aruba on December 1, 1946, at the Lago Hospital. Dr. Borbonus was the attending physician. At the time, Pop Hudson was tough on letting people have time off, even for a birth in the family, if you couldn't give him the exact date on which the baby would be born. Everyone knew this rule couldn't be enforced but Letty gave Rudy the date about two weeks in advance and David arrived right on schedule. Pop said they were lucky that time. But the same thing happened when Douglas was born. When Letty hit the date just right for Joyce's date of birth, Pop gave up heckling for a date for the next one. Most of the people at the office thought it was hilarious.

Rudy's work, at this stage, consisted of surveying for new installations, staking out for new pipelines through the refinery and colony, and setting elevations for concrete pours. Much of Rudy's guidance came from Paul Hollyfield. Closed and corrected traverse surveys were seldom necessary but Rudy enjoyed performing them for the 50 New Houses Project and the Harbor Sweeping Program.

While he wasn't working, Letty and Rudy enjoyed going to the local shopping spots such as the Aruba Trading Company, and Spritzer and Fuhrmann, and to the docks in Oranjestad to buy fish, bananas, papaya and other fruit from Venezuela. They loved spending time with the children down in the little lagoon just playing in the sand and snorkeling. Rudy said he had never seen a kid more excited than when they first took David snorkeling and he saw the beautiful fish beneath him. It is such a different world under the water. Rudy enjoyed going fishing once in a while but spent a lot more time spearing rock lobster along and under the various reefs throughout the little lagoon and the big lagoon. His spears were made by friends at the refinery shops.

Son, Douglas, was born November 16, 1949. Rudy and Letty had taken a short local vacation to Barranquilla when David was about 18 months old but when Doug came along they stayed fairly close to home. Rudy paid to have flower beds and a high concrete block wall built around their front yard. Truckloads of good dirt from the other end of the island were hauled in to fill the beds. More dirt was hauled in to prepare for a lawn. Letty and Rudy spent hours and hours planting

Bermuda grass that grew quite rapidly if watered. Then they planted bananas, papaya, bougainvillea, and other flowering plants in the beds. Everything grew beautifully and soon they had one of the prettiest front yards on the island. The family spent many happy hours playing there with neighborhood children.

Rudy said they never felt like strangers on Aruba because Red Ward, Letty's brother had worked there several years before their arrival. Red, his wife Trudi and their children Ginger, Carol, and Tommy were close family members. And, Letty's sister, Dina (Pud) and Reginald Storie had lived there several years before our arrival. Their son, Peter, was always a constant companion to our two boys. So, we had a big family in Aruba. Reg was Captain Storie of the Lake Tanker Fleet so we were invited to many of the nice parties given by the British Colony given at the Marine Club.

Joyce, their first daughter, was born on October 30, 1952 and family chores increased again but Letty took it all in stride although at times it was quite hectic. Letty and Rudy had taken up bridge with a vengeance. Sometimes Rudy would rush home after work, shower and shave, and help feed the babies while Letty was busy preparing dinner. After eating quickly, they would stick the kids in bed and Rudy would make the cocktails. They mixed their own in a little hand shaken mixer and preferred frozen daiquiris. Long drinks were served during the bridge playing. They joined the duplicated bridge club and eventually became directors of the club. Rudy also played highly competitive bridge with a gang of men that included John Mechling, Obie Whiteley, Doc Hendrickson and several others. That was fun.

When Jeanne was born on November 16, 1952, Red Ward came by and asked Rudy and Letty if they knew yet what was causing the babies to be coming along like rabbits. By now, Rudy had been transferred to the Equipment Inspection Section where he said he learned a lot of things that kept him well employed for the remainder of his working days. This was an excellent training ground for Inspectors in the Exxon circuit. Hands on inspection during turn-arounds gave insight into many of the erosion/corrosion problems within a refinery. Becoming the lead inspector on the turn around of a major operating unit within the refinery was a highly responsible assignment. The inspectors had to work very closely with all company departments; especially the Operating Department, the Mechanical Department, the Technical Service Department, and the Materials Department. Training was ongoing with courses being taught in Safety, X-ray, Magnaflux, Process and Mechanical Design, Dye-Checking, Report Writing, etc.

Rudy said he had, however, become somewhat tired of the little island of Aruba with all of its goat trails, hard coral, salty breezes. There appeared to be little promise of great job advancement so Rudy decided to ask for a transfer to some other affiliate. While waiting for a transfer, Rudy kept thinking of the many other memories they would have of Aruba such as:

- Dancing at the Esso Club with their many friends.
- Outdoor barbecues at Red Ward's.
- Being pulled up by four old men and inspecting the chimney at an elevation of about 150 feet.
- Playing bridge with Al and Winnie Lake.
- Picnics among the sea-grape trees at B. A. Beach.
- The Inspection Section picnic at Little Lagoon.
- The screeching parakeets.
- Exploring the caves with our boys.
- Cleaning eye glass lenses every ten minutes to remove salt deposited by the cool, salt-laden, evening air.
- Wandering around the old gold mine area at Frenchman's Pass.

Finally in April, 1954 Rudy was offered an assignment in Barrancabermeja, Colombia with Esso's affiliate, Ecopetrol. He accepted the offer and the Janeceks were soon on their way to a new life in the tropical jungles of the Magdalena Valley. It was quite a change. Saying good-bye to family and friends in Aruba was not easy.

The Paul Emil, Kamma & Daniel Jensen Story

Paul was born in Svengborg, Denmark, October 9, 1900. His mother died when he was very young and his father remarried when Paul was 13 years old. At that age he was sent to sea to work on ships and worked his way up to be an electrician on the Moore-McCormack Line running between New York City and Los Angeles, stopping in Havana and then through the Panama Canal.

When World War I broke out the ship he was on, the *S/S California*, was drafted, sent to New Orleans and converted to a troop transport. Paul was a Dane and told to get off the ship. His story was that in a couple of days the Navy looked him up and offered him U. S. citizenship and a commission in the Navy to come back to the ship as Chief Electrician. He accepted.

While he was on the *S/S California* he fell down a ladder while it was under Navy command and broke his leg. The ship was enroute to Panama and through the canal. His leg was set and put in a cast in Panama and he rejoined the ship. The leg never healed properly and a year later the Navy put him in a Navy hospital in New York where they broke the leg and reset it but it also was not successful. The leg was a problem for him all his life and as he got older and particularly after retirement.

In 1927 he was working for Brown Instrument Company in Philadelphia. In later years this company became the Minneapolis-Honeywell and then just Honeywell Instrument Company. Anyway, they were going to send him to Russia on some installation they had going on over there. The Russians' refused him a visa so Honeywell said, "No problem, we'll send you to Aruba." Paul had no idea where Aruba was and it took him half a day in the New York library to find where it was because all reference to Aruba was filed under Curacao.

Paul was sent to Aruba by Brown Instrument Company in 1928. He worked on installing the new instrumentation for less than a year when he joined Lago.

Kamma was also from Svengborg, Denmark and first met Paul in New York City at a mutual Danish friend's home. They had not known each other previously. She joined Paul in Aruba in 1929. She always

said she was the 23rd wife to arrive in Aruba.

In the early days Paul was assigned a motorcycle with a side car to carry tools and instruments around. Elmer Wheeler was the General foreman of the Instrument Department. Paul was his assistant.

Paul became General Foreman of the Instrument Department in 1937. There is no doubt that Paul's shipboard experience translated into his General Foreman abilities. Edgar J. Hillstead was his Assistant. Paul was the one you talked to at your annual salary review. When the budget didn't allow a raise you received a very good review and when you did receive a 5% raise you were reminded of all of your faults. He had some definite ideas of what was right and what was wrong.

Jim Lopez was a 14 year old high school kid when he first met Paul and Kamma. Paul introduced Jim to stamp collecting and gave him an album and a number of stamps. Some of these stamps were issued in Germany during World War I. Jim still has the album and stamps.

Paul was one of the founding fathers of the El Sol Naciente Masonic Lodge in Oranjestad along with his life long friend, L. G. Lopez.

In the early days because of his shipboard experience he had the assignment of "shooting the sun" with his seaman's sextant. He used the results he obtained for setting the master clock in the Power House. This was the clock to which all of the time clocks around the refinery were connected. Later he initiated the use of the National Bureau of Standards "time ticks" for checking the clocks in the Refinery and Colony. These signals were received via short wave from station WWV in Virginia. Our time was one half hour later than New York time.

Every morning he sat in his patio with his cup of coffee and his pipe and planned his work day. He was a strong believer in "planning your work and budgeting your time."

He was a conference leader in the company's Modern Supervisory Practices program. He was also a conference leader in the Effective Discussion program. Over the years these programs were given to refinery supervisors.

He was the president and active member of the Lago Colony Yacht Club. He was an active member of the Instrument Society of Aruba. He fostered the activities of the Instrument Department off the job. He was active in Colony Red Cross drives and the Lago Community Council.

When Paul retired from Lago he and Kamma settled in St. Croix, U. S. Virgin Islands. They picked this as their retirement location because,

they wanted to stay in the West Indies; the islands had been Danish and still had some Danish influence; they wanted to remain under the U. S. Flag. St. Croix seemed to fit the bill.

DANIEL'S STORY

Their son Daniel was born in Aruba and went through schooling at the Lago School there through the first 3 years of Lago Community High School. When his parents retired he spent his senior high school year in Florida. He then attended the University of Florida where he studied Building Construction. After graduation he worked a year in Orlando. When his father died he got a job in St. Croix with a West Palm Beach construction company, he moved to St. Croix with his wife, Lee, in 1963. In 1966 his company sent him to Barbados to set up the islands first Ready Mix concrete plant. They lived in Barbados for three years, during which time their two children were born.

The company moved them back to St. Croix in 1969 and Dan became General Manager of St. Croix and St. Thomas. In 1969 Dan and Lee purchased a travel agency and Lee managed it. Due to a downturn in the concrete business in 1971 the company decided to close their office in the Virgin Islands. Paul decided to leave the company and started a hardware store.

In 1979 Dan and Lee decided to move to the States so the children could attend stateside schools. They sold their businesses and moved to Madison, Georgia, more for climate and location than any other reason.

Both children went through high school in Madison and then attended Berry College in Rome, Georgia. After graduation their son, Paul, married and settled in the Atlanta area. Their daughter Lise lives in Atlanta. He says having two children in college wasn't what you could call good family planning.

When the children went to college Dan became a building inspector for the local county government until they graduated. Dan and Lee both missed the water having lived in Aruba and St. Croix for all of those years. He applied for a job as Director of Planning and Building for Camden County, on the Georgia coast. At this time, September, 1991 they have been there for two years and enjoy it.

The William Arnold Frederick Koopman Family Story

"Bill", as most people called him, was born on November 22, 1907 in Delft, Holland. He went to a radio school in Rotterdam. Upon graduation he became a radio operator at the Municipal Airport.

In 1929 he joined the Nederlandse Koloniale Petroleum Maatschappij (N. K. P. M.) as a Student Field Engineer. This was a subsidiary of Standard Oil Company of New Jersey. This company sent him for a one year of on-the-job training with the Carter Oil Company in Seminole, Oklahoma. At the time Seminole was a famous oil field. Bill learned about the oil fields and American English. He had his meals every day at a boarding house run by a motherly type who looked after Bill. Fellow workers taught him to preface every dinner table request with a swear word. But "Ma" made sure that he knew the correct words to use. He said he was fortunate to have board and room with her. His recollection of his stay in Seminole ran something like this: Mud - hospitality - mud - tough men - mud - Indians - mud.

After a year in Oklahoma he returned to Holland and found that he had been assigned to the oil fields in Sumatra, Indonesia in Dutch East Indies. While there he learned some of the Malayan language. He said the work there was quite interesting, but he had no desire to return. After two years in the Mechanical Department there he returned to Holland and the Great Depression.

Bill was lucky that Standard Oil Company of New Jersey was in The Hague hiring people for Lago Oil & Transport Co. Ltd. in Aruba. He joined Jan Moller, Tex Schelfhorst, Herman Couzy, and Jack Wevers.

Bill turned up in Aruba in 1932 as a Pipe Department employee of the Lago Oil and Transport Co. Ltd. At the end of two years he was offered a job with the Eagle Refinery on the other end of the island. The position was as General Foreman of the Pipe and Instrument Department. After nine months Bill got tired of talking to himself (no men to supervise). So he joined the Instrument Department of the Lago Oil and Transport Company Ltd. He made a name for himself as the job training instructor. He was a natural for that job. He had a way of talking with the apprentices and others in his classes that produced good results. He demonstrated enthusiasm for his job; he was a stern taskmaster and the students did their best to make any project they were working on a

success. He naturally filled the role of a "Dutch Uncle."

Bill had an inquiring mind which was one of the requirements for a good Instrument Technician. He said that one time he decided to pop some popcorn. He used a regular pot with a lid. He heard the corn popping and took the lid off to see what was going on. He wound up with popped corn all over the floor. One of Bill's favorite expressions was: "Do you mind if I have an idea?"

He was handy with his hands. One time the Esso Club had a fair. This was when Vic Schultz was the Club Manager. The Instrument Society of Aruba had a booth which included several things. One was a recording potentiometer which was connected to a thermocouple. When you held the thermocouple temperature sensitive end in your hand you could see the temperature record move up scale on the recorder chart. This demonstrated what a thermocouple does.

Bill had rounded up some silver fuse wire from the island electric company. He had made himself a little mold and had a little gas torch. He had a hand full of Dutch ten cent pieces. He would put one ten cent piece in the mold and give it a smack with the rounded head of a ball peen hammer. Next with a little jig he would twist a length of fuse wire. Then with the little gas torch he would weld one end of the silver fuse wire to the bent ten cent piece and, *voilà*, he had produced a unique silver spoon! As I remember it people paid a guilder for one of these spoons. He had trouble keeping up with the demand.

In 1946 the foreign staff of the Instrument Department began a united effort to learn more about electronics. Our General Foreman advised us in a staff meeting that electronic type instrumentation transmission and control systems were being developed. He said this meant we would all have to study electronics to prepare ourselves for this new instrumentation.

Bill was quite happy that this was a chance for him to refresh his memory. He and Jim Lopez set up a shop in Jim's garage at bungalow #510. A basic radio book was obtained and hands-on experience was going to come about by way of repairs of radios, amplifiers and record players. Subsequently Bill also took on the job of organizing his garage for repairing and overhauling office machines from John Eman's Bank and the Aruba Trading Company.

On request amplifiers and speakers were ordered and installed in people's homes and patios. Any money received for repair work was used to buy equipment and "Ryders Service Manuals". These manuals

contained circuit diagrams of just about every American-made radio. The complete set must have been made up of 30 or so manuals. Each manual had pages a little larger than 8 1/2 x 11" and were 2" or 3" thick. The cost per manual was about \$20.00. Eventually there were 10 or so of these manuals on hand. It was interesting to see that some automobile manufacturers also manufactured radios.

When casinos came to Aruba they found they needed someone to fix their slot machines. Bill was a natural for taking on this project. When he left Aruba on retirement he had already trained one of his former apprentices to take over from him.

Along with Art MacNutt and Jim Lopez, Bill was one of three founders of the Instrument Society of Aruba; this organization was established in 1946 modeled after and later affiliated with The Instrument Society of America. Its purpose was to improve the efficiency of its members in their daily work.

One job, in the I. S. A., that appealed to Bill and no one else could have done it, as he would say, more-better. The I. S. A. printed and mailed out a monthly *Bulletin*.

The I. S. A. had permission to use the mimeograph machine in the Instrument Department. Stencils, ink, and paper were paid for by advertisers. It was a sight to see Bill each month with stencil ink up to his elbows and paper knee deep on the floor. After every "run", there (figuratively) would be Bill on his knees on his little prayer rug, bowing to the four main points of the compass; asking for just a little newer model of the mimeograph machine. The *Bulletin* was published for 8 years - from 1946-55. Bill made a gadget with two staplers mounted on a wood base to more efficiently staple the *Bulletins*. Then he drafted his daughters Nancy and Loesje and the Lopez boys David, Michael and Victor to staple, fold, address, stamp and put the completed *Bulletin* in the mail.

Since Bill had served the required time in armed forces in Holland he was called to duty in Aruba on September 1, 1939. He was given the rank of a sergeant in the Marines. All Dutchmen called back to duty in Aruba were inducted into the Marines. This was in spite of the fact that their previous compulsory service may have been in the Army.

Two years before he retired in 1959 he was transferred from the Instrument Department to the Pipe Department. This was because they badly needed a job trainer and his background and previous Pipe Department service made him a logical choice for the job.

Bill enjoyed the family gatherings in Oranjestad. He became a member of the "Three Kings" group that brought Christmas to the children of the Eagle Refinery employees. There was Gaspar, Melchor, and Bill. Bill was "Black Peter." Since there were no camels in Aruba the kings arrived on the scene on donkeys. It was customary to warm up with a few Bols Gins before their performance. This was a very delicate procedure. Several narrow escapes were experienced. After all the three kings were expected to dismount from their donkeys right side up!

When Bill and Els retired to Holland in 1959 they were looking for a house. They were fortunate to find one complete with garden. Bill built his dark room in the attic and became the treasurer for his church. Bill had medium blonde hair and blue eyes. In his later years his hair turned snow-white.

ELSIE HENRIQUEZ KOOPMAN

Bill's wife, Elsie Henriquez, was born in 1910. The family called her "Els". She was one of eight sisters and four brothers. Her father was Leonardo Johan Meadus Henriquez whose parents were Benjamin and Regina Henriquez Refrigerio. Her mother was Elizabeth Croes whose parents were Frans Croes and Margaretha Quant. There were originally two Croes families who came from Holland. Elizabeth was a descendent of the Johan Croes family who were Jewish.

Elsie's father died when he was 82 and her mother died two weeks later. Elsie's sister, Aida, is married to William "Scotty" Barbour and they still live in Oranjestad.

Elsie's sister, Clothilde, was married to Sidney Merryweather and they had retired to live in England. Merryweather died in May, 1984 when he was 82 years old. Barbour and Merryweather were each at one time managers of the Eagle Refinery west of Oranjestad. This refinery was a subsidiary of the Shell Oil Company and came under the direction of the Shell refinery in Curacao.

L. J. M. Henriquez was one of the all Aruban management of the Aruba Goud Maatscappij which conducted gold mining operations from 1901 to 1915. Previous gold mining companies had been managed by foreigners. Operations of this company ceased when World War I broke out. Shortages of critical supplies caused operations to cease.

NANCY (KOOPMAN) KRULLAARS

Nancy Koopman was born at the San Pedro Hospital in Oranjestad while her father was still working for the Eagle Refinery. She graduated from the Lago Colony High School and married and lived in Oranjestad

with her husband, Gerry Kruellers. Gerry worked in the Ammonia Fertilizer Plant located near the airport in Oranjestad. After they divorced, she now lives in Holland with her two children.

LOESJE MARIE ELIZABETH (KOOPMAN) SINT

Loesje was born in 1938 in the Lago Hospital. She remembers going to kindergarten in a building next to where the Junior Esso Club once was - in the lot next to the wartime Esso Club.

Loesje learned to dance when Mr. Jim Downey taught all of the 6th and 7th grades kids ballroom dancing in the old auditorium on the second floor. Downey was also the Physical Education teacher. Loesje says he was a great coach. He was a great disciplinarian. He doesn't smoke and he didn't allow any of the school kids to smoke. Any smoking that was done had to be done on the sly. Parents didn't allow their children to smoke either. Loesje says she didn't smoke until she went to college.

Loesje says the Koopman family lived in bungalow 526. She says she has a picture somewhere which shows their yard with just the coral, some pipelines, the house and the beginning of a garden. When she graduated from high school they had two patios, a nice garden, and a fish pond.

The new Lago Colony High School was opened in 1951. It had louvers and no air conditioning. There were 30 in her class when she graduated from this High School in 1956.

She says her father's garage was a sight to see 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 developed all of his film there.

Loesje had two years of college in Gainesville, Florida and the same year her parents retired she married. She and her husband, who was a Dutch pilot, lived in bungalow 134 and then bungalow 164, just above the upper tennis courts. Finally she moved to Bungalow 203 which was directly across from guest house 90.

Loesje was on the Lago Community Church board of governors for two years before she went to Holland. When she and her husband were divorced she went to Holland to live. Her oldest daughter, Joyce, is married and lives there. Loesje brought her two younger daughters back to Aruba to live after spending two years in Holland. In 1985 she lived in Oranjestad across the street from Mr. Downey. She considers herself one of the Lago Colony residents who lived the longest in the Colony: First as a child and then as a mother.

Loesje's son Billy graduated from the University of Clemson, South Carolina with a degree in Chemical Engineering. He worked for Lago for a couple of years and transferred to the Baton Rouge Refinery in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.



Oranjestad harbor
(with a Grace Line ship at the docks)

Photo courtesy A. S. MacNutt

The Johannes & Mary Lou Koulman Story

Johannes (Jan) Koulman is remembered in Aruba for his work with the students in the Lago school music program, the church choir, and certainly as the director of the Lago community band. He was born June 6, 1913, in Utrecht, the Netherlands; was a professional musician in Europe, traveling as a trombonist and arranger with big bands during the 1930's and 40's. He lived in Holland during the war and occupation and had his share of stories of life during those hectic days.

Jan came to Aruba in 1948 as a car salesman for Ecury in Oranjestad who at that time had the Ford agency. Charlie Overstreet remembers that he purchased a Ford from him in 1949.

Mary Lou Farr, was born December 9, 1927 in Syracuse, New York and was graduated from the Crane School Of Music, in Potsdam, New York (just 30 miles south of the Canadian border), in 1949. She came to Aruba, from Canastota, New York in 1952 and started the instrumental music program in Lago High School where she taught 3 years.

Jan met and married Mary Lou in 1954. And as she laughingly says, "Then he took my job away from me," because Jan became "musical instrument" teacher in Lago High School in 1955, serving until 1965. At that time the School policy was that married female teachers were not allowed. There were exceptions as an emergency or temporary arrangement. In 1965 he joined the faculty of the Crane School of Music where he taught until retirement in 1981.

Jan was the director of the Lago Community Band for several years. He also formed the "Dixielanders" dance band which performed for dances at the Esso Club. He was also a member of a Chamber Music group.

Over this same period of time Jan managed to earn a bachelor's degree from the University of Indiana and a master's degree at Crane School of Music in Potsdam.

He was well known as a teacher devoted to bringing each individual student to his or her full potential, and for generosity in providing time, attention, and encouragement. Even in retirement he was constantly sought out by grateful students who felt themselves enriched by his wise counsel and support. As a teacher he wrote much of his own music for

class work, and many of these arrangements have subsequently been published. He conducted the church choir in Aruba and wrote many of the anthems for the choir.

Mary Lou returned to teaching in 1966 in Massena, New York and retired from this post in 1984. Jan's death came just 6 days after his 72nd birthday, in 1985.

Their three children were all born in the Aruba hospital. None are married as of about 1985. Daughter Susan works with the mentally retarded in Potsdam; son Casey, lives in Boston and works at Lincoln Labs which are affiliated with M.I.T. Son Bryan is a professional dancer and lives in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.



Esso Club Fire - June, 1942

Photo courtesy *Aruba Esso News*

The George Larson Story

George was a tall, 6-foot-plus Swede with a shock of sandy-colored hair. He weighed over 200 lbs. but carried his weight well. George came to Aruba with the Chemco Company when they built the Acid Plant. He was a welder with the specialty of "Lead Burning". He was in charge of installing lead sheeting inside steel tanks and vessels used in processing Acid solutions. The tanks or vessel were first built of steel and George would come along and install the lead sheeting inside the tank or vessel. He would hang the lead sheeting from the top of the tank, installing supporting brackets as necessary. Lead sheeting was rated according to the weight of a square foot. 20# sheeting was usually used inside of certain tanks or vessels requiring this amount of protection. The lead sheeting would be melted with an Acetylene torch as necessary to join the pieces together.

George Larsen used to go rabbit hunting in Aruba. There were a few rabbits on the island for a while. One day he was talking about rabbits, and Tony Descanio wanted to know if George would get him a couple. George got him a couple, cleaned them, and turned them over to Tony. Someone spread the word around the plant that they were actually cats from around the plant. When Tony finally heard the rumor, he really jumped on Larsen. Nobody ever convinced Tony that they didn't taste like and weren't in fact cats.

A BET AND A PRICE

Gabor was a Hungarian who worked in the Acid Plant. He was muscularly built and in fact was in several boxing matches.

One day while he was hanging around and getting in everyone's way, he made some remark about being able to pick up the 200 pound anvil in our Acid Plant shop with one hand. One thing led to another, and pretty soon they had a bet that he couldn't move that anvil with both hands. Poor Gabor failed to lift the anvil and he had to pay off.

A few days later Larson was bragging about winning that bet off Gabor. Gabor, who had always admired Larson's gold pocket watch, asked Larson how much he would sell it for. Larson looked at him, scratched his head and thought about it. Finally he said, "You give me \$20, and I'll sell you the watch."

The next morning Gabor walked in, handed George \$20 dollars, and said, "Here's your money, now gimme the watch."

Larsen looked at him incredulously and said, "What are you talking about - give you the watch? I'm not giving you this watch for a measly \$20. If you want this watch, I need another \$200."

Gabor said: "Ah-ah! I distinctly remember you saying you would sell me the watch for \$20!"

Larsen said: "All I said was, 'If you gave me \$20 I would sell it to you.'"

Gabor stomped into our boss's office to demand justice.

Bob Heinze explained that the transaction was a perfectly legal deal. There wasn't anything that he could do about it. Gabor walked away madder than hell. George let him seethe for several days before returning the \$20.

