

December 28, 1992

The following is written as of possible historical interest and I have not repeated much of what was given verbally to Ed Moreth in an earlier conversation. If there are any questions about this, I will not be home to answer calls until April, 1993 although I will still be receiving mail at my regular address on a very delayed basis.

My electronics training was at Groton, Conn. in the first half of 1946. Classes were held about 43 hours each week plus compulsory night study with instructors performing room checks hourly. There were four students to a room with a large study desk. At the very least the student had better be sitting at that desk with a book open during the assigned hours. I was very enthusiastic about the program and later used what I learned there as the basis for a very fulfilling career in broadcasting. The Coast Guard also paid for advanced electronic correspondence courses from the best school in the country upon arrival at a duty station- Capitol Radio Engineering Institute (CREI). I took full advantage of this opportunity