MAKING A COPPER FRYING PAN

One of the first things I remember about George Larsen was him making a copper fish pan. He had caught a red snapper off a pier and he had given it to Heinze for his wife, Mame, to bake. Any good cook knows how imposing red snappers are when they are baked and put on the table in one piece. There wasn't a large enough pan among the utensils the company supplied to do the job, and Bob was disgruntled about this glaring oversight. George agreed to make a suitable pan. He said a proper cook could always use one. His pan looked so handy, I made one for myself. It took a sheet of copper, and much hammering was required to shape it. I had repaired a few race car bodies in my life and I was familiar with sheet metal work.

We had what passed for home refrigeration in those days - the wooden ice boxes that you loaded with blocks of ice. You couldn't keep perishables very long in them, especially fish, so Mame cooked it the next day. George and I helped them eat it, and it was d e e e lish.

You know that copper we used to make those baking pans was industrial grade, pure copper, and you could get copper poisoning right fast from cooking with it. Normally, they use a cookware version to prevent sulfate build up.

GEORGE'S FARM

In 1932, when George went home on his first vacation, he heard that the government had raided a big farm in New Jersey that was involved in illegal liquor manufacturing, confiscated it and was offering it at auction. This was during the depression when real estate prices were very low. George made a bid on it and got it. He paid for that farm with the money he won in all of those poker games he played in Aruba. The farm came

with a great big house, a good apple orchard, and a barn. So he put Weldon, his brother, on the farm, and rented a post office box in Cranberry, New Jersey. I don't know who owns it now; I imagine they got rid of it.

That's where George retired. His brother and his whole family had been living there, harvesting apples from the orchard and selling them. Then the brother decided to go to Florida to retire. His niece and her husband stayed there. The husband worked nights as a dispatcher for a trucking company. They had a good tractor.

They couldn't make enough on the apples. By the time they sprayed them, hired some one to pick them and pack them there was almost no profit. They finally quit the apple business and didn't do anything. The taxes went up as it became a valuable property by virtue of the town spreading to include it.

The city reclassified it as an industrial property, and the taxes got all out of proportion. They had to pay \$100,000 a year, and he couldn't afford that. I think they sold it after George died in 1964.

GEORGE'S MOTORCYCLE

Larsen was riding a motor cycle when he was in Whiting. He lost control of it and it went through a couple of barbed wire fences and wrapped him around a tree. His leg was injured and the bone became infected. It didn't heal until 1950 in Aruba.

GEORGE'S BACKGROUND

George Larson was from New Jersey. He had two brothers and two sisters. One of the sisters never married, and George was a bachelor as was one of his brothers. One brother, Fred, was a state trooper, and was married once.

George was a cowboy in Wyoming for several years and a welder in Bayonne before going to Aruba. He had done a little bit of everything. He used to go out west and help harvest wheat.

Yes, George got to drinking; he was an alcoholic. He woke up one morning in his yard and said, "This can't go on." He packed his clothes, and caught a freight train back to New Jersey, where he went to work for Chemco. From there he went to Aruba. He couldn't work on the Eastern Seaboard because he was blackballed with the union. George was quite a poker player in Aruba, and he played with the top gang down there, winning himself a lot of money in the process. George would get in a poker game and before it was over he was making more money than he made on the job.

Al High, the Chemco Construction Superintendent, was supposed to stay with Lago when the Acid Plant construction was completed. He wouldn't, so Heinze had George transferred from Chemco to Lago. At the time H. V. Heinze was in charge of the Acid Plant.

GEORGE'S FISHING BOAT

George Larson, Dutch Engle, and Jake Walsko built their boat right down there below the mess hall in that big crevice. This was in the early days. What a hell of a time they had launching it. I volunteered to carry the beer for them and that was it as far as I was concerned. We took two cases of beer and put one on each side of the boat. Dutch and Larsen went to the mess hall and said they needed help to launch their boat. They offered free beer, and by gosh, we got a hellava slew of people down there - so many that they picked the heavy boat up and carried it out into the water. It was five o'clock in the afternoon by the time we got it into the water and started its Sperry marine engine. I forget how many were aboard for its maiden voyage, but I know there were too darn many. Somebody forgot to secure a line and the loose end of it fell overboard. I was afraid that the doggone thing was going to get into the propeller, so I tried to get it back on board. I slipped and fell, and George Larsen grabbed one of my feet as I fell overboard. I dangled there with my head under water for a minute, trying to kick loose. Finally they got me back into the boat, stopped the engine, and secured the rope.

One afternoon several months later George registered the boat and christened it the *Laura Ann*. George kept the papers on the board the boat all the time. The first time George started out; a Dutch official boarded it and demanded the papers. George told them, "No, I'll keep them on the boat." They said, "No, you will keep them in our safe, and when you want to go out, you will have to clear it with us." George had to make it official by turning them over to the officials.

We went fishing. George had misunderstood the guy and so had everybody else. He didn't get the papers before we sailed; we just went fishing outside the harbor. When we returned to the harbor we proceeded towards our anchorage. I looked back and saw a Dutch gun boat following us. We anchored the boat, and as we were getting in the rowboat to go ashore the gunboat pulled up and boy did they give us the dickens for going outside the harbor without papers. George went to Oranjestad and straightened it all out so he didn't have to mess with the papers every time he went fishing.

That old boat, launched in 1935, saw a lot of service. George put a

second engine in that boat in 1938. George almost lost the boat one day during the War. The engine caught fire one day while fishing with a group off the Seroe Colorado point. Luckily Larson was able to fix it before ending up on the rocks. George said he didn't want to take any more chances, and he changed out the whole works, replacing them with two side by side engines with two separate propeller shafts.

GEORGE'S FINAL DAYS

Let's see he left Aruba in 1951, and he returned twice. The first time he had a heart attack, and the Company footed the bill for his stay in the hospital.

The first time he came back to Aruba he stayed with John and Julia Sherman's. The second time he came he stayed with the Humphreys for about six weeks. The last time he came was in the late 50's. He loved to play cards. He was a good bridge player and a good pinochle player.

George stopped at the home of Howard and Helen Humphreys in Clear Lake, Texas on his way to Florida (he almost always wintered in Florida). He would spend a couple of days with his brother and then he stayed with Julia Sherman. When George stopped at our Humphreys house he didn't look well, so Humphreys offered to travel with him on the drive down to Florida. He said, "Nah, I'll be all right."

The next day I got a phone call from New York from Chemco to pack a bag and get out to Fresno, California. They had a plant half way up and everybody was sick. I was only in Fresno a couple of days when Helen called me to tell me Julia Sherman had told her that George had died. I was alone on a plant in the middle of a start-up. I couldn't leave.

George fell out of the chair he was sitting in at Julia's brother's Gulf filling station, and the brother picked him up. He offered to take George to the hospital, but George didn't want to go. While the brother went about his work, George fell out of his chair again, and died right there.

Helen and I felt bad about George's death. It made them feel terrible because he had stopped at their house. They saw he wasn't feeling good, but he was bound and determined to drive on.

As told by his best friend, Howard "Hump" Humphreys.

The Lucien Lecluse Story

I was born October 24, 1906. My father was a school principal in a very small village near Roermond, Holland. This was close to the German border. My mother was born in Belgium. My parents spoke only French in our house. My older brother called me Frere (brother) so everybody called me by that name.

Of course I went to my father's grammar school and we did our writing on a slate because paper was too expensive. We received paper to write on in the 5th grade. There was no electricity, only street lamps with gas and cooking on gas burners. My father was the only one in our village who rode a bicycle. He needed it, because he gave instruction far away to the farmers in other villages, at night. When he arrived home at 9:30 at night, he picked up his books and started to study until 1 o'clock in the morning for just another subject. There was no radio or other music, but my mother sang very beautiful French songs while she did her housework. My father died at the age of 47. I was 17 years old and still in college. I had to leave school and could not get a job; first I cut firewood for a bakery where they baked bread in wood heated furnaces. I earned 25 pennies a day plus 2 cigarettes.

While I was in school I attended military training every Saturday afternoon. Thus it was that when I was called in the army for compulsory military service, I only had to serve a short time.

Then I bicycled 25 kilometers a day to a garage in Germany to study for auto mechanic and driver's license.

Germany hardly had any good cars after the First World War. So the owner of the garage looked every week in the newspapers to see if there were any second hand cars for sale. He would buy one and take it to his garage. We apprentices had to take the motor apart and make a good car out of it. This turned out to be very good experience later on in my life.

The Germans did not have any coffee after the war. They offered me something they called ersatz (surrogate) coffee made of roasted corn and peas. I told the wife of the garage owner that I would bring them a package of good coffee from Holland. We had no war in 1914-1918 like the Germans. They were so glad with my coffee that they paid me double what I paid for it at the bakery where I bought it. The next day I smuggled 10 packages of coffee but had to be careful that the German

Customs would not stop me at the border. So I crossed the border at 5:a.m. in the morning when the customs people were still asleep. Thus I arrived early at the garage.

The brother of the garage owner had a business right next door. He made concrete tiles and pipe. I observed his work and when there was nothing to do in the garage I helped him mix concrete, sand, etc. with the shovel and filled the forms for the tiles etc. As I arrived very early for work I started to work with the cement.

There were busses parked in the garage by their Chauffeurs. I watched them preparing their busses to make their daily rounds. In a few days I was preparing these busses before the Chauffeurs arrived. It was hard work, because I had to crank the big motors by hand using a large copper crank at the front of the busses. When the Chauffeurs arrived they could start their rounds immediately because everything was ready for them. I was never lazy, just ambitious.

We had to take driving lessons in the afternoon. There were 4 German boys besides me. One day one of the German boys was driving and Heinrich Finken, the instructor, was sitting next to him. I was sitting in the back seat with the other two German boys. Apparently the driver passed too close to a lady with a baby carriage. Finken shouted, "Halt, Heraus." They both left the car and Finken smacked the German boy with his big hand right in the face. The boy fell in the road. Finken shouted, "Never come to my car any more!" I was the second victim. I drove very carefully, and most of the time I watched that big hand next to me.

This was the best lesson I ever had in my life. Be careful. After a week I was considered a good driver. They sent me with two drivers in a truck and I was given the job of driving. Driving was difficult at the time. There was no rear view mirror. The throttle was located at the top of the steering wheel. The gearshift and the brake were on the running board outside of cab. However they were very pleased with my driving and my repair work in the garage work shop. After four months I received my driver's license. This was 6 years before driver's licenses were issued in Holland.

I finally got a job in an office in Holland. Then I was a traveling salesman. Then I became a supervisor unloading fertilizer from ships on the canals. My wages were pitiful; 30 guilders a month. I had to drive a motorcycle in the summer and in freezing weather in the winter. During this time I was involved in two serious accidents. (A guardian angel must have been watching over me.) In one accident I was riding a horse

on a hot summer day. The sky darkened and a big thunderstorm came up. Suddenly a bolt of lightening struck about ten feet away on my right. When the lightening hit me I only felt as if somebody had hit me lightly with his fist against my chest. However the horse died with blood streaming from his nose.

The second accident occurred while I was riding my motorcycle on a real cold day. I took one hand off of the handle bars of the motorcycle to wipe the tears out of my eyes. At that moment I lost control of the motorcycle and hit the roadway 4 or 5 times. Every time I hit the ground I heard hi-hi from the back of my head. When I got up on my feet I was about 40 feet from where I first hit the road. I didn't know from which direction I had come. I saw my hat and picked it up. My motorcycle was 20 feet further down the road. My former colleague had been killed riding the same motorcycle. I found I only had a scratch on the back of my left hand and another small scratch on the back of my head. I can't explain why I wasn't more seriously injured.

When I was supervisor of the unloading of fertilizer ships I was still a young man. But I was successful, without any help, in stopping 2 strikes. I found out that if the ship was delayed one day it would cost the owners of the business 320 guilders. A fiesta was being celebrated next door to where the ship was being un-loaded.

The workers were shoveling the cargo of loose potassium salt into burlap bags. Then they would carry the bags up a ladder from the hold of the ship up to the deck. From the deck they carried the bags down a gangplank to the dock. At the dock the bags were loaded on a street car wagon. After two hours they stopped work and were drinking beer in a nearby bar. They informed me that they were finished for the day and would be back the next day. I became very angry knowing that it would cost my boss more than 300 guilders for each day of delay. I told them if you won't unload it I will do it myself.

I started to take off my jacket and grabbed a shovel. They said No sir, No sir we will unload it. I then went to the bar and bought a whole milk can of beer. (This would have been about 5 gallons of beer.) This cost me only 30 guilders. I had the bar-keeper bring the beer next to the gang plank going on board the ship. They worked and drank their beer. I went to look once in a while and saw a few workers fall down on the potassium salt in the hold of the ship. By 10 o'clock that evening the ship was empty. I then went into the bar and had another drink with them. That's the way I settled my first strike. I was very disappointed that my bosses did not appreciate what I had done. I had saved them

over 300 guilders and I didn't receive one penny.

Business was terrible and unemployment was high. I was told that there were golden opportunities in the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia). But the problem was how I was going to get there. I had only saved 320 guilders and that wasn't enough for my passage.

I really was ashamed what I did then, but no one knew about it. At the time there was the Dutch Indonesian Army. This was a shameful bunch of soldiers like the French Foreign Legion. Every crook or murderer was welcomed; nationality did not mean anything. Members were from Russia, Germany and Poland and of course Dutchmen. They were all just a bunch of crooks. I never told my mother or my girl friend and went to enlist in this army. I was issued that terrible uniform. When I was a salesman there were certain bars where I used to eat. When I entered these places in this uniform they refused to serve me a drink and politely asked me to leave.

My army pay was Fls. 1.40 a week; the round trip train fare to my mother's house and my girl friend's house was Fls. 1.80. So I could only visit them every other week-end. When I was hungry I would not spend a penny to buy food. I kept the Fls. 320 that I had saved as emergency fund. In case I found a good paying job this would buy my way out of the army.

In those days they had black and white movies with no sound. They were looking for someone to play the piano during the movie. I volunteered and that paid me Fls. 3 guilders a week. I could go home every week with this addition to my soldiers pay. On the train I would change into civilian clothes in the toilet and put my uniform in a suitcase. On the return trip I would again change back into that terrible uniforms; nobody knew about my secret life. I bought a text book to learn the Malayan language to be prepared for the job in the East Indies. We slept on straw mattresses which was certainly bad when I compared it with the nice mattress I slept on when I was home. I learned to eat Indonesian food and once a week we had long marches. We were being held until they had enough volunteers to go to Indonesia.

This went on for four months until early in 1929 there was an alert. Communications was very poor, but we heard that a bunch of revolutionaries under Venezuelan General Urbina had captured the fort in Curacao. They had killed six Dutch army men, and taken the governor, Fruitier and the Army Captain as hostage. They had taken all of the arms and ammunition from the Fort and their hostages and commandeered the American ship, the *S/S Trujillo* which was in the

harbor. They forced the captain of the *Trujillo* to take them to Venezuela. They were trying to depose the Venezuelan dictator President Juan Vicente Gomez. When the arms and ammunition and the men were unloaded they freed the ship and the hostages.

The governor of Curacao notified the government in Holland that they needed replacement armament. The Dutch Queen Wilhelmina asked the Dutch army to send 50 volunteers and replacement armament to Curacao. I was one of the volunteers. The requirements were that we had to be 21 years old and had served in the Army. I had never served in the Army but I had a little army training while I was in school. So I said I had been in the Landstorm (like the U. S. National Guard); this was of course a lie but a sergeant who heard me grabbed me by my arm and pushed me with the group.

We received a round trip train ticket to say good bye to family and be back the same evening. That evening in the barracks everybody was drunk except me. The government loaded cases of beer and wine on the *S/S Rotterdam* which was a large Dutch freighter and we were told we could have whatever we wanted - free. The next day we marched to the train station with the army band in front. At the station the band gave us a special goodbye salute. Then we went by train to Amsterdam. When we arrived there we were lined up at the train station and we were ordered "present arms" as they do for dignitaries. This was holding the rifle in front of us with the barrel pointing upwards. Then a group of Amsterdam girls put a rose in the barrels of our rifles. Crazy!

As we passed through the Dutch canal I sat on the railing and played army songs with my banjo. At the end of the canal the Amsterdam boys were yelling at us, "Soldiers, bring us a little monkey!" When we arrived at sea I became very seasick. I never saw any free wine or beer!

Thus it was that we arrived in the hot Caribbean. There we were in our hot woolen uniforms. It was terribly hot below in the hold of the ship so I climbed up on the top where I found a row of life boats with their nice canvas covers. I discovered that I could make a nice hammock of a life boat cover. So in the evenings I disappeared and lay in my hammock looking at the beautiful stars above me. The masts of the ship were rolling from side to side as the ship rolled. It was a beautiful sight.

When we arrived in Curacao it was bloody hot in our woolen uniforms when we walked to the water front. Here we were immediately issued nice tropical cotton uniforms. Then we assembled and were asked who had a driver's license. Of course I was the only one!

They gave me a kind of moving van and I had the task of transporting the families in the fort to houses in the countryside. I did not have to carry anything; I just sat behind the steering wheel. When everything was unloaded I took two friends with me and we toured the island. The second day we were again called together and were asked who could speak English. The other soldiers could only speak Dutch and Indonesian Malay as they had already served in Indonesia. Again I was the only one who spoke English. They picked 19 other soldiers and we were sent to Aruba.

In Aruba they only had black policemen from Surinam in San Nicholas. The American construction workers had nothing to do after working hours but drink and visit the houses of the prostitutes. When they were drunk they staggered back to their barracks and were often jailed by these policemen. One day a couple of the workers were jailed and their comrades asked that they be released. The policemen refused to release them. The comrades came back with a flat bed truck with some cases of dynamite. They told the policemen to let their comrades out immediately or they would blow up them and their police station. The two jailed men were released and the construction company asked for white policemen. Since there were none in Aruba they called on us in Curacao.

A Dutch lieutenant, Weyerman, and the 20 soldiers that had been selected, including me, were sent to Aruba. We traveled on a Dutch Navy ship, the *S/S Hertog Hendrik*. I had never heard of the island of Aruba. On board the ship we had to stand in line with the sailors and we were served pea soup in metal soup plates. When we arrived off shore of Oranjestad, the capital of Aruba, the ship dropped anchor. There was no unloading dock. The sailors lowered life boats and we had to step into these boats with our suitcases. Near the shore the water was not deep enough for the life boats to pull right up to the shore. When we stepped out of the life boats with our suitcases on our shoulders we found ourselves knee deep in water. Thus it was that I arrived in Aruba where I lived over 30 years.

The 20 black policemen we were replacing were lined up on shore and boarded the ship we had just left. Once on shore we were lined up and appointed policemen on the spot. A small house was rented from an old German and 19 of us were crammed into small house. To reach your cot you had to climb over the other people; it was hot. Our Lieutenant Weyerman took one older soldier, Dirk, as his servant in a house near the governor's house. There was a large room where Dirk had his cot. In the corner was a large concrete tank containing rainwater. The governor's

new blue Buick stood on the other side. I was put in charge of this Buick, so Dirk asked me to join him in that large building so I could be close to the Buick. I was also put in charge of an old Model T Ford to haul food supplies for the men. At the end of the day my uniform was practically white with perspiration. I made good use of the water tank, cleaning my green uniform every day.

Every one of us received about one and a half gallons of drinking water a day. If we needed more we could buy it for two and a half guilders a gallon. The beer in the village was cheaper than drinking water, but it was warm. Some German barkeepers put the bottles of Amstel beer in a burlap sack, kept it wet with sea water and hung it in the wind to cool the beer. We had two army cooks and our food was terrible.

Louis Posner, a Jew, had the only store in town where you could buy food stuff. Most of his stock was small old cans of sardines and small cans of watery frankfurter (also called "Chinese Fingers"). He also had sour bread, onions and potatoes. Our menu depended on what we could buy. Every day we had sour bread, which I hated, for breakfast. There was a large milk can with a mixture of tea, milk and sugar. We were doled out this tea in a metal mug in the kitchen. One day we would have frankfurters and the next day we would have sardines. The onions and potatoes were cooked in the form of a stew. On Sundays we received a banana. I ate in the large garage with Dirk. He carried the same meals as we had to our Lieutenant who never complained. All over the island there were hungry goats and donkeys. I only ate the crust of the sour bread and gave the rest to a donkey who came often to look for food in the garage. One day I was painting the wheels of the Buick with red lead paint to prevent rusting. The donkey was standing near me. I thought what beautiful white hoofs he had. I painted his hoofs red and then chased him into town. I thought he looked like a lady with red lipstick on. I was always ready for a joke, not to make life miserable.

The next day I was detailed to deliver a letter from governor Wagemaker to Captain Rodger in San Nicholas. As I was passing through San Nicholas the Americans seeing me hailed me as a white cop and asked me to join them in the dining hall, which was one of their wooden barracks. At Rodger's house I was served with real English Tea. The Captain lived there with his assistant, Farquharson. They had two Chinese servants. When he looked at the letter in Dutch he asked me to translate it for him. And then he offered me a job working for him. I could not do this because I had a 3 year contract with the army. On my way home I stopped at the dining hall and ate the best meal I had in

years. Of course I never mentioned this to the other soldiers when I got back to Oranjestad. I did not want to make anyone jealous.

At that time there was no road between Oranjestad and San Nicholas. I had to make my way to Santa Cruz over a donkey path. From Santa Cruz I had to make my way over sharp volcanic rocks. Almost every day I had two or more flat tires. (There were only two spares for this car) If I had more than two flats I had to repair them on the spot. The heat was terrible. I had to remove the tire, find the hole, patch it, put the tire back on the wheel and pump it up with a hand pump. I don't believe anyone in the whole world could have done this. My training in the garage in Germany prepared me for this job. Except in Germany the temperature was more agreeable. One day I counted seven flats in one day, which must have been a record.¹ I also had many broken springs, as in those days they had not yet invented shock absorbers. I had to buy new springs just about every month. I never complained, I just tried to reach San Nicholas everyday at meal time. On my way I often saw vultures circling around over some poor goat that was starving to death. These birds would swoop down and eat the cadaver. When I came back by there was only a heap of bones left. The next day these bones were all white from the baking sun. On the beach under a roof was a slaughter house. There was always a swarm of lizards around this place. This was where our cook bought meat for our meals.

While I was making these trips between Oranjestad and San Nicholas the rest of the soldiers were doing their assigned work. This was running a telephone from Oranjestad to Santa Cruz. There it was connected to the priest's house. From Santa Cruz the telephone lines were run by the way of Frenchmen's Pass to the priest's house in San Nicholas. The priest in San Nicholas was Father Hendricks and he lived next to the old Police Station.

There were only five telephones in Oranjestad. There was a gasoline driven generator on the edge of town that provided electricity for the city. At 6:30 they would start up this generator which could be heard all over the city.

San Nicholas had many abandoned houses and several bars and a few stores that stocked odds and ends that might attract the construction men.

¹ *Phoey. I had 27 patches on my bicycle inner tube at one time. It looked like one big patch, but I rode those tires until I was riding on the cord and out of patches. I got so I could push it home from school at lunch time, fix it, eat and be back before the bell.*

One day as I was driving through San Nicholas I was stopped by a Portuguese man (M. Viana). He asked if he could polish my Buick for me for Fls. 2.50. He lived in one of the abandoned houses in the village at the time. He had been a mess boy on one of the tankers. He had abandoned his ship and decided to improve his lot in Aruba. A few weeks later he asked if he could buy a couple of tires for the Buick. The governor gave his permission because the tires were full of holes. Viana could earn Fls. 5.00 that way. He was later a millionaire Chrysler dealer and garage owner. He also owned a bus company.

One day I ask Lieutenant Weyerman how I could earn some more money. He told me that I would have to take exams. For mastering English I could earn 60 guilders a month; for Spanish I could earn 60 guilders a month more and for law another 60 guilders. This would be in addition to my pay which was 140 builders a month. I immediately ordered a Spanish text book from Curacao. I figured that I had sufficient knowledge of English to be able to pass the exam.

Captain Rodger complained to the governor that too many sailors left their ships looking for higher wages with the construction companies. This left the ships short of crew. There were also many stowaways coming in on the ships. The governor decided to establish an Immigration office in San Nicholas. I was transferred to San Nicholas and put in charge of this work. I was assigned a blue Buick and an old pilot boat with the motor in the center and a rudder in the back. It was built for a crew of two. The company furnished three barracks for us and a shower with brackish water. I was furnished a dock and free gasoline because I was helping them in the harbor.

At first there were three Lake Tankers and later there were six. Once in a while a large tanker would come in and load crude oil for England. Usually the ships came in at 6:30 in the morning, and I would be free most of the day.

I operated the pilot boat and carried a government doctor (doctor Ludwig Cornelius Nunes) to clear every tanker that arrived. We heard the same words every time. The captain of the tanker said, "No passengers, no stowaways, no sick crew members." The doctor would say, "Okay you can take the 'quarantine flag' down." This was the yellow 'quarantine flag' that the ships always hoisted when coming into harbor. No one was allowed off the ship until the doctor came on board and spoke to the ship's captain. If the captain reported any sick crew members they had to be examined for contagious diseases. The doctor notified the captain when he could lower the 'quarantine flag' and the

crew could go ashore. The Dutch government doctor was of Portuguese extraction originally from Surinam. He received his medical training in Surinam and Holland. His wife was of French extraction and was born on the French side of San Martin. We always spoke English in our conversations.

Some of the larger tankers from the States also brought passengers for the new company. As it was difficult for me to handle the throttle lever in the middle of the pilot boat and the rudder in the back I decided to do something. I thought of my experience in the garage back there in Germany. The company had a storehouse full of parts. I found a steering wheel from an old van, mounted this in the middle of the boat. I fastened two cables to the steering post and ran one along each side of the boat with pulleys to the rudder. I was able to steer the boat from the center near the gas throttle.

At noon the Dutch doctor would say to the ship's captain, "Do you have anything good to eat?" And of course the steward served us a delicious meal. After the meal the doctor would ask the captain if he had any fresh fruit for his sick wife (she was like the rest of us sick of doing without fresh fruits and vegetables.) And then on the way back to shore the doctor would say to me: "Lecluse I could give you some of this fruit, but I know the police may not accept gifts." (That was a dirty trick he played on me.)

We only received mail once every ten days from Curacao. This mail came via sailing schooner, the *Fedelma*. This schooner also brought the only newspaper in Papiamento. I tried my best to understand it. Little by little I began to understand more and more. I found an Aruban girl, Nicomeda Tijssen, who was an assistant teacher with the nuns at the school in San Nicholas. On Sunday I went to her house. She spoke a little Dutch and had a gramophone that you had to wind up after each record was played. She had only had records that contained Spanish songs. I learned the words and music quickly. Some I still remember. *Quisiera llorar, quisiera morir de pensamiento*. Most probably I made mistakes but it sounded so good and then she explained the words. *Llorar* meant cry and *morir* is just like French to die. Lots of words resembled my mother's language, French. This went along alright except on weekdays she was at school and I had no teacher. I could learn the words, but not the pronunciation.

Many of the bars had South American bar maids. They had nothing to do all day until the customers came in the evening. So they just sat on the stairways of the bars sunbathing. I took my Spanish book to them

and started to read. They laughed and laughed at me, but they also corrected me so I had a free lesson every day.

The English language was another thing. I had no trouble talking with Captain Rodger and others. But on the docks, especially with the crews off the tankers I had a terrible time. I could hardly understand anyone. Finally I found out they were cursing, and using dirty words which I had never heard before. Just for example I was a @#\$%\$# square head, others were S. O. B.'s. And then there were the limeys (Englishmen), frogs (Frenchmen), wops (Italians), krauts (Germans), hunkies (Hungarians), etc. Of course the @#\$%\$# word always prefaced these words. No wonder English was so difficult for me. The Yankees even had different words for each state. Georgia crackers, Oklahoma blankets. I learned all of these words over the years.

Four months after I arrived in Aruba I offered myself for English and Spanish language examinations. These examinations were conducted in Oranjestad by the head school master, Mr. Lampe, Miss Henriquez, the secretary to the governor and an army officer from Curacao. I passed the tests and this almost doubled my monthly salary. The next exam was to be for law. I would have to know the whole book. I went to the Minister of Justice in Oranjestad, a Mr. Planz. He said he had only one copy of the law book that I needed and he needed it for himself. I begged him to loan it to me. I bought a Remington Rand Portable typewriter in the Arends store in Oranjestad. And sitting on my cot in my bedroom I copied the whole book. Everyone thought I was doing work for my job at the harbor so nobody bothered me. In two months I had the whole book copied and almost knew it by heart. At 6 o'clock in the morning while everything was quiet on the street leading to the harbor I learned the most difficult words by speaking them aloud. So seven months after arriving in Aruba I was able to take the law exam. There was no one else ready to take this exam when I was ready. The S/S *Liberatador* was a new passenger ship going between Aruba and Curacao. They sent me to Curacao on this ship for my final exam. I passed the exam successfully and now my salary was 320 guilders a month.

When I returned to Aruba they ask me if I would take the job of governor of the island of Saba, another Dutch island in the West Indies. I asked how much salary I would get as governor. They told me the same as our two Ministers in Aruba. I asked them how much that would be. They said it would be 320 guilders a month. That was what I was earning now after taking all of those exams. Besides in Saba a sailing schooner only called once a month. Now Aruba had this new passenger

ship that came every two days. So I turned that job down and returned to my job at the harbor where I had lots of spare time, no supervision, I was my own boss and enjoyed good food.

However because of passing the Law exams I was given an additional job of being a kind of judge. I did not handle court cases in the courthouse, but directly in the street or in the hospital in cases involving death, fatal accidents or public health. This turned out to be a job with a lot of responsibility. I had several terrible cases. The very first one I can mention now because the culprit died long ago. The director of the hospital and chief surgeon had amputated the arm of a construction worker. The arm was thrown in a garbage barrel. I had to tell him that this was forbidden. Another one was a fellow who while drunk had accidentally run over a Chinese man with his car. I thought about this case. I knew the fellow had a wife and daughter in the States. The Chinese man had no family. According to my law book the sentence should be 6 months in jail for death by negligence. I ruled that the Chinese man was drunk and ran under the Americans car.

A third case was a fellow who accidentally ran over and killed his friend. There was a farewell party and the culprit was driving his car. All of participants in the party were everywhere on the car. His friend was standing on the front bumper of the car. They were going somewhere and the friend fell off the bumper and was run over. The culprit was crying at the hospital about killing his best friend. My investigation produced a "no fault" ruling. My judgment resulted in no paperwork. I believed he had enough punishment - so again there was no sentence. I could never put anybody in jail with those Negroes who were in the jail at the time. Most of them had bad venereal diseases. Later both of the men involved in the last two cases were my bosses in the refinery. They never recognized me and I never took any advantage because of this knowledge. No one ever had any idea that I was the man who handled their cases as the judge at the scene.

The company needed more laborers so two men from the personnel office, Ward Goodwin and Harold Attwood, went on a recruiting trip to the British islands in the Caribbean. Some of the Negro men they met would come if they could bring their families. So the company furnished them with building materials and that was how the Negro village was built in San Nicholas. In those days they had no indoor plumbing and unless they blasted there was no way they could build outdoor toilets. The result was that every morning there was a parade of women with buckets on their heads going to the beach. They emptied their buckets down below where the Acid Plant was built. In the early days most of

the Aruban men were in Cuba working in the sugar cane fields. The airport in Oranjestad that was later built was laid out in the middle of a large aloe field. The juice of the aloes grown in Aruba was sold in a cake form after processing. Aloe juice was used for medicinal purposes.

In 1930 I was summoned to Curacao. The head of the Curacao Intelligence Agency (C.I.A.) was leaving and they needed someone to replace him. His replacement had to be able to speak, read, and write several languages. There was Lecluse in Aruba: My high living days were over. I was met at the ship when I arrived in Curacao by two Dutch Marines. They took me to a Navy officer, the Adjutant to the Governor. He was to be my supervisor. He assigned me to a big office next to his and on the floor above the Governor's office. I was given money to buy civilian clothes, shoes and a hat. No one was to know that I had anything to do with the police. I reported to the Adjutant.

My job included reading all of the Spanish language newspapers from Venezuela and the islands in the Caribbean. I was to pay particular attention to any revolutions or uprisings. This was the first thing I did every morning. After two hours of reading I went into town to the bars and restaurants in the narrow streets. I drank coffee, I drank beer, and I made friends with revolutionaries. Often I paid for their drinks and made friends all over the island. I had a car at my disposal, but I preferred to travel by bus. Every Friday I made my report to the Governor. On Friday's I was reimbursed for all of my expenses and received my salary.

While on this assignment I obtained pictures of General Rafael Simon Urbina and his aid Machado. (I still have these pictures as a souvenir of those days.) I also have pictures that I took of the then Venezuelan dictator, Juan Vicente Gomez, in his palace in Caracas. I noticed that the policemen in Caracas wore brown uniforms and had no shoes. The weapon they carried was a whip. I once visited a camp of the dangerous Motilone Indians between Maracaibo and the border with Colombia.

Actually this assignment was dangerous work, but I wasn't afraid. I took Sundays off. One day the Captain of the Police called me into his office. He told me that they were very pleased with my excellent work and planned to give me a promotion. But then he said inspectors were coming over from The Hague in Holland. The inspectors had a contract for six years and my contract was for 3 years. He said he would be very gratified if I would sign this new contract for 6 years. I told him that I had promised my mother and my girlfriend that I would return to Holland in 3 years. I told him that I would fulfill my 3 year contract and

after that maybe I would prolong my contract. The Captain became very angry and told me to get out and he didn't want to see me again.

I went to my bedroom and sat on my bed thinking when a military policeman came into my room. He told me that I was to report for duty in 15 minutes in uniform. My uniform was wrinkled and moldy and in a box under my bed. My shoes were covered with the white mildew that attacks leather in the tropics. So I borrowed a uniform from another policeman and reported to the sergeant of the police for duty.

I was put in the center of town directing traffic. This was a job I had never done before. That day was the day of the official opening of the session of the government. While standing there the open car of the governor in his white uniform approached. In the car with him was his aide who was my boss in the C.I.A. Instead of directing traffic I called the attention of the aide to my uniform.

After the ceremony was over, he called me to his office. He said, "But Lecluse what have you done? Now everybody knows you are with the police." I said, "If I go into town those rebels will kill me. I want to get out." He agreed and the governor sent a cable to Holland for an honorable discharge for me. I stayed in my room reading until news came from Holland accepting my resignation. I still had to pay Fls. 311.67 which was the fee for buying your way out of the army. I went to the bank and withdrew all of my savings and the Fls. 311.67. Then I booked my passage on a passenger boat to Aruba that evening.

Next I went to the police office and they were laughing. They said "We have seen the cable, but Lecluse does not have the money." I showed them the money, but demanded a receipt before I gave it to them. When I had the receipt in my hand I told them including the officer in charge you can all go to hell, I am a free man.

I went down to the harbor and sat down at table at a sidewalk cafe. I was drinking a cup of coffee when I saw people running together. I went down to see what was happening. There was a man lying on the ground bleeding and there was another man with a knife in his hand running away. I was unarmed but I ran after him. He ran into a side street and crawled under a desk in a little store. I told him to get up and drop the knife. He got up but he did not drop the knife. I grabbed the arm of the hand holding the knife and walked him to the police station. There a police sergeant hit him on the arm so the knife fell. He asked me to make a report on this crime. I told him I was no longer connected with the police.

Because the victim and the culprit were both Portuguese they asked me to go to the hospital with them. At the hospital I asked the victim if the man they were holding was the one who stabbed him. He nodded his head yes and then he died. This was the way I ended 16 months of public service in government. It was a strange but interesting time and I had learned a lot in my 24 years.

When I arrived back in Aruba the next day I went to work for the Pan American Petroleum Co, as it was called in those days. I had already did some work from them indirectly. Before I had gone to Curacao I had heard that there was a strike of all of the Chinese Cooks and waiters. There had been riots in the dining halls and the construction workers were looking for their meals. Some of the American men had volunteered to go into the kitchen and try to cook the meals. They had hired some of the Negro girls from the villager to be waitresses. But there was too much confusion. I saw the Governor of Aruba, the Chief of Police, and the refinery management representatives in the harbor area. Of course they were having difficulty understanding each other. I happened to see the boss of the Chinese, Sha Sawai, and I ask him what the trouble was. He said the government wanted 500 guilders deposit from each of the Chinese to guarantee their return passage in case they left before their contract was up. I made some quick calculation and told Sha Sawai that I would arrange that this money would be taken out of their pay, a small amount at a time and it would be returned to them if they stayed their full contract. We shook hands on that agreement and all of the Chinese saw us shake hands. After a few moments all of the Chinese went back to work. I then explained to the Governor and the company representatives what I had promised and they all agreed with that solution to the problem.

The Company was called The Pan American Petroleum and Transport Company. Then it became The Standard Oil Company of Indiana. Next it became Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, then Esso, and finally Lago Oil and Transport Co. Ltd. In the early days we were paid every month with 5, 10 and 20 dollar gold pieces. We were paid in gold because the natives didn't trust paper money.

When I went to work in the refinery I reported to Mr. Coy Cross in the Light Oils Department. Mr. "P." was my shift foreman. In the Sweetening and Treating Plants they used caustic and sulfuric acid in the process. I had an idea whereby the Company could save a lot of money by changing the way they used these chemicals. A lot of this material was being wasted, besides it was eating up the lines and vessels unnecessarily. Mr. P. became very angry at my trying to tell him how to

run his job. So he and I didn't get along. For four miserable years I was on his shift. He lived across the street from me in the Colony.

Three months after I began working for Lago I sent a letter to Dutch Queen Wilhemina in Holland. Three weeks later Mr. Coy Cross informed me that the Governor wanted to see me in his office in Oranjestad at once. I notice a Dutch warship in the harbor in Oranjestad when I arrived. This may have been the first time a Dutch warship had ever visited Aruba since my initial visit there. In the office of the governor there was the hated captain from the police in Curacao. He had come to apologize to me. He said that in the name of her Majesty he to hand me this money: 311 guilders and 11 cents. This was my revenge for the mistreatment I had received from this fellow.

At Lago I still existed with Mr. P. as my shift foreman. I was fortunate that I had Mr. Tiry Harrod as the operator on my shift.

In March of 1932 I went on my first vacation to Holland via Paris. I arrived in Paris at 5:a.m. and it was freezing cold. I was still wearing tropical clothes. I sat near the coal stove in the railroad station until the metro started running at 7:a.m. I took the metro to my aunt and uncle's house. They served me a bacon and egg breakfast. They had no coffee but cold red wine. My aunt took be by car to the best dress shop in Paris to buy warm clothes. When I returned to Aruba from that vacation we had a 10% cut in wages due to the depression.

It wasn't until 1937 that Frank Griffin became the head of the Light Oils Department and I finally received a promotion. He promoted me to operator in 1938. Mr. P. was transferred to another job and eventually was shipped out when he went crazy. I always thought God had seen the injustice I had received at the hands of this man and caused this to happen.

It was then Mr. Robert Heinze introduced the "Coin-Your-Ideas" plan in the refinery. This was the plan developed by the company to encourage employees to submit ideas for improving refinery operations. A committee of knowledgeable refinery people examined each idea and determined how valuable it was to the company. I received more than 22 awards under this program. In 1937 I received the first Capital Award. I received a letter from the President of Standard Oil Company of New Jersey whose office was in New York. He informed me that my idea was considered the best of those submitted from all of the company refineries world wide.

On June 11, 1941 I traveled from Curacao to New York on the

Grace Lines' Santa Paula with Louis G. Lopez and Mrs. Consuelo Lopez. In Curacao at the American Embassy they insulted Louis in my presence. On this trip my wife and I won First Prize in a dancing contest.

I kept sending in Coin-Your-Ideas until in 1952 I received such a large award that I made a trip around the world. I made the first trip ever in propeller driven planes around the world. In Hawaii girls hung flower leis around my neck. I traveled to Indonesia, Baghdad, Egypt and Holland. I returned to Aruba via Scotland, Newfoundland, Montreal, New York and Cuba. This was a voyage you might dream about. The papers were full of the story with my pictures.

After returning to Aruba I was promoted to shift foreman in the Light Oils Department. Since I was a supervisor I was no longer eligible to receive Coin-Your-Ideas awards. Never-the-less I had one of my most successful ideas. It would save the company millions. Since I couldn't receive any award I gave it to Tiry Harrod and he received credit for it. I later wrote a recommendation to the Queen of Holland for a Royal Decoration for Tiry. This was the only one of its kind given in Aruba.

In 1962 I put two daughters in a Swiss boarding school with children of movie stars. When I returned to Aruba I recommended an idea to management that was my best idea yet. They were about to give me a huge increase in wages, but I decided to resign instead. I went with my wife to Holland to join my children. I had become a millionaire and no one knew it.

We have three children, all born in Lago Hospital in Aruba: John born January 30, 1936, Jeannine born August 8, 1940, and Mitzie born August 8, 1944.

Since 1962 I have spent my time enjoying life. I retired completely. I went a couple of times to Washington, D. C. when my daughter and then my son were married there. My daughter, Jeannine had an Ambassador's wedding. Her husband is Jon van Houten. It was exciting. I met lots of Congressmen and President Kennedy. My daughter's husband is an executive with the IMF. He had an office in Bolivia for three years; in Paraguay for one year; in Paris for three years. His office is now in Washington, D. C. and he is involved in finances worldwide. They live in McLean, Virginia. They have seven children and one grandchild.

I was present in the room when Eisenhower received his honorary Doctorate Degree at Georgetown University.

I lived next to President Roosevelt when he was on his farm in

Hyde Park, New York. I lived in the next vacation farm. Roosevelt's Chauffeur came every evening to our place to have a drink.

President Roosevelt did not allow drinking at his home. I took movies of the Roosevelt family until his Secret Service guard told me it was prohibited. He was as small as a boy because of the infantile paralysis he had suffered as a young man. That was why no one was allowed to take pictures. But I took his picture. I happened to be there when the attack on Pearl Harbor happened. I have been in the Roosevelt Library and have seen his childhood toys, roller skates, and everything.

I made money everywhere, even in Washington. One time I worked for two days in the Library of Congress, behind the White House. I translated a letter that the famous Berlitz people couldn't do. It was a Dutch patent to make plastic paint. I received good pay for doing this. I bought a house in Bethesda and still use my checks from the Bank of Bethesda. My wife sold this house making a good profit.

In Aruba I received twice as much income as the President of Lago, Horigan, Mingus, etc. I was always lucky. I owned seven houses in Aruba. I was a notary. I lived in Bungalow Number 3 in 1936 when my son was born. I later lived in Bungalow 83 next door to Odis Mingus. Frank Griffin had the bungalow on the other side. Bungalow 83 became a beautiful house and I was the first to install air conditioning.

After retirement I first lived in Switzerland near the movie stars. My neighbors included: Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, David Niven and Roger Moore (who became a good friend), and others.

The James Louis & Mary Griffith Lopez Story

My father, Louis G. Lopez, arrived in Aruba as one of the pioneers in the Aruba Refinery project in February 1928. He was Assistant Division Superintendent Light Ends when he retired in August of 1953.

My mother was Margaret Tibbets Lopez. She was an adopted child whose parents were killed in an accident. She never learned what happened. The census records did show she had a brother, named Arthur, but was never able to find him.

I was born June 18, 1915 in Drumright, Oklahoma. The Drumright oil field was at its peak and produced 73,000,000 barrels. Oklahoma was the number one oil producing state in the nation. Drumright was the oil capital of the world. It is no wonder I wound up in the oil business.

THE TRIP TO CATCH OUR SHIP

My mother and brother, Victor, and I packed up our black, 1928, 2 door, wire wheeled, Plymouth Sedan for this trip. Every nook and cranny was filled including the trunk on the back. Our destination was Tampa, Florida where we were to meet the ship that was to take us to Aruba.

We left Drumright, Oklahoma, early one morning and the next thing I knew I was driving. The third day we arrived in Tampa, Florida. There we were informed that the ship we were to catch had been rerouted to Galveston, Texas. The third day after we left Tampa we arrived in Galveston only to be informed that the ship had been diverted to Destrehan, Louisiana. So we backtracked around the Gulf of Mexico to Destrehan. If you look at a road map you will see that we covered a lot of territory around the Gulf of Mexico trying to catch that ship. Destrehan is on the east bank of the Mississippi River upriver near New Orleans. My main recollection is that the Port of Destrehan was out in the middle of nowhere. The dock was a very simple one when compared with some I saw later. The strong, pungent smell of crude oil became a part of our lives.

THE TANKER TRIP

In June of 1929, along with our car, we boarded the *S/S Crampton Anderson*. This was the first time we had ever been on a ship of any size let alone an ocean going oil tanker. I managed to be slightly sea sick for

a couple of days, while my mother and brother were in bed for a couple of days. Fortunately the trip was relatively smooth. I finally decided that the place to be was on deck. Seasickness wasn't a problem if you were in the open air. As a result I spent most of my time in a deck chair out on the boat deck which we occupied during the trip. It didn't take me long to locate the ship's library and I spent most of the trip reading books. I found I had already read many of those books.

The Captain was afraid Victor, my 7 year-old brother, would fall overboard. As a safety measure he had the ship's carpenter sew up some canvas strips, about 36" wide. These were then laced to the railing along the sides of the boat deck. A life boat was hung on each side of this deck. These canvas "screens" effectively covered the railing on both sides and were just the thing because Victor was always climbing on the railing. The only passengers, we were occupying the first mate's cabin on this trip. More or less confined to the boat deck because of Victor, we eventually toured the whole ship.

In the dining room we were seated at the Captain's table along with the Chief Engineer. In those days it was customary for the passengers to sit at the Captain's table. We found we were expected to "dress" particularly for supper. The men were expected to wear ties and of course the women dressed as if going out to a good restaurant in any city. Breakfast and lunch were usually informal. The meals were simple and usually you had a choice such as different meats, three different vegetables, two different deserts, such as fruit or some bakery items. The menu of the meals depended on the nationality of the officers and crewmen of the ship. The crews of each ship usually were made up of one nationality, American, English, Dutch, German, Belgian, Greek, and Scandinavian nationalities predominantly.

I was an excited 14 year-old and standing on the deck right under the navigational bridge, when I first saw the island of Aruba. Columbus couldn't have been more excited when he first sighted America. On the horizon I could see a dark blue haze with some lighter colored clouds hanging over it. The Captain had explained at the dinner table the evening before that we would be sighting the island early in the morning. He said we would probably be docking before noon if they had a berth for us.

ARRIVAL IN ARUBA

It was in June of 1929 when our ship entered the San Nicholas harbor and tied up at a berth. My father, Louis G. Lopez, was waiting on the pier for the ship to finally dock; the gang plank to be installed and

immigration and health authorities to complete their checking of the crew and passengers. In those days these officials were very formal. Finally we were allowed to disembark and found our legs were a little wobbly after our long week at sea. We were quite surprised to find that we still had the sensation that the ground was "rocking and rolling" when actually it wasn't.

My father had borrowed a car to take us and our luggage to our new home. Our personal car, which was on the ship, was unloaded sometime later.

OUR NEW NEIGHBORHOOD

Our new home turned out to be Bungalow 16. This was one of the few houses that were ready for families at that time. These houses were located in the area which was later occupied by the Main Office Building and The Number Two Power House. There was a row of houses that blocked our view of the sea, otherwise we would have been able to look out our living room window and see the reef, located about 3/4 mile from the shoreline. Our house was some 300 yards from the shore line and we were about 12 or 15 feet above the high tide level.

The roadways were all topped with heavy fuel oil. The drive-ways, such as to our bungalows and the "alley" between our row of bungalows and the row between us and the sea were caliche. Another surprise for us was the fact that the surface of the area where we were located, except for the caliche and oil covered areas, was of a coral rock formation. However this formation had been exposed to the elements for so many centuries that it was a dull grey eroded so badly that the kids had to wear shoes all of the time when outdoors. Much later, when the soles of their feet adapted to the uneven surface, which was filled with many sharp edges, some of the kids managed to walk across the coral in their bare feet if they paid attention to where they were walking. When you looked out across a bare area the surface was a dingy, dark, gray in color. If you found any vegetation, it was liable to be cactus of the round leaf variety. The coral surface had many holes, some a few inches deep and others a foot or two deep. The only soil was found in flower beds around the bungalows. These flower beds were surrounded by 12 or 18" high by 4 or 6" thick walls constructed of concrete blocks. These concrete "boxes" were filled with dirt. There were darn few of these flower beds when we got there and as I look back the place looked desolate!

OUR BUNGALOW #16

Because there was my brother and I, plus my parents, we were assigned a two-bedroom bungalow. The living room/dining room ran

along the South side of the house. The kitchen was about 12 feet x 24 feet, running along the West side of the house. The two 12 feet x 15 feet bedrooms, separated by a bathroom, ran the length of the house on the North side. Each bedroom had a clothes closet, one wall of which was common with the other closet. And both closets had a common wall with the living-dining room. The opposite wall of the closets was common with the bathroom. An open porch, with a wooden railing, extended across the East wall of the living room. The front door opened out on this porch as well as two living room windows. Six wooden steps with a handrail, on each side, extended from the west end of the porch down to a small concrete slab at ground level. At each home you could see this slab with the name of the contractor who built the bungalow, "C.C.ROSS," imprinted in the cement.

There were two windows in each of the bedrooms and one in the bathroom. The living room also had two windows in the East wall, one in the West wall and two in the South wall.

The living-dining room and the two bedrooms had varnished hardwood floors. There were carpets on the living-dining room floor and a linoleum covered floor in the kitchen. There was wicker furniture in the living room and standard dining room furniture. A white enameled, metal topped, table was in the kitchen and four, wooden, kitchen chairs. There were twin beds in the bedrooms as well as a dresser with two small drawers and four large drawers and a large mirror.

Another surprise for us was the fact that the house sat on concrete piers and there was a little "moat" part of each pier. In some cases the houses sat 2 to 3 feet, or more, above the uneven surface of the coral. Other houses were high enough above the coral that children could play under them. These "moats" were filled with a heavy fuel oil and were intended to keep out the ants and roaches. These insects became the bane of everyone's life. Actually most of the mothers grew to hate these "moats" because all of the kids, played in them and got oil all over their clothes.

Our bungalows outside walls were stucco covered with about a 3/8" thick layer of concrete with a uniformly rough finish. This stucco was sprayed on a heavy wire mesh which was backed on the inside with a tough cardboard. The wire mesh was mounted on the bungalow walls before the stucco was sprayed on. The inside walls of the houses were plaster (Later plans called for 3/4" sheetrock.). The ceilings were about 10 feet high and were covered with sheets of 3/4" thick sheetrock. The roof had a high peak so it was later possible to install attics where a man

under 6' tall could stand up in them. These had a flooring of wooden planking and a ladder was fastened to the wall and an opening cut in the ceiling of the large front walk-in closet. This attic became a storage area where you could put your luggage and junk you always manage to collect over the years. The large walk-in front closet had one wall common with the bedroom located in the northeast corner of the house. The other side wall of the closet was common with the front porch wall. The back wall of this closet was common with the outside wall on the east side of the house. The roof overhang left about a 3 foot opening all around the eaves of the house. This opening was covered with screen wire to keep out larger insects and lizards.²

My mother found that all cooking was done on kerosene stoves with four burners. While on an automobile trip in 1988 we passed through the western part of Oklahoma. In the town of Elkhart, when we visited a museum where we saw a kerosene stove similar to what we used in those long ago days. A removable, box-like oven could be placed over two of the four burners of the stove. It was found that a 20 pound turkey could be cooked in that oven (Provided one could be found in the commissary). The only thing was it took some practice to get used to cleaning the wicks of the burners, adjusting for the right temperatures, and remembering to keep the 1 gallon, glass, supply bottle filled with kerosene. There was a, maybe, 5" diameter "chimney" which sat over each burner to direct the heat upwards to the grill where the cooking utensils sat. Each "chimney" had a little window, covered with Mica, which allowed you to see the flame as you adjusted it. There was a little wheel with a long stem which allowed you to raise and lower the donut shaped wick and thus raise and lower the flame. There was a little handle made of tightly coiled wire which was located near the bottom of the chimney. This handle allowed you to tip the chimney so you could position your lighted, wooden, match near the wick to light the burner. The coiled wire handle was designed to remain relatively cool while the burner was in operation.

Another surprise was that there were no glass windows in the bungalow. The windows were screened on the outside and could be closed on the inside with wooden shutters. Each of the shutter slats were about 2-1/2 inches wide by maybe 13-1/2 inches long and installed on

² *The attic was a good place for kids to play. Also good for hiding out or checking what treasures accumulated up there. The screened eaves, with a few licks with a saw, provided strategically located trap doors to get in when you got locked out and your folks re-latched the screens you left unlatched on purpose for emergencies.*

the inside of the window. Each window was about 30 inches wide, but there was a vertical divider about 3 inches wide that divided the window into two equal halves. A little wedge made from a piece of slat was kept in each window to close the shutters.

The outside of the house was a pastel beige color; and the peaked roof was covered with a red "sanded tar-paper". The plastered walls, inside, were a pale pastel green color. The ceilings were white.

The bungalows all had showers instead of bathtubs. Brackish water was piped to the shower. The brackish water was salty enough that you didn't want to drink it. Sea water was piped to the toilet. Fresh water was piped to a faucet outside the kitchen door. There was no hot water heater. The bungalows came completely furnished except for the bed linen, towels, wash cloths, and shower curtains.

THE COMMISSARY

Food and other expendable items were available in the company store, called the Commissary. A free bus service was established so the ladies of the Colony could ride to the Commissary during the day. Mr. Roberto Garcia was the Commissary Manager. He was transferred from the Huasteca Petroleum Company in Tampico, Mexico which was a subsidiary of Esso at the time.

The Commissary was located down near the main gate on the west side of the refinery. The original Commissary was a wooden building with a porch on the East and South sides. The front of the commissary had wide set of steps and a double door for customers to enter. The porch on the East side opened into the Butcher Department. The sides of beef, wrapped in burlap, were propped up against the wall to partially thaw out before the butchers took them inside. Fortunately the trade winds took care of mosquitoes and flies so they were never a problem. The preparation of the meat was done in the "cold room". The butcher department was surrounded on three sides by a counter. The left side of the Commissary was devoted to "dry goods". These were items in cans, packages, boxes. Clerks took the orders of the customers at a counter that ran down the left side of the building. Every thing was charged against your payroll account. Shelves displayed what was available. Fresh produce was occasionally available but as Mrs. Lise Nunes said, "My can opener was my best friend!"

OUR FIRST NIGHT IN ARUBA - 1929

There are two things that stand out in my memory about the first night we spent in Aruba. One of these was that after dark we heard this clicking noise outside the house and went out with a flashlight to

investigate. There was a big "flock" of land crabs looking for something to eat. The clicking noise was made by their large claws dragging across the coral.

And the other happening was the steady "singing" of the East to West Trade Wind through the window screens. It took us several weeks before we could get use to that constant sound which seemed to be magnified in bed at night.

OUR NEIGHBORS

The first family that my mother, brother Victor and I met was the John F. Whitney family. He was tall, with dark red hair. He was born in County Wicklow, Ireland January 12, 1892 so when I first met him he was 37 years young. His wife was born in Dublin on June 2, 1898. John Frederick, better known as "Sandy", Samuel James (Buster), Arthur Vene, and Donald Sidney were the boys I became acquainted with right off the bat. Bennett S. was not with the family at that time. He was at home going to school.

We boys used to spend a lot of our time down at the water's edge and we managed to put together a boat from lumber scrounged from housing being built at the time. As I remember it the boat would hold two boys at a time and we had about 2" of freeboard. So we couldn't venture too far out or we would be swamped by the little waves. We explored the shore line and did some cautious wading and swimming.

At that time it was the custom to hitch a ride with some one who had a pickup truck to the swimming area. This came to be called "Baby Beach". It had shallow water and had such wonderful sandy beaches. This was where all of mothers took their babies to play in the water before it became too hot. One area of the beach on the east side had pink sand. In those early days people went swimming as a family.

SAN NICHOLAS

I remember our family made a trip to San Nicholas to look for a gift to take to a friend in the States. The main street of San Nicholas was unpaved, sandy and had some large boulders in it. The stores we went into had all sorts of goods in one big pile on the shelves. We had to search through the piles of wares. We saw a many interesting things: cameras, spools of thread, needles, perfumes, watches, bolts of materials, clocks, buttons, paint brushes, dishes, hand soaps, figures carved of ivory: All sorts of strange things.

Another time we visited an outdoor refreshment bar that catered to families. There were rough tables and chairs in a patio like atmosphere. Open on all sides: A slight breeze blowing. This was my first taste

of Canada Dry ginger ale. I thought it was great. This was down west of where the Acid Plant was established. It was on sandy ground and you could see a little beach and the water. It was near sundown on a cool, cloudy day.

SCHOOLING - 1929-30

I was in the school building as the classes were being formed. Because there was no 10th Grade in the High School when I arrived I had to return to Drumright for schooling the 1929/1930 school year. I left Aruba on August 31, 1929 on the *S/S Danzig* bound for the company docks in Bayonne, New Jersey. One of the original Engineers, Mr. C. H. Clendenin, was scheduled to go to New York on a business trip. My dad asked him to see that I got on the train in New York's Grand Central Station headed for Tulsa, Oklahoma. I remember my wide eyed wonder at New York City. A friend of Mr. Clendenin met us at the ship with a car and drove us to Grand Central. I thought sure we were going to have a wreck several times before we got there.

In Drumright I stayed with family friends, Ora and Meiggs Ellison at Stanolind Gas Compression Plant #4. This plant was four miles east of Drumright. I was in the 10th grade in Drumright High School.

In the early years, in Aruba, several young people had problems with the schooling being available. Vida Hughes, whose father, Leroy, was our Fire Marshal, received her 9th and 10th grade schooling in the U.S. Vida then waited in Aruba during 1930 and 1931 until others were ready for the 11th grade in 1932/33. I understand she worked in the Main Office while she was waiting. Then she had to wait until 1934 before there were enough students for the 12th grade and she finally graduated there in 1935.

SECOND TIME IN ARUBA - 1930

I spent the summer of 1930 in Aruba with my family. There is a picture in our family album of my brother, Victor, me and my masterpiece. This was the small one-masted sailboat I had made that summer. I managed to put together several layers of the thin wood of an orange crate. I used a hack saw blade and sandpaper to shape the bottom the same as the sailboats I had seen. When I put it into the water at the swimming docks it sailed to the reef 3/4 of a mile away. (Some one found it and returned it to me later.)

ACTIVITIES OF KIDS IN ARUBA- 1929-32

When we youngsters became a little braver we walked along the shoreline, past Rodger's Beach which was the school kids and adult swimming area, the T-dock area, the Yacht Club anchorage, the "new"

club house area, the bath house at Baby Beach, the Company Picnic Grounds and around the rough shore line and up the hill to the Colorado Point Light House. In those days the plain, four sided, concrete structure had four steps up to a locked door, and the light "house" could be seen on top. Some one later said there was a man who came every day to service the kerosene light. None of the kids reported seeing him.

We were always discovering something new and strange in the water, particularly at low tide, such as starfish, garfish (They jumped when you directed the beam of a flash light on them at night), sea urchins, hermit crabs, sea snails, sea worms, plants in the water which tried to trap small fish. Also found were serpentine star fish, eels, and all kinds of fish, including parrot fish, noted for their many teeth. There were also many small fish with various markings and in various colors. The kids spent many engrossing hours exploring the shore line and catching many of these wonders with their bare hands. The kids' hair was bleached and their skin became a burnt brown in color.

Some of the kids spent a good part of the day at the swimming dock below Captain Rodger's house on "Knob Hill," as it was sometimes called. This was the highest point in the colony and was where the upper management of the refinery lived. "Casa Grande," the Manager's house, was built off by itself east of "Nob Hill," out at the east end of First Avenue.

In those days they were constructing the three room bungalows along what was later called "Birdcage Row" because it was mostly occupied by newly married couples. It was said some one dreamed up this name based on the song "Only a Bird in a Gilded Cage." These houses had a small kitchen which had the back door of the house. A doorway from the kitchen opened into the living-dining room. A screen door opened from the living-dining room onto a covered front porch, along the side of the living-dining room, with a wooden railing and there were three or four steps leading down to the ground at the "front" of the house; a bedroom, which had a common wall with the kitchen, opened out into the living-dining room area and there was a bathroom opening off the bedroom at the rear of the house. These houses were numbered 103 through 131. Others were added later. This row of houses extended up the main street through the camp to what was later referred to as "Five Corners" where five streets met. They were also building four-room bungalows numbered 41 through 48. These houses were along under the cliff just below the 3-room bungalows.

Just after the sun went down and it became dark, these houses

attracted all of the kids in the area. It was great to play hide and seek all through these unfinished buildings and around through the unfinished attics. Fortunately not too many kids stepped off of the beams and through the ceilings so we didn't attract forbidding adult attention!

OKLAHOMA MILITARY ACADEMY 1930 - 31

In the fall of 1930 I entered the 11th grade at the Oklahoma Military Academy, "OMA," in Claremore, Oklahoma. It had 4 years of high school and 2 years of junior college. Graduates of the junior college at OMA, with four years of military training, were eligible to be commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army Reserves. I was in the senior ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) Cavalry Unit which was being offered for the first time at OMA. Since its beginning it had been an accredited Junior ROTC Infantry training school. That year it became a Senior ROTC school with Infantry and Cavalry training. The horses were "remounts" which meant they were specially selected for the regular Cavalry Units. (We always thought they were rejects because of the strange behavior of some of them).

A contingent of regular cavalry non-commissioned officers served as our instructors in the feeding, currying, drill, and riding the horses. Major Philip C. Clayton was the Professor of Military Science and Tactics for cavalry and Lieutenant L. R. Hamilton was the P. M. S. and T. for the infantry.

All of the other professors at the academy held a military rank in the National Guard and/or were on the governor's staff. They all wore U.S. Army uniforms.

The following year our woolen uniforms were replaced with poplin. At the same time our woolen "wrap leggings" were replaced with lace boots.

THIRD TRIP TO ARUBA - 1931

In the spring of 1931 I again returned to Aruba and spent the next 13 months there. They still didn't have a 12th grade in the Lago High School. I worked for six months on the local payroll in the Commissary, where Mr. Roberto Garcia was in charge. I spent three months in the dry goods department and 3 months in the butcher department.

I really learned about the fickle general public. I cut a round steak for one lady and she loudly voiced her disappointment. She called for the butcher, Jim Jenkins. Jim was a little bald headed guy who reminded me of Jimmie Gleason in the old movies. He even had a Brooklyn accent. He said: "Come on Jim, let's go back in the freezer and see what we can do about this." So we went in the freezer and he said to me: "I'll

show you what we do in a case like this in New York." So he put the same steak on a new piece of butcher paper, sliced off a piece of a nearby ham and shared it with me. After five minutes or so he said, "Come on, let's make the lady happy." So I carried the same steak back to the lady. Jenkins said to the lady, "Now Mrs. xxxx, I believe you will like this steak!" Sure enough, she said, "Now why couldn't I have gotten that in the first place?"

Next I worked 8 hour shifts for six months in the Oil Inspection Laboratory. We changed shift every week. One week we would get 8 hours off; the next change we got 16 hours off; the next change we got 32 hours off. We repeated this change schedule.

In the lab we checked the incoming crude oils and outgoing hydrocarbon products being manufactured in the refinery. We measured gravity, made flash tests, we checked viscosity and ran distillation checks on the various hydrocarbon products; and I learned a great deal. There were probably very few instrument mechanics that had the opportunity to learn this much about refinery products.

It was there I met 19 year old John Clarence Every from the Dutch island of Saba. He was one of those who taught me all about their test work. I really got acquainted with islanders "Flick" Maduro, Claude Peterson, William Johnson, Ajax (with Arawak Indian background), and others. Hank DeSpain was our shift foreman.

MY FUTURE BOSS

Paul and Kamma Jensen were good friends of my dad and mother. Paul and my dad were Masons. They were the founding fathers of the El Sol Naciente Lodge in Oranjestad. One time when I was at Paul's home he showed me his stamp collection. He gave me stamps of several different nations. One was a set of stamps issued during the World War I in Germany. He gave me a stamp book and a stamp catalogue. I was introduced to the world of stamps. I never had any idea that years later he would be my boss.

I was with my dad and Paul when they were looking over a building located near the Spanish Lagoon on the west side of the road to Oranjestad. It looked like it had been a club house. It was across the inlet from where the salt water distillation plant is now located. A small sailboat something like the Snipe-class boats was tied up at the little dock. Paul asked me if I wanted to sail. When I said yes he ran up the sails; I climbed in and he shoved me off from the dock. Never having sailed before I did all right until I had to "come about". The boat capsized and I had to swim ashore.

THIRD TRIP FROM ARUBA - 1932

On August 4, 1932 I sailed with my family from Aruba and landed in Boston on August 14. My dad had shipped his car to Bayonne so we went to the hotel in New York and picked up our car and left the next day for Oklahoma. I attended Oklahoma Military Academy - 1932-1934. I completed high school and my freshman year in junior college. In the summer of 1934 I had six weeks of Reserve Officers Cavalry Training at Fort Clark, near Brackettville, Texas. Meanwhile, I lost track of J. C. Every and my other Oil Inspection Laboratory friends.

THE INSTRUMENT DEPARTMENT 1934 - 36

Then in October of 1934 I returned to Aruba and worked for 18 months in the Instrument Department. My first assignment was to prepare bundles of circular charts, changed daily, for the operating units. This was done on a monthly basis. I delivered them to the control rooms around the refinery. We had a mix of various manufacturers of instruments and their charts. My starting salary was fls.75 (\$.30) an hour (The rate of exchange at the time was 2-1/2 Guilders to the Dollar). I learned about the industrial instrument business from the ground up. I was earning money for my last school year.

In those days the Instrument Shop was housed in a steel framed building covered with corrugated sheet iron. The wide shop door faced the Power House which was across the main refinery road. This main road ran East and West near the water on the South side of the refinery area. Originally we were called the Combustion Department. I suppose the name arose from the fact that we were involved with the efficiency testing of the boilers in the Power House. Bill Ewart was the Superintendent over the Power House, Utilities, Electric, and Instrument Departments. Bill was the first instrument man. He said at his request Harry F. Moore was sent down from New York to assist him in this work. Harry stayed until the Department was organized.

At the time our Department was a very cosmopolitan group of people:

- Gus Stutzman was a bald, square-headed German. He was a field mechanic with a very loud voice and German accent. When he got on the phone you couldn't hear yourself think. He would say "Vat?" - "Vy is dat?" He wholeheartedly supported Hitler. He said the Nazi's would straighten out the world. This of course didn't endear him with the plant operators in the refinery. Many of them were members of the American Legion. One of them once said to Gus, "Gus, the best job I ever had only paid \$30 a month." Gus said, "Vot kind of job

was that vich only paid \$30 a month?" The operator said, "In the War - shooting the rear end off of guys like you!"

- Cyril Rex was a short, slight built Englishman with a mustache and black hair - turning grey. He had been an engineer with various steam ship lines. Rex was our shop foreman. He was always joking with the local employees. He would pretend he thought he was speaking Spanish. He would say things like, "Take el wrencho and turn el valvo". He acted like he thought putting an "O" on the end of a word turned it into a Spanish word.

When Gus and Rex sat at their desks in the shop they were facing each other. Rex was always in a heated debate with Gus. It sounded like a lot of it was based on the World War I.

The shop was separated from our offices by a wall filled with paned glass windows that could be swung open.

- Elmer Wheeler was a husky MIT graduate who wore glasses. He seemed to spend a good deal of his time at his desk examining parts from the latest instruments. He was our General Foreman. His office was in the northeast corner of our building.
- Elmer shared his office with Paul Jensen, a blonde, weathered-face Dane who was our Assistant General Foreman. He had served in the American Navy in World War I and earned U.S. citizenship.

The rest of us were in a general office. This extended along the north wall of the building and between the northeast and northwest corners of the building. Bill Ewart had his office in the northwest corner of the building.

- Jim Jordan was a rosy cheeked American Engineer, a graduate of Annapolis who wore glasses.
- John McBrady with a degree in literature, from Chicago, was our original office supervisor.
- Art Krottenauer was a field mechanic. He had worked with a contractor before joining Lago.
- Karl Schlageter, an older fellow from Czechoslovakia was another field mechanic. He once said he was afraid of what Gus Stutzman might have done to his family back in the home country. (He indicated he was not one of Hitler's admirers but he was careful not to antagonize Gus.)
- Ben Whittpen was another American mechanic.

- Art MacNutt a Junior College graduate from Redondo Beach California was a field mechanic.
- George Cunningham was a Mechanical Engineering graduate of Lehigh University. He was a thin young man who one of his peers called "Scabbard Legs" because he was so thin.

Bill Ewart was keeping a close eye on the Power House operations. He was monitoring steam and water flows from the Power House to various areas of the refinery. Our department read the charts of a number of flow meter including those from the Power House boilers. The amount of flow over each 24 hour period was recorded in Utility record books that we maintained.

- Emmy Suylen joined the Instrument Department in 1935. He was a thin, short little Dutch man whose hair was turning grey. He was an old time accountant. We all marveled at how he could add a page full of figures in a matter of seconds. He kept all of the figures in head and his pencil moved down each column at a fast pace. One day Ben Whittpen challenged him. Ben was using a hand operated adding machine. Ben thought he was pretty good, but Emmy beat him easily.
- Stan Chapman was a mechanical engineer from New Hampshire.
- Carl P. Forester was a mechanical engineer from Boston.
- 18 year old Gregorio Frank, an Aruban of Arawak Indian extraction, was our "Tool Room Attendant." He had his "office" in a narrow cubby hole which was the store room in the shop. His job was keeping track of small tools checked out by the mechanics. He also issued all small parts used in industrial instrument work. He could span his work area by standing on the shelves on opposite sides of the room. You could say he was our first on-the-job apprentice in the shop.
- Adolph Halpert, a Hungarian, was a watchmaker by trade. He was the mechanic in charge of the Pyrometer Room.
- Louie N. Crippen worked with Halpert. Crippen was a son of Ira Crippen, a carpenter in the refinery.
- Greg Frank was also in the Pyrometer Room. One of his jobs was making Thermocouples for measuring temperature.

The Pyrometer Room was a room partitioned off in the west end of the shop to provide a relatively clean, quiet place for mechanics to work on some of the more delicate instrumentation. Pyrometers,

potentiometers, millivolt meter temperature measuring instruments and clocks were repaired here. The Pyrometer Room people were always up to something. Their chairs were the wooden kitchen type chairs. Every day Louie kept finding one leg of his chair was shorter than the other three. He would cut the other three to make his chair sit level. This went on until there were hardly any legs left so he had to get a new chair. He suspected Halpert. One noon Louie applied a coat of shellac to the seat of Halpert's chair while he was out to lunch. When Halpert sat down revenge was sweet. Halpert had a good idea who had done it. But these mysterious happenings stopped. Something exciting, comical, educational, was always happening in this atmosphere. All members of the department were involved in ordering, application, installation, maintenance and/or repairs.

Our 4:00 p.m. quitting time at the end of the regular day shift was preceded with a warning whistle at five minutes to four. This was to allow the mechanics time to put away their tools and wash their hands before the final whistle. As soon as the warning whistle blew Jordan would make a production of getting ready for the final whistle. He would stand by his desk and say, "Man your benches Men!" Nobody would pay any attention because they were busy clearing off their desks.

At the end of the day all of the young fellows gathered in the general offices. They all wore white shirts and examined each others shirts. Any that had a small tear was promptly pointed out and somehow a finger would get caught in the defect and before you knew it the shirt would be in shreds. Everyone seemed to make haircut appointments at the club right at four o'clock. One time Carl Forester's shirt seemed to have so many defects that he wound up with just the collar and the buttons down the front. He had an appointment at the barber shop for four o'clock. He wound up at the club, in his newly designed shirt, on time for his appointment. I often wondered what the barber thought about these young fellows who were always trying to steal each other's haircut appointments.

BACK TO SCHOOL 1936

On August 22, 1936 I Left Aruba bound for Bayonne, New Jersey on the *S/S H.H. Rogers*. My fellow passenger was Lincoln Perry who had attended Annapolis but was not granted a commission because he had flat feet. He was not happy in Aruba. We arrived in Bayonne on August 26 after making a record run of 7 days.

I went back to the Oklahoma Military Academy and graduated from Junior College in 1937. I was a cadet captain and one of the lieutenants

in my troop, Troop D, was Edwin Price Ramsey. Ed wound up in the Philippines when the Japanese attacked there in 1941. He led what was the last Cavalry Charge in U. S. Army history.

I took Basic courses in Engineering, during my two years in Junior College. I put this knowledge to good use when I returned to Aruba in 1937 and went on the “overseas” payroll in the Instrument Department at 92 cents (U.S.) per hour.

MARY GRIFFITH LOPEZ FAMILY

Mary was born on May 1, 1920 in Happyland, Minnesota. Her brother, Donovan was born on November 5, 1921. Her sister, Phyllis, was born on January 13, 1924. Mary's mother, Corrine, traveled to Aruba on the *S/S Elisha Walker* in September of 1930 with her three children. Mary says the ship was caught in a hurricane and their suitcases were floating in water in their stateroom. They were all seasick as well as fellow passengers Mrs. Wayne Richey and her two small daughters. The captain had to take care of the two little girls because their mother was incapacitated.

Mary's father, Ivan Griffith, a mechanic in the Power House had arrived in late 1929. Corrine subsequently became a comptometer operator in the Accounting Department. She did the overseas payroll. The overseas payroll was made up of those who had been hired through the New York personnel office. The professional Dutch citizens were on the Guilder payroll. The locally hired citizens from Aruba and surrounding French and Dutch islands were on the local payroll.

After 1 year in the Lago Community School, Mary went to Bryan Hill Grammar School in St. Louis for the school years 1931-33. She returned to Aruba and re-entered Lago Community High School. Mary and I met in 1934 while she was going to Lago High School. Her father was one of those laid off in 1936 and the family returned to the U.S. where Mary graduated from High School in St. Louis in 1937. Ivan went to Oregon and bought a house in his home town. Corrine took a beautician course, in St. Louis, and joined Ivan in July, 1937. Ivan died of peritonitis in October of that year.

MARRIAGE IN ST LOUIS & TRAINING IN PHILADELPHIA

Mary and I were married on June 12, 1937 in St. Louis. A few days later the company sent me to the Brown Instrument Company Training School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Most of my classmates were Brown Instrument Company sales engineers. Mary visited her father during the latter part of June. She joined me in July. We roomed with Mrs. John Williams, a Pennsylvania Dutch lady. She “adopted” Mary

and helped her achieve "Domestic Engineering" skills that lasted a lifetime.

In September I finished the Training Course at Brown Instrument Company and went to Aruba on the S/S *Pan Aruba* (later called the *Esso Bolivar*) without Mary. The New York Medical Department held up Mary's departure until a medical problem was cleared up.

Mary left New York December 5 on the Imperial Oil Company Tanker M/v *Canadolite* and arrived in Aruba December 12, 1937. In those days all of the passengers were carried on the ships manifest as crew members. I think this had something to do with insurance laws. Mary still has her merchant seaman discharge certificate from that voyage.

MY CAREER WITH STANDARD OIL COMPANY (N.J.)

I arrived in Aruba on September 8, 1937 and my Dad met me and put me up at his house. Since we had not been assigned a house my father suggested that Mary and I live with him and Consuelo until we could make other arrangements. We stayed with them 3 or 4 months.

At the time there was a housing shortage in Lago Colony. We made arrangements to live in bungalows of people during their two months vacation. One time we had to move the day after Christmas. Ken Hewlett shared his bungalow while Mrs. Hewlett and family were in the states for the birth of their son, Rob.

This went on for about a year. During that time we shared a five room bungalow #47 with Cass and Lois Wood. Cass was also in the Instrument Department. They were from Mississippi and had a *deep* Southern accent. He was a noted winner of poker games. Every month he mailed home more than he made on the job. At the end of that two month period Mary had a deep Southern accent and sounded like a native Mississippian.

During this year or so when we had no house Mary was working in the Typing Department in the main office. There were some strange terms used in the material she was typing. One was "orange peel bucket." She finally found that this was the name used for a large, heavy steel bucket that was used with a crane. It was round like an orange and had four "sections" that opened up like a "claw." Mary was glad to have that mystery cleared for her.

We had a picnic lunch at the beach every day. We managed to finally rent a house, in the village of San Nicholas. It was next door to the East of the Rainbow Bakery. We lived there for a year. There were

no screen doors and goats liked to visit. Adair Sonnenberg and her small son, Hudson, lived with us for several months. Adair was expecting their second child. Her husband, Hudson, was a mechanic in the Instrument Department. They were also awaiting assignment to a bungalow in Lago Colony, affectionately known as "the colony".

OUR FIRST BUNGALOW IN LAGO COLONY

Three-room bungalow #153 was our first housing in the colony. This bungalow used to be at "Five Corners" and across from the Chief Watchman, Gilbert Brook and his family.

We had a little white dog with one black eye: "Poochie." Elizabeth Dickey, one of the secretaries, received a gift of a small monkey. She lived in the Girls Dormitory and had no place to keep it so she gave it to us. It was housed in a little wooden bird cage which was very confining. So I proceeded to build a larger cage. In the meantime we established a routine of letting the little monkey out on our front porch for an hour or so every afternoon. The puppy and the monkey liked to play together. The monkey moved from place to place in hops. The puppy adopted this mode of travel. He never did walk like an ordinary dog after that. When I drove home from work he always came hopping down the drive way to meet me. People kept asking what was wrong with that dog - hopping like that.

One day Mary called me at work and I had to come home. The monkey had accidentally hanged himself on a piece of string that was fastened at the top of the cage.

NEW BUILDING

During 1937 a number of changes took place in the refinery. The new Instrument and Electrical Shops were completed to the North of the dining hall and the main office building. The two buildings were much larger than previous quarters and were separated by a small roadway with their main doors facing each other. These were two-story buildings. The instrument building had small offices upstairs over the store room on the end of the building. The main shop area occupied a little over half of the building.

INSTRUMENT DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES

During this period of time someone in the instrument department dreamed up the idea of having a "going away party" before going on vacation. At first it was just for the men. Ellie (L. E.) Wilkins had a "shack" near the beach, not far from where the Yacht Club was later located. This was a handy place to have beach parties. These were usually hamburger and beer affairs. Ellie Wilkins and Bill Hughes

considered themselves gourmet cooks. They tried to outdo each other on the meals they prepared when it came their turn. They used an electric roaster and cooked their roasts very slowly. They used all kinds of spices. The meat was in shreds and each person made a super sandwich by hollowing out a Vienna Roll and filling it with the roast they had prepared. Corn on the cob, vegetables and salads contributed to long remembered feasts.

Then Carl Forester's vacation came along. He said, "Hell no! I am not going to have a party." Ellie Wilkins and Bill Hughes decided, well okay, we will throw one for you. So a little committee was formed and everyone got busy. The best Scotch and beer at the club was ordered. Also there were bottles of boneless chicken, pickles, olives, sirloin steak, bakery goods, etc. When we arrived at Ellie's shack about five o'clock the first thing they did was tie Carl Forester up in a deck chair. Bill Hughes told Carl that since he didn't furnish the party he would have to eat last. Carl was quite surprised at the elaborate layout of foodstuffs and liquors and was agreeable. Finally after everyone was had served himself they turned Carl loose and he really enjoyed the repast. In those days it was customary that the person going on vacation went down to the accounting office cashier to settle his accounts and receive his vacation pay the day he was leaving. About 9:00 o'clock here came Forester barging into the office. "You bastards!!!" he said as he threw down the bills he had received from the commissary and club for all of the makings for the party. Everybody laughed. They had no mercy on the suffering fellow worker.

Later on the wives were included in these parties. We had some grand meals. Each wife tried to outdo the others. Pies, cakes, and cookies began to appear. Mary remembers that when it came her turn to prepare the meal the dining hall chef prepared the meal for us.

Meanwhile the "Pan Aruban" kept us up to date on the happenings in the colony. There were regular seasons of basketball, softball, bowling, tennis, and golf. The flying club gave flying lessons. The members of the Shell refinery golf and tennis clubs visited to play the Lago golf and tennis club members. And our people went over there to play. Of course there was a big party the day before the games to try to get the competition to "party" too much and throw them off their games the next day.

Bridge parties and dinners were faithfully reported in our community newspaper, the Pan Aruban. New arrivals were dutifully welcomed and those leaving on vacation or permanently were bid

farewell. The Royal Order of Blackened Eyes announced new members after Saturday night altercations.

JOB EXPERIENCES

In 1938 construction of the Edeleanu Plant began. The control valves used on this plant were from the Belfield Control Valve Company. This was a subsidiary of The Brown Instrument Company. Apparently their inspection of these valves before shipment was very poor. The pistons were binding in the bottom guide. They all had to be corrected on our instrument shop lathes. This of course held up the installation and check out of this equipment at the new plant. A lot of overtime was required. W. (Bill) F. Hughes was in charge of installing the instrumentation on this job.

An operators training program was initiated by the Training Division for all refinery units. The mechanics from the instrument department were also scheduled to receive this training to help us be more efficient on the job. We all received some excellent training.

During 1939 the instrument department made a concerted effort to have a set of instructions put together for the edification of all in the department. All instrumentation that came to be installed and maintained by the instrument department was received with a manufacturer's instruction booklet. However these usually only contained a list of parts and their part numbers for ordering purposes. We were sadly in need of factory instructions. Everyone in the department received an assignment to study and prepare instructions for overhaul and calibration of the instruments we handled.

The companies ordering instrumentation were trying to encourage the manufacturers. Aruba became a proving ground for all types of new equipment. Instrument engineering in the New York offices were responsible for shipping some of the new models to us. Our completed assignments were prepared on tracing paper and a book was assembled with a copy for each of us. There was even a cabinet prepared for keeping our copy of this book. We wound up with a ledger type book with the pages that could be removed for use in our work. This book was very useful.

One of my assignments was preparing manuals of drawings and text material for the chlorinators we used for treating the colony fresh water system. The research and preparation work I did was a great help in the work I did in the field. Particularly some 20 years later when I found myself responsible for 11 chlorinator installations in the oil fields in South Iran.

Frederick S. Rich was in the instrument department during this time. He came to us from the Foxboro Instrument Company. He left in 1941 and was later in charge of the instrument department that he organized at the Oak Ridge, Tennessee Atomic Bomb Project. He said that he had to train women and farm workers and his copy of this book contributed to his successful efforts.

In 1940 the supervisors in the instrument department put their heads together and initiated an instrument job training program. This was mainly for local employees. It covered some physics and math, as it applied to instrumentation. George Cunningham had this job for a while. Text material had to be prepared. Some basic physics and math had to be covered in the classroom.

Since our department had so many young engineers called to service Bill Hughes and I were kept busy. We were trying to fill in on the technical side of instrumentation where we could. In my own case I felt the experience I gained during this time was of great benefit to me and the company. I was classified as a second class mechanic and my pay was \$0.90 cents an hour when I started out on the overseas payroll in 1937. We picked our time cards up at the main gate between the colony and the refinery. In those days we received job order tickets the day before we were supposed to do routine maintenance work. This was so we could plan our work and be prepared to get an early start on our jobs. One of my assignments was to organize this program.

On November 15, 1944 I was sent to La Salinas, Venezuela to take charge of the Instrument work during a routine shutdown. I returned to Aruba on December 18th.

In 1946 we formed The Instrument Society of Aruba. Bill Koopman, Art MacNutt, and I were the founding fathers. This was made up of all of the overseas staff in the instrument department. We modeled it after the recently formed Instrument Society of America. The purpose of this organization was to advance the instrumentation, discipline. Later we became a chapter of the I.S.A. We published a monthly "I. S. A. Bulletin." Since we were not dependent on any monetary assistance by any instrument manufacturer we were able to say a lot of things in our Bulletin that the other chapters couldn't. At that time we were the only overseas chapter of the Instrument Society of America.

I became quite involved in this organization and our instrument department was like a team. We held beach parties and had fish fries and any time one of our bachelor's (such as Dwight Fryback, or Louie Crippen) married we had a bachelor party for them. Of course we gave

them all kinds of useless advice.

Bill Koopman and I were the ones who organized and printed "The ISA Bulletin." His daughters, Loesje and Nancy, and my sons, David, Michael and Victor were drafted to help us assemble it, address it, and mail it. Besides members in Aruba we had members in Venezuela, Curacao, Trinidad, Holland, and England. We exchanged monthly Bulletins with the Society of Instrument Technology in London. We also mailed a copy to every Chapter (at that time 45) in the U.S.A. as well as the general foremen of every department and the upper management of Lago. We supported the Bulletin by obtaining advertising from some merchants in San Nicholas. We had a great time publishing the Bulletin. I still have a complete set of file copies put out during the 8 years we published it. I still get a chuckle when I read one.

At one of our ISA meetings in '48 our general foreman, Paul Jensen, suggested that we had all better be studying electronics, what with instrumentation being developed which depended on electronics only. So we set up a radio course, because this was as close as we could come to the required teaching. We had young engineer members with radio and electronics backgrounds. Some of the guys in the group were interested in amateur radio, so our classes helped us not only on the job, but in our hobbies. One knowledgeable instrument engineer, Stan Chapman, organized a Morse code course. After much palavering, a number of the colony residents obtained amateur radio licenses to operate on the island.

Bill Koopman and I set up a radio repair shop in my garage when we lived in bungalow 510. Later we moved it to our "maid's quarters" (we had no maid) at bungalow #366. We repaired radios, record players, amplifiers, tape recorders. We also ordered and installed amplifiers, record players, and speakers in people's patios. Any money we got for our work we put into a set of "Ryder's Manuals". These were filled with diagrams and instructions for the repairs of just about every American radio made in those days. We also bought test equipment and tools. Bill Koopman organized a shop in his garage where he overhauled and repaired business machines from the banks. Ultimately he took care of slot machines for the gambling casinos in Oranjestad.

On January 13, 1955 I was loaned to the Creole Petroleum Amuay Bay Refinery in Venezuela. I was involved in the installation of instrumentation and the start-up of a new Hydroformer Unit they were building. On April 29, 1955 I flew back to Aruba from Maracaibo at the conclusion of that assignment. We had 3 intermediate trips between

Venezuela and Aruba by way of the ocean tankers that were shuttling back and forth carrying crude to Aruba. Mary managed to travel on one of those tankers and visit me in Amuay Bay on one of these trips: Nothing like coming down a ladder to a pilot boat in a dress billowing in the wind.

Over the years I learned the Instrument business and worked in just about every position including that of Instrument Job Trainer. One day in 1954 the Manager, Fred J. Wellington, of the Barrancabermeja Refinery of our affiliate, International Petroleum Company (Colombia) Ltd., was visiting Aruba and he observed me doing my Instrument Job Training work. I had no idea who he was.

Shortly thereafter I was invited to Barrancabermeja for an interview and to look over a position (actually replacing Leroy Bonbrest). I enjoyed the 6 day visit; and enjoyed the mostly Canadian crew there very much. This was to be my next job-posting

WORLD WAR II

All Dutch men who had served in the armed services in Holland (as conscripts) were called to duty on September 1, 1939 when WWII broke out. They retained the rank they had while conscripts. Those from the Instrument Department included John Moller who was a Sergeant in charge of training of local Aruban citizens. Nick Schindeler and Bill Koopman were sergeants. John ten Houte Delange was a corporal. They reported to their posts in the morning and returned to their bungalows and their families at the end of the day. There were no barracks.

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941, the American Consul in Aruba was swamped with applications for enlisting in the American armed services. Major John Resler, my chemistry professor back there at OMA, was chairman of the draft board in Claremore, Oklahoma. I was registered with this draft board. However the company had already had too many fellows called up, and our oldest was born December 12, 1940. Major Resler classified me as being in an essential industry. So I was deferred as well as a number of others.

After being called to duty by the U.S. Army Lieutenant George Echelson was sent back to Aruba to supervise radar installations on the island. He couldn't discuss his work, but he visited all of his friends while in Aruba.

At the beginning of World War II magnetic mines were sinking Allied ships. These mines were laid by German submarines. When a ship made of metal came near one of these mines the mine was attracted

to the ship and exploded on contact. A degaussing system was developed to neutralize the magnetic attraction of the mines. A cable was arranged around the periphery of the ship. This cable was hooked up to some kind of electrical circuit. The exact hook up was a military secret.

Cornelius Perin of the electric department was the technician called to repair the degaussing systems aboard various ships. Since these systems were a military secret he could not view any schematics or drawings. This was no deterrent. He made his own drawings. His assignments sometimes meant he sailed with an outbound ship. His wife wouldn't know where he was, but eventually he was sent back on an inward bound ship.

I was a shift supervisor in the instrument department in 1942. I felt like I was helping to produce the aviation gasoline used by our Air Corps over Germany. My radio operator-gunner brother, Victor, was being supported by my contributions in supplying fuel for his B-24.¹

OUR AUTOMOBILES

When Mary and I were first married we had to depend on others for transportation. For a couple of months we were loaned a Ford sedan by a Mr. Jenkins who happened to be the father of a friend of Mary's. Then we bought a used Dodge coupe from M Viana who was the Dodge dealer in San Nicholas. In 1940 we traded for a new Plymouth sedan which we picked up in Bayonne, New Jersey when we went on vacation in early May of that year.

The Company equipped some of their ships to accommodate automobiles shipped to and from Aruba. These ships that were on a regular schedule between Aruba and Bayonne, New Jersey carried the automobiles of employees at no cost. All materials and automobiles shipped to Aruba were handled by the company warehouse near the company docks in Bayonne. As you went on vacation you shipped your car to Bayonne to be there when you arrived. When you returned you left your car at the Bayonne warehouse for shipping to Aruba.

VACATION - 1940

At the end of April, in 1940, Mary and I left on vacation via the

¹*Pop never did put any good anecdotes in here, like when the German sub attacked in February of 1942 ma was expecting my older brother Michael and woke up scared. After some shoving, she woke pa up and alarmed, he crawled under the bed and advised her to do the same. After several tries she realized she was too pregnant and crawled under a card table. Some protection that was.*

Grace Line's S/S *Santa Rosa*. Mary didn't enjoy the cruise very much because she was "expecting" our oldest son, David. We stopped in La Guaiara and Caracas.

After arriving in New York City we stayed at the Lincoln Hotel. That particular year it was rather chilly in New York City. We were quite intrigued to hear the music of the day being played on the ships radio as we approached New York harbor. One of the songs that Mary remembers is "Stone Cold Dead in The Market." We never heard it again!

As I was taking a walk that night on 42nd street I was obviously a stranger to town because of my light grey suit and no topcoat. I was approached by a well dressed man, recently shaved, wearing a black topcoat. He said he was a used car dealer who was from Boston. He had come to New York on business and the night before he had been celebrating in some bar and was "rolled" and all of his money was taken. He wanted me to stake him to a bus fare to get back to Boston. I had just read an article in some magazine about the various approaches used by "con" men so I was immediately suspicious. I asked him several questions. I noticed we were walking into a little corner with a building on the street. Out of the corner of my eye I noticed another well dressed man was keeping step with us and seemed to be waiting for something. Somehow things didn't appear right to me and the answers he was giving weren't very convincing. I told him to contact the police for help. Then I hurried away and when I looked back a few moments later neither man was in sight.

The next day we picked up our new Plymouth (We had ordered it before leaving Aruba) in Bayonne, New Jersey just outside of New York, and drove south. We were on our way to Miami, Florida where my mother was living at the time. On May 10th as we were leaving our motel we heard on our car radio that Holland had been invaded by the German Army. Chills ran up and down our spines. It took a while for us to digest this news and we slowly began to realize what this would mean to us as we began reading the papers and talking about it.

At the end of our vacation we returned to Aruba by an ocean going oil tanker. We had to leave our car at the company warehouse in Bayonne, New Jersey for future shipment.

FIRST BORN DECEMBER 12, 1940

Dr. Sanvos was in charge of the Lago Hospital in those days. He was German and didn't believe in using any sedatives for the mother when a baby was born. They used to call it "Twilight Sleep". Many of

the new mothers went back to the States to have their first baby. Mary made arrangements to go to Philadelphia Lying In Hospital. She went up to Philadelphia in September.

She stayed with the same Mrs. John Williams we had stayed with when I was going to the Brown Instrument Training School. Our first born, David Louis, was born on December 12, 1940. Mary's brother, Donovan, came from St. Louis and was with her when she went to the hospital.

In the later part of January of 1941 Mary and Donovan were met at Abby Hotel in New York by their sister, Phyllis. The next day they boarded a tanker in Bayonne, New Jersey. Seven days later they were in Aruba. At that time we were living in bungalow #343 (number later changed to #345) at the corner of Fifth Avenue and 7th Street. Directly across 7th Street the Ed Harris family lived in bungalow #347. My dad lived in bungalow #509 which was just around the corner and five houses down on Sixth Avenue.

Then in 1952 our David entered the Boy Scouts and in a short while I found myself the Scoutmaster of the Boy Scouts of America Troop 1 in the Lago Colony. John Opdyke was Cubmaster for more than 17 years. I will never forget pitching tents in the sand near the beaches. Tent pegs were held down with big rocks.

The Louis G. Lopez Story

Louie was born on December 30, 1891 although for most of his life he mistakenly believed he had been born in 1894. He said he failed to learn his true birth date until after he retired. Louie had returned to the Church of San Francisco in his home town, the city of Celaya, in the state of Guanajuato in Mexico to look up his birth record. A copy of birth records is also kept by the civil authorities.

His paternal grandfather was a Spaniard and his paternal grandmother was an Otomi Indian; he was one quarter Otomi Indian. Apparently he was rather close to his grandmother because she taught him the Otomi language. One day after he had retired and built his home in Mexico City an Indian woman came by selling produce and he found himself conversing with her in Otomi. He said that until that moment he did not realize he retained any of the language because he had neither spoken nor heard Otomi spoken since he was a child!

It is interesting to note is that the first time Louie went to a dentist in the United States, the man routinely counted his teeth, did a double take and counted them again. He said, "I've never seen this before. You have two more teeth than the thirty two most people have!" Louie explained that this was one of the characteristics of the Otomi Indians.

Apparently his mother was unable to nurse Louie, and a "wet nurse" was needed. He and the wet nurse's baby boy grew up almost like brothers.

Years later, in June of 1956, when I visited him in Mexico City after his retirement, he took me to visit his "brother," the son of the "wet nurse". We sat in the kitchen of the small thin man's home, drinking coffee while he and my father recited poetry remembered from their younger days--one would recite a line, the other reciting the succeeding line. Their recital continued for about two hours. They got a kick out of that as did I, although I must confess my Spanish was somewhat lacking. We visited for some time and learned that his "brother" was a retired teacher.

Louie had a marvelous memory. No doubt about it; this was a valuable asset of which he made good use.

In his early teens he and his brother, Augustin, studied for the priesthood in the San Franciscan Seminary in Cholula, a town six miles

north of Puebla, and 90 miles south of Mexico City. It was while he was here that his beloved mother died. His father had died some years before. The church decided the boys didn't need to know of their mother's death. When Louis learned of it, he left the seminary and went home to Celaya, where he discovered his relatives had divided up his mother's property among themselves, leaving him and his brother nothing. As he was a minor, he had no legal recourse. He left Celaya, vowing to have nothing more to do with his treacherous family. He also decided the head of the seminary had treated the boys badly by not informing them of the death of their mother.

Although he never said so, it appears that late in 1911, Louie briefly joined up with the Mexican Revolutionist, Doroteo Arango, a.k.a. Pancho Villa. One story goes that Villa became a bandit when he killed the son of the rich ranch owner for raping Pancho's sister. From that time, Pancho robbed from the rich land owners and helped the impoverished peons who he felt were helpless victims of social injustice. The government, as dictated by Porfirio Diaz, put a price on Villa's head. In 1910 Villa joined forces with Francisco Madero in his bid to oust Diaz in an election. Villa was an admirer of Madero, and believed in his plans for a democratic form of government. When Villa learned General Huerta was treacherously plotting to have him executed on false charges, he sought refuge in the U.S. By this time Louie had decided the life of a revolutionary was not for him. There was no future in Pancho Villa's army.

Louie once remarked that he learned the barber trade in the army. Later he regularly cut the hair of his two sons, Victor and James. He also put this skill to good use during his early years in Aruba. He did this to accommodate fellow workers and to pass the time while his family was not in Aruba.

When I visited him in Mexico in 1956 he took my brother-in-law, Flavio Carlos, and me to see the San Franciscan Seminary in Cholula. As soon as our car was parked he hopped out, told us to wait, went inside, and was there for what seemed like an hour. When he returned he said he had found the roster book with his name in it and had taken a quick tour of the school. At that time of day we were not allowed to go where he had gone. As of 1984 this same roster book had been sent, together with other old files, to a store room of the church in Mexico City. This latter church was the one where the daughters of my step-sister, Adrianna, were married. Someday I hope to find this book to verify some facts and dates.

Later in his life Louie saw the movie, "Pancho Villa," with Wallace Beery and got a big kick out of it. He said the movie reminded him of bygone days. He was keen on "Viva Zapata!" with Brando, too.

During my first visit with him in Mexico City, after his retirement, Louie pointed out the monument to the Mexican Revolution, and said, "How do you like OUR monument?" In 1976 Villa's body was moved from the small cemetery in Parral and entombed in the monument with other heroes of the revolution.

CATARACTS AND CITIZENSHIP

When Louis took a Physical Examination in 1914 it was found that he had a cataract on his left eye. He went to Kansas City, Missouri for an eye operation in September, returning to Drumright in November. He wore corrective lenses since the vision in his left eye was less than normal.

Louis showed interest in obtaining citizenship papers, and obtained the sponsorship of the Superintendent of Schools in Drumright, who schooled him in English, American Government, and U.S. history. His excellent command of the English language was apparent to all who heard him speak, and his knowledge of American Government and History was excellent. As a result of his studies in the San Franciscan seminary, he was able to recite freely from the Bible and quote passages to fit any occasion.

On June 27, 1923 Louie petitioned for naturalization. He received a 57-question form from the Chief Naturalization Examiner, M. E. Bevington.

On this form he stated he was known as Luis G. Lopez in Mexico, and he was petitioning under the name of Louis G. Lopez. At the time he was residing in Drumright, Creek County, Oklahoma. He declared he was born on December 30, 1894, in the town of Celaya in the State of Guanajuato, Mexico. He entered the U.S. by way of El Paso, Texas on April 17, 1912, settled in Stillwater, Payne County, Oklahoma, and lived there until November of the same year. His father's name was Manuel Lopez Zamudio and his mother's maiden name was Maria Ines Flores. Question #52 on the naturalization form asked why he wished to become a citizen. His answer: "Because America was good enough for me and mine at this or any other time."

In 1924 he went before a judge in Sapulpa, Oklahoma to get his certificate of naturalization, and become a citizen of the United States of America. The date on his naturalization papers was January 30, 1924. In

those days an oral examination was given by the examining judge, and it often took hours.

He said when he first left Mexico in April for the United States he bought a railroad ticket from El Paso, Texas to Stillwater, Oklahoma. That was as far as he could afford to go. When he stepped off the train, he saw snow for the first time. The mountains in Mexico had white-topped peaks, but he had never seen the phenomena of snow up close before.

FIRST JOBS

Louie arrived in Stillwater, Oklahoma in April of 1912. As soon as he stepped off the train he realized that with only 50 cents in his pocket, he needed a job. As he was walking down the road, he saw a gang of men digging a ditch. There was a pick lying on the ground, and no one was using it, so he picked it up and started to work. The crew digging the ditch was Hungarians and thought it was funny and encouraged him. At mealtime they shared their sack lunches with him. The foreman ran up and began to berate him in a loud voice, waving his arms and demanding that he leave at once. Louie's English vocabulary was limited. All he could reply to the foreman's blustering and threats was yes, and for an occasional variation, he would say, no.

As he later learned, the men were digging the ditch for a pipeline, and the work was scheduled to continue for some time. At the end of the first week the Hungarians informed the foreman that the only fair thing to do was pay Louie since he had done as much work as they had. Later, when Louie's English improved to a level that made conversation possible, the foreman told him that he had been trying to fire him all day long, but Louis just wouldn't fire. Because he was a good steady worker, the foreman kept him until the ditch was finished.

Louie went to Payne County, Oklahoma in November 1912 and lived in Cushing until March, 1913. It was here that he worked in a funeral home, although he never got used to being around the dead, particularly at night.

In March, 1913, he went to Drumright, Creek County, Oklahoma where he resided until September 1914. When World War I came along he attempted to join the American Armed Forces. It was then that he learned he had a cataract in his left eye and surgery was needed.

In September of 1914 Louie went to Kansas City Kansas to have the cataract removed from his left eye. In November of 1914 Louie returned to Drumright.

And on Saint Patrick's Day, March 17 of 1912, Wheeler Number 1 Oil Well came in, spraying oil 50 to 200 feet high in what was later called the Drumright Oil Field. The nearby town was not officially designated as Drumright until December 28, 1912. It was named after Aaron Drumright whose 120 acre farm, combined with the 120 acres belonging to Harley and J.W. Fulkerson became the townsite. (No doubt this was land that had been claimed during the opening of Oklahoma during the land rush in 1908.) Because Drumright was not named when the Wheeler number 1 oil well came in, the production field was referred to as a part of the Cushing Oil Field which was 10 miles to the west.

MARRIAGE

On November 19, 1913, a 22-year-old Louie Lopez, and an 18-year-old Maggie Tibbets were married in Chandler, Lincoln County, Oklahoma. They had met in Drumright, Oklahoma in March, 1913. He had black hair and brown eyes and weighed about 130 pounds. Her sandy, almost golden long hair hung to her waist, she possessed blue-green eyes, freckles, and weighed just 100 pounds.

They were blessed with four children, two of whom died at birth, one in 1914, and one in 1916. James Louis was born June 18, 1915. Victor Alonzo was born March 29, 1922. Due to the lack of hospital facilities, all were born at home.

MARGARET TIBBETS

According to her recollections, Maggie Tibbets was born in Melvin, McDonald County, Texas on October 29, 1895. She was told her parents died in an accident, she wasn't sure what kind.

According to the census of 1900, she resided in the Creek Nation, Indian Territory, in the household of Sarah J. Nolan with her two sons, Isaac H. and James. Also shown in the same census record are Arthur Cox and Flossy Cox with the latter shown as 4 years old with a birth date of January 1896, and her birthplace was given as Oklahoma.

On the 1910 Census Record, she appears as Flossie Cox, Foster Daughter, age 14, with no reported birthplace. She was enumerated in the family of James K. Polk and Matilda Tibbetts.

James K. Polk Tibbetts was born July 8, 1845 and Matilda Parrot Tibbetts was born in January 1868, both Audubon, Iowa natives.

Finally on the 10th of January, 1945, a county judge, W. M. Hall, made it official--Maggie was born in Melvin, McCulloch County, Texas on October 29, 1895.

When Maggie and Louie were first married they lived with the Charlie Winans family. The family owned one of the larger grocery stores in Drumright. Mrs. Winans took care of Maggie as if she were her own daughter. Both Mr. and Mrs. Winans worked in the store as did one of his brothers who was the butcher. They had a daughter, Betty, and a son Jimmie who was always into some minor mischief. Jimmie became a well known boxer at one time.

COOK, BAKER

Louie and Maggie came to live in the town of Drumright on the east side of what was known as Tiger Hill, until 1920. During that time he held many jobs. At one time he was a cook in a short order cafe. He had a flair for cooking, and he used to run Maggie out of the kitchen while he whipped up a raisin pie that was out of this world. Louie also used to make chili and hot tamales that would clear your sinuses and stick to your ribs. Renown in his neighborhood as a cook of considerable talent, he would have to make up big batches so he could share them with friends and acquaintances.

Louie used to work in a bakery in Drumright. He always laughed when he told about that time in his life. There were big rats everywhere. Once, when the baker was rolling out a big hunk of dough, a big rat ran along the work bench. The baker calmly dispatched the rat with the roll of dough, finished rolling it, cut it into loaves and put them in the oven.

MASONIC LODGE, PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Louie also joined the Drumright Chapter of the Masonic Lodge and became an active member. His marvelous memory enabled him to memorize the rituals, and he became team leader, conducting Masonic burial rites in Oklahoma. He maintained his membership in the Drumright Lodge until his death, saying the Masons proved a helpful influence throughout his lifetime. Louie died at the age of 72 on May 1, 1963 in Mexico City.

Maggie became an Eastern Star member and maintained her membership in the Drumright Chapter until she passed away at the age of 82 on May 23, 1976 in Pasadena, Texas.

Louie and Paul Jensen were two of the founding fathers of the El Sol Naciente Masonic Lodge which was later established in Aruba, Netherlands Antilles in the early 1930's. When he left Aruba they gave him a gold pocket watch and chain which his son still has. On the back of the watch is engraved "TO BROTHER L.G. LOPEZ IN APPRECIATION OF YOUR SERVICES TO THE LODGE 'EL SOL NACIENTE'. ARUBA, N.A. 1953."

Louie and Maggie joined the Presbyterian Church of Drumright, and his sons, James Louis and Victor Alonzo, were baptized in this church. At that time the church was on Penn Street south of Drumright High School. The men of the Masonic Lodge put on a play one night in the High School Auditorium as a fund raising effort. As a part of the entertainment for the evening they had a sing-along program complete with the song projected on a screen and a bouncing ball to encourage audience participation. The name of the play was "The Woman-less Wedding." It was a success, particularly to the family members of the players. Looking back, Louie expressed his astonishment that such an amusing play could be put on by a group of men. The "bride" was unusually tall, the "baby" hardly fit in the baby carriage, the "other woman" practically cried her eyes out, and Louie was an Indian dressed in a genuine Indian headdress and blanket which was borrowed from an Indian family.

His son, James, was with him when he went looking for that Indian headdress. They visited several houses and James recalls one house in particular; a nice home, practically a mansion. Through an open front door they saw a chicken standing on a grand piano. Louie knocked, called out, and when no one answered, they entered. He told his lodge brothers that he found the family in a large tepee out back of the house. The Indian family didn't live in the house; it was reserved for formal visits of their white brothers (friends).

He also recalled taking his nine year old son, James, and his wife, Maggie, and two year old Victor to Rose Hill one Saturday evening. The small settlement was between Drumright and Cushing, Oklahoma where an Indian stomp dance was in progress. There were few white spectators. Both Indian men and Indian women danced around the big bonfire.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Some time during 1924 the several country schools in the Drumright school district had a joint effort where each school offered a play featuring a different country. This program was staged in the Drumright High School Auditorium. One school featured Holland and a little Dutch girl and boy appeared in a dance scene complete with wooden shoes. As each country was presented, the set was changed accordingly. Louie designed a bullfighter costume with a cardboard hat covered with black cloth, Maggie, his wife, did the sewing. The gold lace trim on the beautiful cape, trousers, and hat was actually an indoor copper radio antenna. A piano playing school teacher had worked with Louie to teach his 9-year-old son, James, to sing the song, La Paloma, in

Spanish. The stage, decorated under Louie's direction, resembled a typical Spanish village.

At one time Louie decided to give up smoking. He gained so much weight that overalls were the only clothing that would fit him. Reluctantly, he began smoking again.

CAREER BEGINS

On April 23, 1916 Louie went on the payroll of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana (later known as the Stanolind Oil and Gas Company). He was assigned to work with a millwright who was installing combustion engine driven Cooper Bessemer Compressors at the Drumright casing head gasoline compression plants. These Plants, the number one, near Oiltown, the number two, three miles north of Drumright, the number three, five miles south, the number four, 5 miles east of Drumright, and the number five, which was near Shamrock.

He learned a great deal from that Millwright and this was where he really got his start in the Gas Plant business. In July of 1951 he wrote an article for The "Instrument Society of America" Bulletin which was published by the Aruba Section in the Lago Colony at that time. The title of the article was, "Is the Quality of Workmanship Important Today?" In it, he said, "Not too long ago an 'Erection Engineer' was known as a Millwright. He was a skilled craftsman in carpentry, the use of a metal lathe, a drill press or a shaper, blacksmithing and mathematics. He was a supervisor and a trainer. He did his job without instruction books, factory representatives, or field engineers to get in his hair. He recruited his helpers from local people, usually employees of the company purchasing the equipment, trained them to follow his every move and ask questions. He had infinite patience, and the willingness to impart to others the fundamental knowledge necessary to aid him in his task." The article further stated, "The fact remains that in any highly competitive field quality workmanship is more important today than at any time in the past."

In 1917 Louie became a member of the work force at Plant Number Two and he moved with his family to the company housing. The plant was surrounded by a cyclone fence, and near the north fence line were the chimney-like exhausts of the eight compressors. The compressor house was a long, steel framed building covered with corrugated, zinc coated, sheet metal that had a cooling tower at its side. Outside its west end was a smaller building, similar in design to the main compressor house that housed the small boiler used to supply the plant with steam. For employees who butchered hogs, there was a steam connection over a

large wooden barrel outside the west fence. There was another long corrugated building on the plant's west side which served as the warehouse and garage for trucks. On hot days Louie and some of the men would take a swim in the cooling towers collection pond. This practice was discontinued when one of the younger men got a chill which brought on pneumonia and his death.

There was a small engineering group and a plant superintendent who lived outside near the east fence in more luxurious quarters. An engineering office building, the main office for all five of the Stanolind compressor plants in the area, was nearby. A paved street ran outside of the east fence. All houses and the office faced the street and the plant. On the west side of the plant, stood the housing for the plant engineers (Operators) and their helpers. An alley extended along the west side of the housing with communal employee garage area on the south end of the housing. Yards of the houses were comparable to 100 foot city lots nowadays, and they were covered with bermuda grass everywhere.

As a "wiper" Louie was one of the lowest men on the totem pole. One of his jobs was mowing the huge lawn around the plant. He worked shift and had a tough time sleeping during the hot summer. He spoke of wrapping himself in a wet sheet to get to sleep. Each shift had a plant engineer and a wiper. The term, wiper, was descriptive of that job. A wiper wiped the excess oil off everything in sight, did all janitorial work and **helped** the plant engineer.

The five compression plants received natural gas by pipeline from the surrounding oil fields, and compressed it to produce gasoline. When Henry Ford started producing his Model T Ford in 1908 the demand for gasoline began to increase. Other automobiles began to be produced.

One of the plant engineers, M.A. Ellison, was a next door neighbor. Meigs, and his wife, Ora, and their two children, Charles and Eva, became life-long friends with the Lopez family. The Ellison's were transferred from Plant Two to Plant Four in 1928. James stayed with the Ellison's during the 1929-30 school year while Louie, Maggie and Victor were in Aruba. That school year Aruba did not have enough students to make up a 10th grade class. Eva Ellison spent five months in Aruba as the Lopez's house guest--October 27, 1934 to March 30, 1935.

TRUCK DRIVER

Late in 1923 the Drumright Company began having trouble with the gas lines from the wells to the five Compression plants. Gas was condensing into liquid gasoline at low points in the pipe line. They installed traps to collect this liquid. A tank truck collected this liquid and

brought it in to the plant to store with the other gasoline. As an added benefit, all employees could fill up the tank of their car with this gasoline as they needed it.

During World War I, a heavy truck, the International (Later became the International Harvester), was developed. It had an air-cooled engine with a heavy box-shaped hood, no power steering or power brakes. Two men were required to change one of the huge tires.

Louie became driver of that truck for several years, developing his shoulders and arm muscles until he looked like a championship wrestler. In all of the time he drove the truck, he had only one serious accident. One day, an old man and lady in a horse drawn buggy met him on the road, and the couple's horse became excited upon hearing this loaded truck coming up behind it. It bolted and the horse dragged the wagon in front of the passing truck. The Truck hit the rear of the wagon, and it tipped over. Louie helped the old man and his wife to right their wagon, and saw that they were able to proceed. He said they were most angry, and that the incident scared him. He was forced to find a way back to the plant that did not involve that buggy.

In another incident, he related that a couple of drunks began playing a game of tag with his truck; coming up closely behind him and honking their horn; then passing him and slowing down at his front bumper, nearly causing a collision. Tiring of their dangerous pranks, Louie blocked the road with his truck, reached under the seat for his jack handle, and walked menacingly toward them. They hurriedly reversed their car, and made tracks in the other direction.

During the summers, his son, James, and a couple of his friends from the neighborhood took sack lunches and rode with him all day while he made his rounds. The silly kids would often ride on the tank, sniff the fumes from the tank inlet cover and become woozy. If they behaved themselves, at the end of the day Louie would stop in Shamrock and treat everyone to ice cream cones before heading back to Drumright.

Just before Christmas he began to carry an axe on his route and kept watch for a suitable Christmas tree. There were no pine trees in that area; they were all cedar. Naturally, some of the neighbors needed one also, and as a matter of course, he collected Christmas trees over a period of several days.

DRAFTING COURSE

During this period, the International Correspondence Schools sent a railroad car outfitted as a classroom around the country to offer various

courses. Louis took a course in engineering drawing and completed it successfully.

He was talented and had previous training in penmanship in his school. He developed this writing talent and as a result he was in demand for using a steel-nib pen and gold ink to produce fancy wedding and graduation announcements as requested by the neighbors. This talent seemed to also help him when it came to drafting work.

It came to the attention of plant superintendent Paul Goldman that he had completed this drafting course and the superintendent had him helping design gas compression plants that were later built in Texas. Working on this project added to his knowledge of gas plants, and was later to prove quite useful.

FIRST CAR AND RADIO

One day Louie bought a new Chevrolet touring car which developed a cracked block, but the dealer replaced it and he enjoyed that car for several years. The people who lived at Plant Number 2 needed a car; it was more than three miles to town by the roadway, a route which was paved during the early 1920's.

He also bought one of the first radios in the neighborhood; an auto battery powered Atwater Kent. This was most likely one of the first production models from this manufacturer with a metal case and a metal amplifier horn similar to the one seen in the RCA's early advertisements--the one showing a dog with one ear cocked as if he were listening. Station KDKA, from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania came in loud and clear.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The neighbors at Number Two Plant were a congenial group. During the summers Pinochle card parties were held for the adults, and games were organized for the kids. Once a month, during the summer, the group would go together for a Saturday night camp-out between Drumright and Cushing, on Euche Creek. Men set trot lines on the Cimmaron River and their families would swim. Once, the river was swollen by heavy rains, and no one was daring enough to brave the current. Louie, a strong swimmer whose side stroke was imposing, was the only one who dared to swim across the river and return. He made the trip only once, professing the river was too swift for him to try his luck again. A quilt spread on the ground as a pallet served as a bed. It was exciting for the kids to lay there on that quilt and hear the bull frogs croaking; see the lightening bugs; watch the sun rise in the morning, and smell bacon and eggs frying for breakfast.

Nearly everyone in the Number Two Plant Camp had a vegetable

garden. Eva Ellison said she could remember the beautiful tomatoes, sweet peppers, radishes, onions, beans, and peas that were produced in Louie's garden. There was a good sized peach tree just inside the fence, near the back gate. The neighbors enjoyed the fruit from this tree as much as Louie and his family.

HIS LIFE STYLE

Louie had a difficult time finding the size six shoes he wore. He wore a size 7-1/4 in a hat, but he seldom wore one. A picture of the period shows him wearing a cloth cap which may have been the only one he ever owned. He was a straight razor user, cultivated a thin mustache all of his adult life, and wore his hair in a straight back pompadour style.

Louie enjoyed reading the Sunday funny papers to his two sons. As he read "Maggie and Jiggs", "Mutt and Jeff", and "The Katzenjammer Kids," he added embellishments of his own. In one of them, the Katzenjammer Kids found a cave and coming out the mouth of the cave were the words, "They heard my moans, as they scraped my bones, but they only whittled faster," a line that struck Louie's funny-bone. It became a family saying. His son, James, often said that learning to read the funny papers was his motive for learning to read.

Early in 1926 Louie was transferred from Plant Two in Drumright, Oklahoma to the Huasteca Petroleum Company, promoted to production plant operator, and assigned to Cerro Azul. Cerro Azul is about 100 miles south of Tampico in the adjoining Mexican state of Tamaulipas.

Rigs were erected in the uninhabited areas. Often, the drillers found themselves sharing the floor of a drilling rig with a wild cat, and drilling had to be suspended until the cat was coaxed from the rig. Bunkhouse walls were filled with spent lead bullets from bandits in the area.

A crew of Americans pranksters in the final days before the government terminated their contracts to work in Mexico signed their club bills with names like: George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Robert E. Lee, the result of which was confusion at the accounting department.

Attempting to reduce the number of foreigners in the country, the Mexican Government offered Louie a permanent job with the company if he would renounce his American Citizenship. No, he said, he had worked too hard to become an American; he wasn't about to give it up.

At this time his family had been in Tampico for 6 weeks. In fact they were in the process of getting settled in a rented home, in the outskirts of Tampico. So by the end of the year, 1926, he was transferred

back to Drumright and assigned to Plant Number 3, south of Drumright, Oklahoma. Here he reverted to the status of wiper, and worked with a plant engineer.

While working with Superintendent Paul Goldman at the Number Two Plant in Drumright, Oklahoma he became acquainted with Donald J. Smith who later became the manager of the Aruba Refinery Construction Project.

ARUBA

Smith's recommendations resulted in Louie's transfer to Aruba in February of 1928 as a material checker in the estimating section of the Engineering Department, and a member of the original crew who built the refinery. In preparation for the job he bought a beautiful pair of cordovan brown, high top, lace boots, and some boot pants. Whereas they did offer protection from the cacti that overran the construction site, the hot sun in Aruba made them excessively uncomfortable.

Along with those who arrived before family housing was built, Louie lived in the long wooden buildings with two bunk rooms called "sheep sheds." Their windows had no screens or glass, but were covered with a solid wooden cover hinged at the top which was propped open with a stick. A communal shower and toilet building was constructed for the convenience of those living in each group of four *sheep sheds*.

Residents of the sheep sheds, like their counterparts in houses, had pets. One fellow had a monkey that got loose and ravaged the toilet articles of everyone in the shed, strewing powder, hair oil, shaving cream, after shave and toothpaste everywhere. Louie said there were some very angry people in that shed when they got home from work.

As family housing became available, Bungalow 47 was set aside for those on bachelor status with key jobs. This bungalow was located on the lower road and across the street from the bungalows that were assigned to the Lake Tanker Fleet families. Louie lived there while his family was away from Aruba. He and A.C. "Pop" Fuller cut hair on the front porch of Bungalow 47 every evening after work until dark. Pop Fuller was a clerk in the Marine Department while Louie worked in the Engineering Department. Each man in the bungalow had his own room; the lap of luxury compared to the sheep shed dwellers. At one time other residents in the bungalow were Elmer Wheeler, Harry F. Moore, Fred W. Switzer, "Pop" Fuller, and Louie Lopez. From time to time the occupants changed as their families either arrived or departed.

Knowledge of mechanical drawing resulted in Louie's reviewing

drawings for new housing in the colony. At one point, he took drawings home and asked his wife, Maggie, how kitchen cabinet doors should open and how other household features could be best designed with the woman of the house in mind. It was curious: The drawings, prepared in the New York Offices, depicted houses surrounded by coconut trees. For many years you hardly saw a flower bed, let alone trees in the colony, but during its last years, the Lago colony had coconut trees growing everywhere.

ESTIMATING GROUP

An estimating group where material orders were prepared and amounts of various materials, parts, and equipment were "guesstimated" was another of his assignments. After he left, a large shipment of sheet-rock used on the interior of housing and offices was received and there was some consternation. There didn't seem to be enough storage space for all of it. On examination, the invoice for the material received revealed that somehow after the order had left Aruba another zero was added to the amount originally ordered, and ten times the amount they had ordered was shipped. Frank Hawkins, the carpenter foreman, told Louie about what they were doing. He said they were using that sheet rock to make all kinds of temporary buildings and they were cutting needed lengths out of the center of full sheets to use it up.

THE GAS PLANT

Nineteen thirty, while the refinery was still the property of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, found Louie promoted to Foreman of the Gas Plant. He was in charge of the Gas Plant. He was there from the construction of the foundations, and for the installation of each piece of equipment: the Stabilizing Plant; the Absorption Plant; the Lean Oil Tower, the Debutanizer Plant; the Splitting Plant, the Propane Plant, the Butane Plant. There were Tar Cooler boxes, a couple of small furnaces, and of course the heat exchangers and pumps used in the operations of the various plants.

Louie had his office in south east corner of the plant area. Subsequently he added a small laboratory next to his office. As the Gas Plant became a larger entity, during the war added were the Gas Compression Unit, the Depropanizer Plant, the High Octane Splitting Plant, the High Octane Stabilizing Plant, High Octane Debutanizer Plant, the High Octane Butane Plant, the Hot Acid Polymerization Plant, and the supporting heat exchangers and pumps. As a result the office was moved up on the hill to the East of the Polymerization Plant so it was more centrally located. It might be noted that the older plants became low octane plants.

THE PODBIELNIAC MACHINE

The laboratory served him well. He was able to purchase a Podbielniac machine and was a pioneer in its use. This machine permitted him to test out his ideas for plant operations before he actually applied them in the plant itself. With that glass apparatus he could simulate the temperatures, flows, pressures and levels that would be found in the steel towers in the plant. If he had not had this machine he would have been limited to trial and error methods in operating the Gas Plants.

After he worked with the Podbielniac set up long enough to gain valuable experience, he spent one of his vacations in the United States, working with the designer of the equipment in his factory in Tulsa, Oklahoma. As a result of his development work, some design changes were made by Mr. Podbielniac in the newer models, and Louie got one-on-one training directly from the inventor himself.

In those early days the company was still learning about the manufacture and handling of gases and gasolines. Louie contributed to various developments used in Esso refineries worldwide. He received regular visits from Mr. Ruff, one of the Vice Presidents of the company. Mr. Ruff was responsible for gas plant operations for the company worldwide. They would exchange the latest information. Mr. Ruff would make suggestions for Louie to try out and Louie would go over the results of his experiences. Mr. Ruff was very complimentary of the work done by Louie and said he was contributing to better results worldwide in the company.

It was years before the Technical Service Department finally decided they should become involved in this phase of laboratory work. Doctor Lazlo Broz was sent over by the Technical Services Department to learn how to operate the machine and it was then moved over to the chemical laboratory. They later purchased several more for their use.

DEVELOPING HEAT EXCHANGER TUBE CLEANING PROCESS

All of the refinery units had heat exchangers which were a source of problems well known to even the most inexperienced operator. Heat exchangers vary in size, and can be as large as twenty feet long and five feet in diameter. Contained inside the vessels is a "bundle" of tubes through which liquid circulates. Separate connections on the exchanger allow liquid to circulate around these tubes. In some cases both liquids would be hydrocarbons.

For example in one case an inlet liquid such as a fresh "feed stock" at ambient temperature was circulated around the outside of the tubes

and a heated product would flow through these tubes. This would be a safety feature that cooled the heated product before it was pumped into a storage tank. At the same time the heat in the product going to storage was used to raise the temperature of the incoming "feed stock." This would mean less furnace heat would be required to bring the "feed stock" up to the desired processing temperature, resulting in conservation of energy, and a savings in operating costs.

In other cases, the liquid inside the tubing was sea water which was used as a coolant for the hydrocarbon liquid or gas circulated around the outside of the tubes. The sea water tended to develop a scale, or deposit on the inside of the tubes similar to that which sometimes develops in the bottom of a teakettle. This meant that the liquid being cooled was not being cooled as much as it should be. This would very probably mean less efficient operations or more water would be needed to get the desired results. This usually meant that at the next shut-down, they would be opened; tube "bundles" removed and the tubes "rattled" (cleaned) out manually. Such maintenance work was time-consuming, often resulted in damaged tubes which required replacement tubing. Bottom line it meant lost time and money.

Experimenting in his little laboratory with short lengths of plugged or partially plugged tubing, and various solutions, Louie managed to come up with a solution that dissolved these deposits, and did not damage the tubes themselves. Hydrochloric acid seemed to do the trick. A solution of the acid with water was found to dissolve the deposits and caused little or no erosion of the metal of the tubes themselves.

Over a period of time he managed to rearrange the piping in the units under his charge so that there was a spare heat exchanger mounted alongside of each of the regular exchangers. By monitoring the temperatures of the liquids flowing through his in service heat exchangers, he could tell when an exchanger was no longer functioning efficiently. Then he would put the spare in service and take the in service exchanger out of service, and circulate his acid cleansing solution through its partially plugged tubes. Previously, he had all of the necessary piping and pump equipment installed to allow him to do this throughout his units. He could do this without having to shutdown the plant for this cleaning operation as had been necessary before his innovation.

Proving to himself that this cleaning operation was practical and did not damage the equipment in his units could not convince others to adopt this method of cleaning their exchangers. In 1949 it was noticed a

contractor had begun doing the same operation in the company refinery in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Finally Louie wound up writing an article for the Gulf Publishing Company's "Oil and Gas Journal", describing his system.

The Technical Services Department took almost 20 years to make up their mind that the exchanger tubes would not be "eroded to pieces," and to recommend that this procedure be done throughout the refinery.

His last assignment before retiring from Aruba was to develop a portable system consisting of a pump and a tank with hoses mounted on a trailer. This equipment was moved around the refinery and heat exchangers were acid-cleaned at the remaining refining units.

SECOND MARRIAGE

In 1937 Louie and Maggie were divorced, and in February of 1938 he married Consuelo Jimenez in Tampico, Mexico, her hometown. Consuelo was previously married to Henri Devolder who was a company diver involved in the construction of Aruba's San Nicholas Harbor, and they had a 12 year old daughter. Louie legally adopted the child, who attended a Dutch school on the island of Curacao.

When Louie and Consuelo were first married, they lived in Bungalow number 140. August 13, 1939, they moved into Bungalow number 509 where they resided until October 5, 1953, the date of Louie's official retirement.

VACATION PAY INCREASES, AND PROMOTION!

In 1939 Louie was appointed to Assistant Division Superintendent in charge of Gas Plants. On a vacation prior to that time Louie received two hefty raises to bring his salary up to the level it should have been in light of the importance of the job he was doing.

1950 PROMOTION

In 1950, he was promoted to Assistant Division Superintendent of the Catalytic Cracking Plant and Light Ends Department, a post which included the Gas Plants. He was put on special assignment to develop portable equipment to be used in chemically cleaning all condensers and exchangers throughout the refinery.

There was a bit of irony about this final promotion. The local management found themselves with an engineer for whom they had no position open so they could promote him. Louie was approached by a fellow management member who in, oh, so polite terms let Louie know that the upper management would appreciate it very much if he would take an early retirement. They needed his position for this engineer

without an assignment.

However Louie had no intention of retiring before his age would require it. So the following weekend he took his son, James, down to his office to type a letter for him. He dictated what should go into that letter. His files contained all of the information he needed. The final result was a two page letter. The first page was a letter with his explanation of why he felt the management did not know his accomplishments during his years of service. The second page of this letter outlined these accomplishments, which were well documented.

Louie was a strong supporter of the Coin-Your-Ideas Program that had been developed. Robert Heinze at the time the Superintendent of the Acid and Edeleanu Plants was chairman of the Coin-Your-Ideas-Program. He was the one who developed the program. Although Louie could not benefit monetarily from his ideas because he was a member of management he nevertheless submitted ideas and Robert Heinze would acknowledge them in writing and credit him with his very worthwhile ideas. One idea in particular stands out. This was the one which ultimately resulted in the construction of the spheroid tank farm where the high octane gasoline was stored. The idea was calculated to have saved the company \$1,000,000.00 a year that would have otherwise been lost by the gas vaporizing to the atmosphere instead of being saved in the tanks. Other ideas he had concerned the proper use of automatic control systems in certain units in the refinery. Because he wasn't eligible to receive the money another person in another refinery who came up with the same idea subsequently did receive the award.

Louie's development work with the Podbielniac Machine and the application of the results in improvement of Gas Plant operations over the years was pointed out. His work on the Acid Cleaning system was also submitted for full recognition. Other details were also present for full recognition. The two page letter was delivered to the management office.

Louie received no written acknowledgement or reply to his letter. However the same management representative who had been sent the first time again paid a visit to his office.

The word he was given was: "Louie you don't have to worry. If you want, you can stay home and sit on your front porch in a rocking chair, and we will deliver your pay check to you every pay day as long as you like."

GAS PLANT SHUTDOWNS - PLANNING METHODS

He truly enjoyed trouble shooting in the "Gas Plant" as his department was called. Before planning became a way of life in the refinery he got ready for the annual shutdown of each of his operating units by collecting the maintenance orders that had been written for certain jobs to be done when the units were out of service. He went to the company bakery, bought a batch of donuts, called the general foremen of each of the maintenance departments together in his office building's small conference room, and they would organize the coming shutdown over coffee and donuts. Among themselves they would decide who was to be first and then second and so on so that the workmen would not get into each other's way. Their meetings were informal and things got done in a congenial fashion.

INSPECTION OF TOWERS BEFORE START-UP

He kept an army surplus folding cot in a closet in his office building. During the early days he spent several days and nights in his office during a shut down or a start up of his operating units. He also made it a standard practice to personally examine each of the towers after maintenance work had been done and before the vessel had been buttoned up, or closed. He put on a pair of coveralls and, with a flashlight, crawled through the vessel to make certain all bubble caps were in place, and no strange material such as ladders, pump covers, gloves, safety hats, or timbers were left behind.

When he was asked why it was that the start-ups always seemed to happen over a holiday period, he said it was so that the "big wigs" wouldn't be around asking questions and making suggestions while he was trying to keep his thoughts together.

FAVORITE SAYING

"Anything worth doing is worth doing well." ¹

SAVING A NEWCOMER EMBARRASSMENT

On one occasion he was making a personal inspection of one unit that was located next to the Hydrogenation Plant. In his dirty coveralls, looking like one of the native workmen, he went to a water cooler in the Hydro Plant operating building to get a drink of water. One of the new American operators at the Hydro Plant ordered him out of area in no uncertain terms. Louie smiled and turned around and walked off of the

¹ *I always thought it was "Peel me a grape, Beulah." or maybe "I'm an old cowhand/ from the Rio Grand,/ My cheeks are bowed/ and my legs are tanned..." or maybe that one about grinding bones to make bread.*

unit. He remarked afterward that he didn't want to be around when someone explained to the new man who he was, they would both be embarrassed.

ISLAND FRIENDS

In his early years in Aruba, since he spoke Spanish, he made many friends with native Arubans and visited their homes. Most of the men spoke Spanish because they had worked in other Spanish speaking countries before the Aruba refinery was built. One of his good friends, Louis Ponson, had a Dodge touring car and used to pick up Louie and his family in the Lago Colony and carry them over to Oranjestad for a Sunday visit. In those days (1929-30) not too many people owned cars on the island.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Mexico is one of the few countries in the world today that celebrates two Independence Days. September 16, 1810 is the day they won their independence from Spain. May 5, 1862 is the day they won their independence from France, Louie, as an American Citizen, had always been proud to celebrate July 4th, the American Independence Day. He always entered into the spirit of the celebration and enjoyed setting off firecrackers, lighting sparklers, pin wheels, roman candles, and sky rockets.

In September of 1951 Louie decided he wanted to also celebrate a Mexican independence day. After all he would be retiring one day and he expected to live out his retirement in Mexico City. So he went down to San Nicholas and bought a selection of fireworks. You could always find fireworks somewhere in the village. In the late afternoon of September 16, which happened to be on a Sunday, he sat on Bungalow 509's front porch, and started his celebration with some small firecrackers, working his way to larger ones.

On a Sunday afternoons in the Lago Colony, people were usually relaxing in their patios or catching up on their sleep if they were not out visiting.

The assistant chief watchman, who lived on the street north of Louie's bungalow, ran up carrying a pistol in his right hand. Charlie Hogleund, wearing his uniform cap and a T-shirt, said, "Why, Mr. Lopez, what's wrong?" He later admitted he thought perhaps Mr. Lopez became despondent and was firing off a gun of some kind.

Gene Keesler, the laundry's supervisor was next at the scene, and he

was disturbed. He wanted to know what Louie was doing. His wife and children were trying to take a nap and the noise was too much for them. Louie apologized to both of them, and said he was sorry. When everyone celebrated the American Independence day on July Fourth he was happy to participate in its observation, but now he was celebrating one of the Independence Days of Mexico. And since this was his mother country he thought he had as much right to celebrate her Independence Day as the other Americans did on July Fourth. Both Gene and Charlie went away shaking their heads and not altogether convinced his argument was legitimate.

CHILI AND HOT TAMALES

Once every year, while in Aruba, he got busy and made up a batch of hot tamales and/or chili, and shared them with his friends who had cast iron stomachs and appreciated this type of cooking. These were usually Texans, one of whom was Norman Shirley.

One year he got lye to remove the husks from the kernels of ear corn; ground up the corn; used a washtub to mix the "Masa" ("dough" in English); scrounged around in the farms to find corn shucks (these were hard to find), and mixed up the best batch of fat tamales he ever made. His wife, Consuelo, was involved in this masterpiece up to her eyebrows. They spent a whole weekend on this endeavor.

MUSIC

Louie had a collection of classic Mexican folk music. His favorites were Augustin Lara, Trio Los Panchos, Pedro Infante, Jorge Negrete, Nestor Chares, and the Mariachi. He knew all of the words to the songs and usually sang along with them. In his early days in Oklahoma, he enjoyed the German bands which were often featured in touring circuses. He became acquainted with the music of John Phillip Sousa and his record collection contained selections of this famous band leader. Some Saturday evenings, he would build some scotch and sodas; put on a stack of these records, played them at such a volume the louvers in the windows rattled.

In Oklahoma, Louie learned to play the harmonica. He carried one to Aruba, and could render all kinds of songs for which he had no records. "Redwing," "Carolina Moon," "Silver Threads Among the Gold," "Over the Waves," "My Wild Irish Rose," "Roses of Picardy," "Moonlight and Roses" and many other pieces of World War I vintage were among his repertoire as well as his favorite Mexican folklore pieces.

He liked to dance, and performed waltzes, polkas and foxtrot

equally well. Of course he knew all of the Mexican traditional dances. He had a good tenor singing voice and could recite Mexican, American, and Spanish poetry.

THE GARDEN AT BUNGALOW #509

At his bungalow, he and Consuelo spent many hours working in their garden. As with all bungalows, everything had to be in raised flower beds or pots. Around the perimeter of his yard in raised beds, were Australian pine trees. Along the west side of the house was a lattice covered arbor covered with Bougainvilleas. A similar arbor covered a cement walkway from the front of the house to the front gate. A wooden lattice fence surrounded the yard and the house. There was an opening in the fence for a concrete surfaced driveway that led under the arbor on the west side of the house. Along the front of the house was a flower bed with Oleanders, and as you went in his front gate, a flamboyant tree stood, At least one night a week Louie watered the flower beds for hours.

There was a time in the colony when unscrupulous people went about nightly, digging up plants from other peoples' yards, putting them in their own. One evening when Louie was out watering his garden he heard someone in his yard. He thought at first that someone was coming to pay him and Consuelo a visit, but they were so quiet he decided to investigate. They had one of his plants almost dug up when he said, "Hey! What's going on here?" They dropped their shovel and bucket, and ran off down the road. Louie never did discover the identity of the midnight plant filchers, but he put their shovel and bucket to good use in his gardening activities.

THE REFINERY GRAPEVINE SYSTEM

During the war years there was a shortage of manpower so the management set up an active recruiting program. It was at this time that there was an influx of personnel from British Guiana. They spoke English and were well educated. They naturally became the clerks the various departments so badly needed. A few of them chose to work in the various crafts in the Mechanical Department. Louie had George as the clerk in charge of his office. George was from British Guiana. At the time most of clerks in the offices were his countrymen. These clerks kept in daily touch with each other through their work and friends. One day Louie picked up his phone and heard a clerk in the Main Office building talking to George, his clerk. He heard his name mentioned and as he listened he heard that he was receiving a certain amount as a raise. He also heard about other management personnel receiving raises and the amount.

Several days later when his Division Superintendent officially informed him of his raise he thanked him and said he was glad to see the news confirmed. He said he was pleased to see that his raise compared favorably with those of his peers. There was consternation at the upper management levels to find they no longer had confidentiality they had assumed they had.

SPEECHES AT MASONIC BANQUETS

As previously mentioned, Louie had a very good memory, and in his Masonic work this proved invaluable. Every year the El Sol Naciente Masonic Lodge had an annual banquet. Usually some local luminary was invited to deliver the main speech of the evening. Several times something happened to keep the principal speaker from appearing, and Louie would be asked on a short notice to take his place. Members reported that they always knew that Louie would have an interesting talk for them.

MANAGEMENT MEETING ATTENDANCE LOUIE-STYLE

It was also reported, that in the last year of his company service in Aruba, he sat in the weekly management morning meetings in the main office building with his eyes closed. It got so the chairperson of the meeting never called on Louie for any comments because his eyes were closed, and obviously he would have no comments. The chairperson was usually of the same rank, so Louie got away with his napping. Apparently this was a common ailment in this meeting as reported in the stories of others who attended the same weekly meeting. Also it was reported that he gave very pertinent remarks on those rare occasions when he was called upon.

RETIREMENT PICNIC

During his last year in Aruba he was ill for some time with a liver ailment which finally caused his retirement in August of 1953, one year before his compulsory retirement date, or so he thought.

As was the tradition, there was a farewell picnic organized for him by his department. This was held after five p.m. on a Saturday. The fare consisted of barbecue, beans, salad, rolls, and a wide selection of beer, wines, and liquors. A volunteer three man combo supplied the music. Sam Speziale played his violin, Walter Deece played the horizontal steel stringed guitar and "Doc" Hatfield played acoustical guitar. Sing-along music was played, but not much singing was heard as everyone was busy talking and telling stories about each other.

Odis Mingus, who at the time was the refinery's manager, was the ranking speaker of the evening. At the time there was a retirement picnic

going on nearly every Saturday because there were many people reaching retirement age at the same time. Mingus said that someone asked him how he decided which of these retirement picnics he should attend. He said if the person retiring had more service than he did he went to their retirement picnic! He said he always remembered the calendar on the wall above the drinking fountain just inside the front door of Louie's Gas Plant Office building. This calendar had a large picture on it showing a man sitting on a commode going about his business. Underneath there was a caption which read, "THIS IS THE ONLY MAN IN THIS PLACE WHO KNOWS WHAT HE IS DOING!"

Friends around the refinery presented Louie with a JaegerleCoultre Atmos clock which is wound by a variation of two degrees Fahrenheit change in temperature. The little brass plate on the front of the clock says: TO L. G. LOPEZ FROM HIS FRIENDS IN LAGO - ARUBA 1916-1953. This indicates that his accredited service with the company was 37 years.

RETIREMENT TO MEXICO CITY

Louie and Consuelo left Aruba in August 1953 and landed in Miami, Florida. From there they went to New Orleans where he purchased a black Buick sedan. And from there with his wife, Consuelo, her daughter Adrianna and her husband, Flavio Carlos, and their daughter, Ivonne, he drove to Mexico City by way of the coastal route.

In Mexico City he built the dream house he had been thinking about for many years. Fortuitously his son-in-law, Flavio, was an engineer, and he had someone to work with on the design of his two story creation. All floors are terrazzo with a floor plan as follows:

- A breakfast nook large enough to hold a table and chairs for eight people. As you sit at the table you looked out through ceiling to floor windows and a sliding door into the backyard. The doorway to this breakfast nook is wide.
- The door to the kitchen is on your right. It has a walk-in closet.
- The dining room is to the left. The outside west wall has floor to ceiling windows which were intended to take advantage of the sun since Mexico City is cool even in the summer.
- The dining room contained a dining table with seating for twelve people. The dining room area was set apart by means of a five foot long by 18" wide raised flower bed lined with ceramic tile. It formed traffic path from the breakfast nook, past the doorway to the kitchen to the foyer. An 8 ft., floor-to-ceiling decorative brick wall blocked

off half of the south side of the dining room area from the foyer. The other half of the area was open to allow entrance from front door. This also allowed the dining area to become a part of the formal living room area.

- The foyer area actually separated the living room and dining room areas. Louie had his General Electric long and short-wave radio and record player cabinet installed in this area.
- Also to the side of the foyer was a small television room with a large window.
- Under the circular staircase, adjoining the television room was a small half bathroom.
- Two large windows filled the east wall of the foyer area. These windows extend from ground level to the ceiling of the second story of the house.

The second floor of the house contains four bedrooms, including the master bedroom; all with built-in wall closets. These bedrooms open out on to a common hallway with a bathroom at each end. A railing allows you to look down to the floor below.

A small balcony on the corner of the second floor was originally meant as a place from which the family could overlook the avenue at the front of the house. It also could be an outdoor patio where visitors could enjoy a quiet interlude in a busy day. The side of the house overlooking the street is faced with slabs of colored granite and marble.

There was and a narrow one car driveway leading to a free- standing one car garage with a garage apartment overhead accessible by an inside stairway

Louie and Consuelo lived here with Adrianna and Flavio and their growing family of four daughters for some of the happiest years of their lives. A constant stream of Consuelo's relatives came to help them celebrate on the various festivals, birthdays, anniversaries, and visits to the big city, Mexico City.

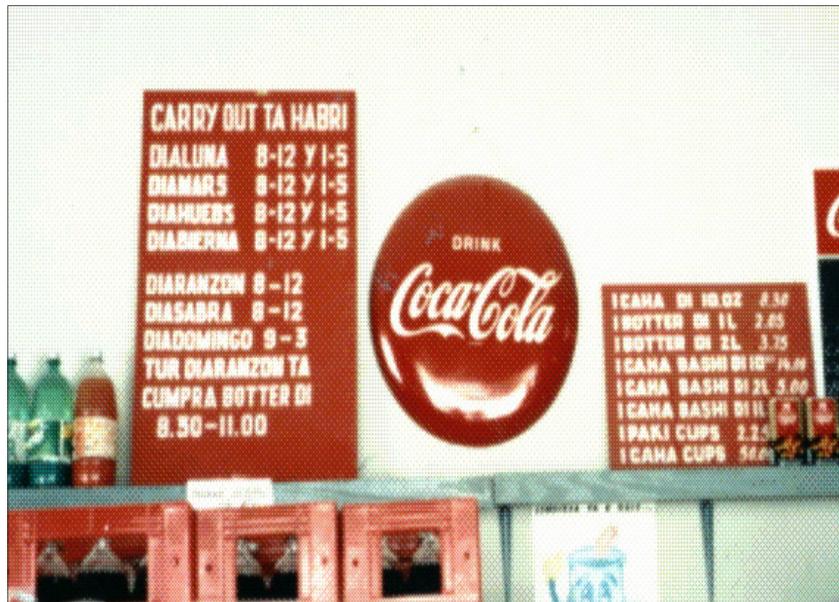
- Ivonne born April 2, 1947 has a degree in Accounting.
- Patricia born April 27, 1954 has a PhD. in Philosophy and is a Professora at the University of Mexico.
- Lorena born August 19, 1955, has a degree in Interior Decorations.
- Angelica born July 25, 1956, has a degree in Communications and is a

Professora in the University in Queretaro.

All are married and have children.

IN MEMORIUM

Louie died on May 1, 1963 at the age of 71 years and 4 months. He is buried in the Cemetery Frances de San Joaquin in Mexico City.



Hours of operation and pricing for a store in Oranjestad in 1980's.

Photo courtesy Sharon Klein.

The Frank C. Lynch Story

I got down to Aruba on the 10th of February 1931. I came from Bayonne on the tanker *Harold Walker*.

I was working for the United Parcel Service as a comptometer operator when I saw an ad in the paper. I worked my regular shift, from 2:00 a.m. to noon, and in the afternoon, I went to the Standard Oil Company office on Broad Street. I tested for the comptometer. They had me signed up and my passport picture taken by 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon. The Company wanted me to leave for Aruba right away. I said that I lived in Massachusetts, and that I was going to have to go back home before I left for Aruba. That was okay with them; they said you go home and we will send you a telegram. They were in a rush to get me down there, because the comptometer operator in Aruba had stolen Jim Bluejacket's truck. He had smashed it up in the village, and they wanted to get rid of him. The same ship that brought me took him back to the States. I think it was Leon Rought who met me at the ship. He took me directly to the office and put me to work.

ANECDOTES

I remember a story told by Jim Bluejacket. He played on an Indian baseball team. They never had any money to go anywhere, so they used to hop freight cars. A crap game was in progress as they came home in a freight car. One of his friends reared back to make a high pass with the dice, and he backed himself right out the door. It was two days before they saw him again.

T. C. Brown worked for the Standard Oil Company of Indiana in Whiting before coming to Aruba. He was a great man. I think I was a favorite of his because I got away with an awful lot of stuff in Aruba. I think sometimes I should have been fired. He was very kind and sedate, and he loved to gamble. Guys came to his house, and they shot craps until 3:00 o'clock in the morning. Brown was at work by 8:00 o'clock on the following mornings, and he always looked like he had had a full night's sleep.

There was a Claude Case who was there in the Labor Department early on. They called him "Doc" Case. He and another fellow, whom I can only recall as "Jim," had a flat bed truck that they kept parked out in front of Bachelor Quarters Number Two. In those days there weren't very many vehicles. Every night at about 6:30 or 7:00 p.m. anybody

who wanted to go to the village went over and climbed on the truck. Doc drove the truck and everyone on it to the village, and he parked in front of one of the canteens. When the canteen closed, you went over and climbed back on the truck. Everybody went looking for you at closing time if you weren't on the truck.

Isador Cosio came from Brooklyn and I think he went back there. He was probably in his 40's.

Coy Cross was in charge of the Light Oils Finishing Department. I am not sure where Gerald Cross, his brother, worked.

Charles Dahlberg was a carpenter.

Goody Goodson was in charge of the warehouse. I think he came from Whiting. Don Henderson was a great big carpenter. He had the first private car in the colony.

Oscar Henskie was there in charge of dynamiting. And later on his nephew, Chuck Henskie was there in the operating department I believe.

Leon Rought was in the Accounting Department and he came from Whiting. Bill Rae was a pipefitter. Cliff Semmens and John Semmens were brothers.

I can remember Johnny, Cliff, and Bates used to get together every Saturday night to get drunk. They always got into a fight. Cliff and Bates used to room together in an upper corner room. The fight always ended up downstairs in the courtyard. No one would ever get hurt, and they would wind up going back upstairs to have another drink. For a while, this happened every Saturday night.

In the early days they had a big "to do" about the quality of the sandwiches for the shift workers. Jimmy Armstrong was on the committee who argued with management about getting an improvement in the quality of the sandwiches. During one of his arguments, he told management, "I want to give you an example how the sandwiches are. The other night, one of the fellows at the power house took the meat out of a sandwich and threw it down on the floor for the power house cat. Now, I won't tell you the cat didn't eat the meat; I am going to be honest with you. The cat ate the meat, but he turned right around and licked his ass to get the taste out of his mouth."

When he saw me coming down the street, he would throw up his hands and say, "Glory be to God, Glory be to God, here's Frank Lynch. You're the man that gives me my money every payday." He would pat me on the back and say, "Thank God, you're here!"

Ed Tucker the Paymaster had something to say about Jimmy Armstrong during the days when there was a second shift. Jimmy comes along and he says to Ed, "Well look who's here. Ed Tucker, I'm glad to see you. You gave me my first paycheck 20 years ago. Somebody in the back piped up and said, "Yes, you SOB, and it should have been your last."

Army Armstrong was the ships' dispatcher. When ships were loaded, he wrote which ones and what the tonnage of the cargo was on a manifest. He took the papers to the captain on the ship. Lots of time when the ship was loaded they were so busy and needed the berth for another ship they would send the ship out of the harbor. The ship will be tied up outside of the harbor. I used to go out with Armstrong in a tug or a launch to deliver the papers. You could never believe a word he told you. He would tell about his wife and child. He wasn't married.



The Robert & Mildred MacMillan Story

I was born in Scotland in 1911. At age 12, I came to New Jersey. My carefree school days, divided between Scotland and New Jersey, ended in my 16th year when I began to work days and attending night school. I obtained an associate engineer's degree from Newark College of Engineering in 1935.

MILDRED DOROTHY MACMILLAN

My better half, Mildred Dorothy MacMillan, was born in Turtle Creek, Pennsylvania, but she's not saying when. Mildred graduated from Turtle Creek High School, attended Temple University for a year, after which she matriculated from Trenton State Teacher's College in Trenton. She did most of the art work on her high school yearbook.

FIRST WORK

I started working for 60 cents an hour in Esso's Bayway refinery in Linden, New Jersey in 1930, as a helper in the Electrical Department. In 10 years I made it to the rating of mechanic, and was transferred from the refinery to the Construction Engineering Department of the Standard Oil Development Co. (S.O.D.), where the work was done on the Cat Plants for Aruba, Baton Rouge, and Baytown, and the Butyl Rubber projects at Baton Rouge and Baytown. At S.O.D. I was a Materials Lister in the electrical group, and that was where I met Colton Somers, an Aruba Refinery Power House employee with two year's service. Colton told about his life in Aruba and I was intrigued. He also worked in the Listing Division.

TRANSFER TO ARUBA

I transferred to the Aruba Refinery from S.O.D. in August 1943. I started as a sub-foreman in the Electrical Department.

To get there, I traveled for 36 hours from New York to Miami by train, and flew KLM to Aruba by way of Cuba and Jamaica. I was traveling as a bachelor because war time restrictions kept Mildred from obtaining a passport. I stayed two nights at the Miami Colonial Hotel waiting for the KLM flight. While I was there I met Joe Rosetti, the lab glass blower known to his co-workers as Joe Blow. He was returning to his job in Aruba after a visit home. He updated me, a green horn, on some of Aruba's customs. On Arrival, I was billeted in single room in Bachelor Quarters Number Eight, but I shared a bathroom with two naval officers. I was there until Mildred obtained her passport, then I was

assigned a three-room bungalow on the main road. She arrived in Aruba in early December. We stayed at that location several months before moving to Bungalow 221, and we lived there for the next 13 years.

MY JOB IN ARUBA

I started as an Electrical Sub-foreman, eventually becoming Zone Foreman. My next assignment was as an Assistant Zone Supervisor in the Mechanical Department zone organization. My tenure in Aruba lasted from August 1943 until May 1957, at which time I arranged a transfer back to S.O.D. which by that time had changed the name to Esso Research and Engineering (ER & E.). I left Lago because Mildred was not well and the proper type of medical help for her was not available in Aruba.

THE LAGO COLONY SCHOOL SYSTEM

Not having any children, we didn't get too involved with the school program. When Dean Thompson was school principal he prevailed upon Mildred to fill in as a kindergarten teacher until he could get a permanent replacement. She did her best for a few weeks, but gave it up because she didn't feel she had the proper training for a kindergarten group. Her teaching experience had been with elementary children. I believe Dean got Mrs. Curley Minton to take the class after Mildred.

COLONY HOUSING

As I remember it, housing was assigned according to the size of the family, but your job level could be a factor. The house we lived in the longest, Number 221, was a one bedroom unit. I didn't know much about the procedures for bidding on another larger or better situated dwelling. When we left Aruba, 221 was one of the few bungalows left where the occupants were still paying basic rent. We had spent quite a bit of money on improvements, a patio, garage, fences, and so on, but we never turned over the improvements to colony service. I believe the maintenance schedule called for a complete renovation every four years, at which time colony service moved you to a "paint house" while yours was worked on. Bungalow 221 was one of the only completely air-conditioned houses in the colony. We had window unit in the bedroom, a large wall type console unit in the living room and in the kitchen, a homemade unit which Howard Stoddard and his refrigeration boys built for me.

A THANK YOU TO THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

For myself, I had no ax to grind with the Medical Department. I think the doctors and nurses did a good job. During the last couple of years they did what they could for Mildred.

HIRED HELP

Our experience with maids was for all practical purposes quite satisfactory. We had part time girls two or three days a week. During our 13 years of residence, we had only three girls. In each case we were very pleased with what they did. Mildred always treated our maids well and they seemed to respond accordingly.

THE ESSO CLUB LIBRARY

As you may recall, Mildred was the librarian at the old temporary club for five years and two years at the new club. She was first hired in mid-1944 by Andy Wetherbee, the club manager, to replace Mrs. Sid Tucker. Mildred thinks her salary was two and a half guilders an hour. Since she didn't work full time she was considered a local hired casual employee. Her normal hours were 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Monday evening. After the war Bob Vint was club manager, and for a while, Martin Czechowitz was Bob's assistant. Mildred says the library was a haven for all the bachelors and married men on single status, and she got to know all the new arrivals. As soon as their families came or they got married she didn't see them anymore. There was a large red comfortable sofa in the library. Military officers all seemed to enjoy lounging in it, and, I guess, dreaming of the comforts of home. The old club was overrun with field mice and Mildred was kept setting traps to keep the critters from eating the glue from the book bindings. One mouse family was born in her desk drawer.

Mildred was relieved from her duties as club librarian when the new club opened in 1949. Lago management decided that Margaret Wade's news stand at the colony post office would be closed. Joe Abadie proposed that Margaret could open her stand in the new club library, but for the privilege, she would have to run the library as well. Naturally Margaret placed the emphasis on her own business and the library and its patrons were the losers. This went on a couple of years until they separated the library from the news stand, and Bob Vint had Mildred come back to run the library for another two years. She gave up the job when she started having health problems.

THE COLONY ESSO CLUB

I served on the club committee for two years, and during my second year on the committee I was the chairman. Serving on the Committee with me were Russell Brace, Wayne Richey, Neil Griffin, Tom Eagan, and a couple of others whose names I can't remember. This was the last committee to serve in the old temporary club. When the new club

opened, a whole new committee was elected to run the club as a dues paying private club. I was the committee chairman when the decision was made to start charging dues for the club, and believe me, I was called some unprintable names by some of my more radical constituents.

Concerning the dues at the club, here are the facts as I remember them. For a long time Lago management (Joe Horigan in particular) were upset about the high cost of running the club. The committee was always being asked to come up with activities for raising revenue--raising bar prices, movie ticket prices, etc., or even paying monthly dues. Naturally the committee represented all the non-management residents and resisted like a bulldog guards his bone. The movie concession at the club was run by de Veer who controlled all movie houses on the island. The censorship committee for the island government was fairly strict about which movies could be shown, and they decided age limits for movies. Censorship rules did not apply to the Esso Club, and de Veer was free to import any films, and all ages in the colony could attend with no restrictions. When the contracts for showing movies in the new club were being discussed someone in the government asked why government censorship didn't apply to the Esso Club, and they wanted to know if that wasn't discrimination. The answer by Lago management and the Esso Club Committee was that it wasn't discrimination because the Esso Club was a private club. The government didn't buy the private club story because anybody who lived in Lago Colony, young or old, could attend all club functions including the movies. There were also about 100 non-colony residents on the island who had special guest privileges at the club. To resolve this question, a meeting was arranged for in Oranjestad at the office of the government's legal representative. The government's legal man, J.J. Horigan, as the Lago Management Representative, and I, as the chairman of the Esso Club Committee, were in attendance. On the day of the meeting I was excused from my usual Electrical Department duties for the afternoon. At noon I went home, changed out of my normal working clothes, dressed up and went down to Mr. Horigan's office in the main office building. Before we left for the meeting we discussed strategy. Then the two of us got in his big chauffeured limousine and motored over to Oranjestad. For a long time afterwards I took razzing from most of my friends about that ride with the big boss. At the meeting both Horigan and I made our pleas to allow the Esso Club to retain its special status. The government man told us that the only way this could be allowed, without having the rest of the non-Lago people on the island yelling discrimination, was to make the Esso Club private in the eyes of the law. This meant requiring membership be entirely dues paying.

Subsequently I called a meeting of the Esso Club Committee to advise them of the outcome. After much soul searching the Committee decided to have flyer distributed which explained the pros and cons of having dues for the club. There was then a referendum vote where the majority of the members voted in favor of having dues after we moved into the new club. Many members, although they voted in favor, felt our committee had not fought hard enough to prevent dues, and that we had sold out to the management. We took a lot of flak and not one member, including me, would agree to run for the new committee. It was most likely that none of us would have been elected had we run. Our committee turned over the reins after the new club had been formally opened.

The grand opening of the new club was a gala affair. We asked Horigan to make a presentation speech at the opening ceremonies. As you probably remember public speaking was not one of Joe Horigan's long suits. He seemed to freeze when he got up in front of an audience; it was a shortcoming he never got over. He agreed to take part in the ceremony but refused to speak. Bob Vint, the club manager acting as master of ceremonies, first introduced Horigan as the management representative to the audience, and then he introduced me as chairman of the club committee. As such, I was a representative of the colony residents. Horigan without saying a word walked across the platform and handed me a large wooden key. This gesture was supposed to symbolize management turning over the club to the people. I said thank you to Horigan, and I made the new club inaugural speech. I don't remember a single thing I said and I doubt anyone else does either.

ARUBA GOLF CLUB

While we are on the subject of clubs, a word about the golf club. One year I ran for the gold club committee and was elected. At the newly elected committee organization meeting I was appointed to the secretary's job. Of all the jobs I have ever done in my years of public duty, serving as the secretary of the Lago golf club was the toughest, most thankless job I ever had. It is the secretary who sets up and runs the men's tournaments. Thank heavens the women's events were run by a separate ladies golf group. In addition to running tournaments, the secretary was responsible for posting men's' handicaps. In order to determine the handicaps, all golfers dropped their score cards in a locked box in the men's' locker room after each round. As secretary I had the only keys for the card box. I removed the cards regularly and took them to a locally hired employee who worked in the accounting office at the main office building. After his regular working hours this man would

tabulate all the scores listed on these cards under the member's name. The club paid the man for the extra hours he put in preparing the handicaps, and he was allowed to use Lago's calculating machines. Once a month he totaled the scores and using a formula recommended by the United States Golf Association to determine a handicap for each member based on their performance. He gave a copy of the results to me on the first of each month and I posted these handicaps on the locker room bulletin board at the golf club. Because of the uproar in the locker room when I first started posting handicaps, I started waiting until I knew the place was empty. I tacked the list to the bulletin board and beat it for home before anyone saw me. One evening after posting new handicaps my home phone rang. An anonymous voice said, "MacMillan, you are a son-of-a-bitch," and they hung up. You might say some of these golfers took the game seriously. Many of them were far more interested in other golfers' handicaps than their own. All I could tell them was that we calculated handicaps on the basis of records turned in. If they thought their fellow golfers were cheating, they should tell them and not me.

On the tournaments no matter what we did to make the pairings as we thought they should be, someone always had a different opinion. What we decided to do was write 'em like we saw 'em and let the chips fall where they may. As you might imagine, at the end of my year as secretary, I did not run for re-election.

ARUBA PHILATELIC SOCIETY

Regarding the stamp club, it was organized in 1945 or 1946, I'm not certain exactly when. Present at the first meeting were Reede Holly, Fred Bucholtz, John Hamelers, Marchant Davidson, Tom and Elenore Woodley, myself, several other men, and a couple of women. We met in the Colony Service Meeting Hall in the mechanic shops across from the colony commissary. At the first meeting we decided to call ourselves the Aruba Philatelic Society. I believe Reede was our first president. After we got going as a group, we began having our monthly meetings at the homes of various members. Several Oranjestad collectors joined our group, and the society became an island wide activity. Reede and I were invited to speak to a group of Lago Heights Club members about stamp collecting as a hobby. We prepared charts, slides, etc., and put on a comprehensive demonstration for a large and appreciative audience. The largest function hosted by the society while I was in it was the issuing of a special Christmas cover. Most of our mail was handled by the San Nicholas Post Office. St. Nicolas and Santa Claus were different ways to say San Nicholas, so we would post our covers (envelopes) on Christmas Eve from the San Nicholas Post Office with a cachet on the cover that

said, "Greetings from Santa Claus." We got the San Nicholas postmaster to agree to have all the covers postmarked December 24 if we brought them to him before closing time that day. First we ordered 1,000 envelopes with our red cachets from a Newark, New Jersey publishing house. Announcements printed in two of the leading US stamp magazines advertised our offer to send greetings from Santa Claus for 25 cents each, or five for a US dollar. I can't remember the exact figure, but I think we mailed about 700 covers. Two things helped to make the project a success. The Post Office issued a new commemorative stamp in early December and we were able to buy them for use as postage on the covers. The Aruba tourist commission had begun a promotion, and they gave us a supply of advertising post cards with a lovely picture of Palm Beach. These we slipped into the Santa Claus covers. For a few years after I left Aruba I continued to correspond with club members, and they sent me new stamps as they were issued. I have lost contact, but as far as I know, the club is still active.

Bob Baggeley senior was a stamp dealer. He was never a member of the club but most members bought albums, catalogs, and stamps from him. Bob handled his stamp business in his house as a side line, and he had philatelic contacts all over the States and in Europe. He planned to become a full time dealer in Texas after he retired. I understand that after he retired he got involved in something else and never did get into the stamp business.

The Arthur S. & Dorothy MacNutt Story

Arthur Smith MacNutt, “Art”, was born on July 31, 1913, in Los Angeles. He graduated Redondo Union High School and Compton Junior College. He was in the high school band and orchestra, and participated in track. In those days he spent most of his time at the beach with his surf board. He was an ardent surfer.

ART'S FAMILY HISTORY

My mother and father were from Canada. The ancestor who came over from Scotland, I guess he was on my dad's side, was an elder in the Kirk Church when he came to Canada in the late 1600's. My dad and mother were both born in Nova Scotia and they immigrated to the United States circa 1900. My dad, Gordon MacNutt, was a lead burner for thirty years. He and his brother worked for the Standard Oil of California's El Segundo refinery for 34 years. My mother's name was Georgetta Lewis, and my middle name is Smith, a family name on my mother's side. My great uncle, George Smith, was an old sea dog.

When I knew George Smith, he was quite elderly. He was the one responsible for my love of sailing. He went to sea as a cabin boy, worked his way through the ranks to become the skipper of three-masted schooners under the Canadian flag. My father didn't like the sea; it made him seasick to watch it, much less sail on it.

I have a sister, Marian, who was born in 1907 and lives in Oceanside, California, not far from Camp Pendleton. My older brother, Gordon Lewis, was born in 1909. He went to Aruba in 1928 as one of the pioneers who helped build the refinery.

We were in Scotland on a job there for about 18 months a few years ago. While there I spent some time looking for our family. We even traveled to Edinburgh, but were unsuccessful at locating anyone. Our people had been gone too long.

I stored my things in California with my sister when I went overseas. In one of the numerous floods, I lost all of my books. It was a great loss since one of them traced our family tree back to the time when they left Scotland. Also lost was the big cutaway model of a full rigged three-masted schooner that my great uncle George Smith had built.

ARRIVAL IN ARUBA

I arrived in Aruba in 1934 aboard the old oil tanker the S/S *Esso*

Aruba while I was vacationing. I was traveling with G. Lewis MacNutt, Mary Corporan, and Mrs. Corporan, who were returning from a vacation in the States. In later years I sailed on the oil tanker the *S/S Paul Harwood*, the *S/S Santa Clara*, of the Grace Line, and a Reidermann tanker in 1936.

DOROTHY'S STORY

I was born in Corozal, Canal Zone, Panama. I attended the local high school, and was mostly involved in swimming. During my early years, my dad was the army's head of the telephone and telegraph in Panama.

Art and I have been married 47 years come July 16, 1985. We met in Panama when he was on vacation. He wanted to marry me right then and there after a hasty courtship, but my mother and dad said no. My Dad said to Art, "You go back home and for a while and let's see if this thing is serious."

He made me wait until I was sure, a period of three months. I finally heckled them until they let me go. As an eighteen year old, I thought I knew it all. Mother was unable to go because of her severe asthma, and I went alone on the *S.S. Colombia*, a passenger ship, to Curacao. I met Judy and Bill Cundiff on the *Colombia* during that trip.

When I arrived, Art wasn't at the dock to meet me; he had overslept. I was so angry; I considered going back to Panama. When we finally got together, Art told me we were to sail to Aruba on the *El Libertador*. Somehow he got his wires crossed; it wasn't scheduled to sail that day. Instead, we arranged to fly on a tri-motored Fokker Snipe, one of the first commercial flights between Curacao and Aruba. We arrived in Aruba June 30, 1938.

We married July 16, 1938, at the government courthouse in Oranjestad, with Freda and Art Krottenauer, Mary and Lewis MacNutt as witnesses. The reception was held at G.L. MacNutt's bungalow and there was a dance later at the old Esso Club. As part of the festivities, the groom was wheeled onto the dance floor tied to Frank Griffin's boy's toy red wagon. I sent a cable to my parents to inform them of our marriage.

Mother eventually came to visit, staying a month while I was expecting Arthur Jr. She had an asthma attack and the doctor told her she would recover more quickly if she got off the island. A week before Arthur Jr. was born she returned to Panama. My sister, Adah, came for a couple of months after our son was born. Art and I and the baby were

living in bungalow 537 when she came on the oil tanker the *S/S Pan Bolivar*.

JOE AND MIN JOSEPHSON

Joe Josephson should not be mentioned without mentioning Min, his wife. She was very protective of Joe. One night at the club they were having a Boxing Event. After the program one of the boxers was heckling Joe. Min hauled off and knocked the heckler down the front steps of the Club.

VIANA AIRLINES

Before the time of the Snipe, Viana Airlines operated a commercial flight between Aruba and Curacao two times a week. The aircraft he used was a twin engine plane fitted with wheels and floats, and it used to land on the flat piece of land just below the acid plant. Young Fred Corporan was the co-pilot on that plane. I can't remember the name of the American who was the pilot, but if I am not mistaken, he also flew for KLM for a few months before leaving Aruba for good. KLM, the Dutch national airline, took over the route when it became profitable.

THE SUBMARINE ATTACK ON FEBRUARY 16, 1942

When the submarine torpedoed the Lake Tankers on February 16, 1942, I slept through the first part of it. Our Aruban dog started making so much noise that when I finally got up to see what the problem was, I could see the fires of the ships burning. I went down the street to the cliffs where I had a clear view of the ocean. I could see the glow above the nearby house tops. I wanted to see what was burning. Since no alarm sounded, I figured they didn't need me at the refinery so I went back to bed. There was nothing I could do anyway.

GOLFING IN ARUBA

Art learned to play golf in Aruba: Of course I was a duffer and had a handicap of something like nine and a half. One time I was in a foursome with Louie Crippen, one of the top players at the time. My partner and his both had a five handicap while Louie's was one. He started giving me a stroke a hole. On the very first time I birdied, and that shook up his game. He gained a couple of strokes on a few holes, but that long five par number five hole had a dogleg to the right. Louie hit one that cruised way out into the coral and cactus, and I knocked one down the fairway. My second shot put me up even with the pin, right off the green. I chipped in, taking a par for the hole. Poor Lou came in with an eight. We beat them by one stroke. Normally he could spot me a stroke a hole and beat me every time; he was that good.

THE 1965 LAYOFF PROGRAM

I left when they offered the 50/15 program in February 1965 and I had 192 days vacation coming which I had to take before I could start drawing my annuities. The program didn't give you any additional percentage for the number of years you had served, but they gave you a severance pay. Your annuity only amounted to 50% if you were 52 years old, and your severance pay depended on your length of service. I had 31 years of service, and my brother, Lewis, had 40 when he retired.

WORK EXPERIENCE AFTER RETIRING FROM ARUBA

During most of 1967 Dorothy, Liz and I were in Rome. At the time I was working with the Overseas Services Company and we were designing a fertilizer complex for Indonesia. The group I was in consisted of only eight people and it was the prime contractor of the \$60 million dollar job. The company farmed out everything. All electrical work, including the distribution system, was farmed out to an electrical consortium, as was the mechanical work. Our company did all design engineering, procuring the materials out of Italy. On weekends, Dorothy, Liz and I took the chance to tour that part of Europe.

One fine day, Tom Malcolm, Joe Proterra, Howard McMillin, and I played together on a golf course just outside of Rome. From February 1970 to October 1973, Dorothy and I were in Libya working for Esso Standard Libya. Len and Pauline Wannop, Ed and Betty Lennep were among those at the airport in the city of Marsa El Brega when we arrived.

Later that day we met Dougald McCormick. He was John's flying instructor in Aruba. I saw Hal Richardson also, but he didn't stay in the area long.

We visited with Len and Pauline Wannop in Saudi Arabia in 1978. A week or so ago, we had a 1984 Christmas letter from them about the happenings for the last few years. They are now in Vancouver, B.C.

Nineteen seventy-eight was the year I was in Saudi Arabia for the Dean Wilkerson Engineering Company, whose headquarters is here in Houston. I met Ken Oliver and Alan Temple in Dhahran airport when I was in Saudi. They both work out of Aramco's Headquarters at 1000 Milam, Houston. They had a job installing some new compressors and running a pipeline for Aramco. I was sent over there to look at the site, and to check the availability of a couple of compressors. The compressors had been in an explosion and fire, and, as you can imagine, they weren't worth a hoot.

Another interesting job I was on was helping to assemble an oil

platform in the North Sea. The quarters for the men who were to be housed on this platform were preformed. They were assembled like building blocks. The compressors mounted on this platform were some of the largest made. Our biggest problem was the weather.¹

¹*Arthur Smith MacNutt died on October 7, 1987, in Clear Lake, Texas, as a result of complications, five days after a splenectomy. He is buried in the Forest Park Cemetery on Lawndale in Houston.*

The John Gordon MacNutt Story

My name is John Gordon MacNutt and I was born September 7, 1944, in the Aruba hospital. My father's name was Arthur S., and my mother's name was Dorothy. I was the second oldest boy of four children in the family. Arthur was the oldest, Roger was the third child, and my sister, Elizabeth, was the youngest.

CHRISTMAS TABLEAU AT THE CHURCH

I remember the tableaux at the church that we had at Christmas time with the manger scene when I was little; I was involved in that for two or three years. Others in the tableau were the Schwartz sisters, Anne and the older sister, Joan, and Scott Montfrans. For a while there after the war at Christmas time there was a manger scene on the lawn at the church. Children from the Sunday school classes would be in costume. There would be Joseph and Mary and the baby Jesus. The three kings were there. There would be shepherds and live sheep. One year they had a live donkey. Several of the children would be selected to care for each animal, at his or her home during the day time. The tableau would be performed in the late afternoons.

TRAINING BY JIM DOWNEY

Jim Downey had us kids either participating in sports, or dancing. I can remember when we were in the first years of elementary school, learning to square dance under Jim Downey. In junior high and high school I was in track, field, baseball, swimming and basketball. Jim came up with some very good teams for Lago.

SCUBA AND SKIN DIVING

I did a lot of water skiing and scuba diving when I got older. Some of the younger Monroe boys, David Brace, his younger brother, Robin, Spence McGrew, and David Norris used to go scuba diving with me. The van Ogtrop boys, Artie Spitzer, and their age group did a lot more skin diving. Our age group probably did more scuba diving; we learned this in the summer recreation program, and our diving equipment came as a part of the program.

SAILBOATING

I can also remember participating in sailboat races, particularly the Sunfish class. On a very windy day David Brace and I sailed in a regatta in Oranjestad and won some medals, and although we were in third place, and weren't supposed to be in the race. The weather was so severe

and we made such a good showing that they felt we deserved recognition for our seamanship.

My older brother, Arthur, was also into Sunfish racing. A Sunfish is no more than a big surfboard with a rounded bottom, and has a thin, removable centerboard set into a slot in the deck. As soon as you get off the beach, you drop it. It has a big sail, but no cockpit. You sit on it rather than in it as you would a Snipe. The Sunfish has a low rail around the deck to keep you from falling off. This class of boat was easy to take in and out of the water, inexpensive, easily controlled, and was very popular in those days.

My uncle Lewis was a real sailor. I wonder if anyone remembers that racing boat he made after 1955.

SCOUTING

Mr. Jack Opdyke was the scoutmaster when I was in Boy Scouts. I went from the Cub Scouts, through the Boy Scouts, and on to Explorer Scouts with Mr. Opdyke. Jack was with the scouting program for a long time.

When I was in the Sea Explorer Scouts we had a six-ton, 120 horsepower harbor launch named the *Pedernales*, after the Lake Tanker that was torpedoed right outside the harbor. We sailed around the island in it. Later, the scouts traded it for a six-ton banana boat, a fishing boat, and a sailboat. We learned much more about sailing with the latter. Its boom, six inches above the deck, knocked us off the boat a few times until we got organized and caught the hang of it. One of those times was when we were out outside the lagoon in the open sea. The sight of those big waves and deep blue water when you fell in was enough to make you remember the boom when you tacked.

On the average, the crew was boys in my age group. I remember Duncan Echelson, Gary Schlageter, David and Robin Brace. The longest trip the scouts ever made - we were in the motor launch when we went down to the southwest end of the island. I can remember one time we went all the way over to the Eagle pier. We met with sizable swells out there even on calm days, but the boat could handle them easily. I rammed the swimming dock in the lagoon near the swimming area several times.

Jim Downey had a boat, and he put Christmas tree lights on the mast during the Christmas season and. On Christmas Eve he anchored in the lagoon and turned those lights on.

VAMPIRE BATS

If you went out the road past B.A. Beach, toward Fontein, you would come upon the bat caves that had vampire bats. A Dr. Bekker from one of the zoos in the States came down to catch some of these bats. He brought his own nets, and enlisted some of kids to help him. Those bats were vicious, and we wore heavy leather gloves to protect ourselves. These expeditions were in the daytime, but the deep caves were dark. We put the nets up over the main opening; I don't recall how they were attached the walls. When we made a commotion inside the cave, they flew into the nets. They had to be removed by hand from the nets. The bats had large claws and teeth.

BANDS

Through a fluke, I organized the first American steel band in Aruba. We got a wild hair and decided it would be a neat idea. Gary Schlageter, Duncan Echelson and I were in junior high and we knew a man named Connors who was 30 years old at the time. Connors had had his own group, the Aruba Invaders, for many years. We approached him and asked if he would be interested in helping us. Enthusiastic about the idea, Connors made the drums for a price. We supplied the oil drums and he cut them and tuned them for us. Connors declined to show us how to make them; he wanted to keep that secret to himself.

It took us about six months to learn how to play them, and we did so for about a year. Sam Speziale, Gary Schlageter, Mark Dittle, and my younger brother, Roger, and I were in it, and my older brother, Arthur, was lead drummer.

We had soprano, alto, tenor, and bass drums. We had some bells, cow bells and things like that. The tunes were played from memory; there was no written music. Because lead soprano was so hard to play, Connors played with the band. Eventually he, Brad Linam and Arthur had to play the pieces together.

The short drum was the soprano; the three perfect five gallon drums I played were the bass. The shorter the drum, the more notes you could get out of it. The soprano drum had about 30 or 40 notes, whereas the bass drums had only three. They were played with a small stick, six inches long and half an inch in diameter. One end of it was wrapped heavy rubber bands to make a ball about one and a half inches in diameter.

We played calypso music that he taught us and just for the heck of it, we tried to play more modern tunes. Love Me Tender by Elvis

sounded quite passable. Marianne and Moses were a few of the calypso tunes we played at a couple of those junior proms, and some beach parties for different class parties. I don't think we had any particular costume. Once we learned how to play the drums we were invited to play at various functions.

Jan Koulman and his wife organized junior and senior bands in the school over the years. They had the instruments you would expect to find in any normal stateside band from bass tubas to piccolos, saxophones, flutes, clarinets, trombones, trumpets, etc. Jan Koulman could play all of them - there wasn't anything he couldn't play.

I can remember Mary Lou Farr as my band teacher and chorus teacher before Jan showed up. After the two of them got married, they taught together for a while. She quit and he took over everything.

THE CHURCH CHOIR

A tenor, I sang in the choir, and I remember Pete Storey because he had such a lovely tenor voice. Pete was in the choir for many years, and we sang together during our high school years. When we went back for the Aruba reunion in 1974, I sang in the choir with Pete once more. In the bass section was Doug Monroe, but I can't recall the others. There weren't that many men in the choir.

THE ARUBA FLYING CLUB

I always wished I had gotten in more flying time in the Aruba flying club. The young people in my age group who learned to fly in Aruba were Gary Schlageter, Arthur, and I think one of the Barnes boys. Arthur's age group was one of the first to start flying out there. I have been trying to remember who my instructor was, and I want to say it was Malcolm Murray - I'll have to look in my log book, it's been a long time.

I soloed after eight hours of instruction and had a total of 13 solo flying hours. I can remember the day I did my first solo. When we landed from the check out flight, my instructor told me to pull off to the side of the runway. I did. He got out and said, "Okay, take it on up." I could look over and see my proud parents watching. There was a little celebration afterwards at the flying club.

SCHOOL HAYRIDES/DANCES

My dad was one of the organizers of hayrides for high school kids. They got a big truck and loaded it with hay. Where they got the hay, I can't imagine, but they did.

I was once in charge of a sophomore dance in high school. Dad got 2000 pounds of sawdust for us, and I spread it six inches deep on the

canteen dance floor. It was really something, but I learned it was hell to clean up. Waxing and polishing that 30 foot by 40 foot youth canteen floor the next day was a chore.

I remember Jan Koulman used to position his very popular 12 piece Caribbean Ambassador Orchestra on the steps of the stage, and we still had plenty of room to dance. Jan and an Aruban fellow were the leaders. They played a wide variety of music, including a combo that they called The Powerhouse Three Plus One. He played the trombone, and they had a drummer, a piano and a saxophone.

Koulman also organized a community band that lasted six years. The band performed while either the flying club put on an acrobatic show, or the Dutch marines gave a close order drill demonstration. I regret I was so young I forgot many of the details.

RADIO

Somewhere about that time, I helped my dad build one of his amateur radio stations. Jim Downey was one of the amateurs, as were Mr. Chapman and Mr. McBurney, who lived across the street. I can still remember the big antenna he had on his roof. Max Sand, a man from Switzerland, and George Hemstreet were two more of them. Ham radio didn't become important to me until I was in Texas A & M studying industrial technology. Our class got into building a superhetrodyne receiver and some other electronic devices. And we had a little ham radio station there at Texas A & M and that's where I got involved in ham radio. In the military we had to have a novice's license, but I never did get my general. Vietnam came along and I got sidetracked.

My dad and I were operating a station just recently. He has a novice's license, but not a general license. With a novice rating you can send code, but not phone or voice. The requirement for the latter is to be able to send and receive 5 words a minute. For a general license, the requirement is 13 words a minute.

My dad put out the first radio club news letter in Aruba.

NEWSPAPER DELIVERY DAYS

At age ten I delivered the Pan Aruban, and I had paper routes for many years. The Pan Aruban was first, and then I graduated to the Herald Tribune, The Miami Herald, The Washington Post, The New York Times, and The Wall Street Journal. After the skinny little Pan Aruban, all of these papers seemed to weigh a ton. I carried anywhere from fifty to sixty papers, and we used some of the largest baskets ever made for a bicycle. There were always 10 or 12 boys who carried them all around the colony. Arthur and I were latecomers in the delivery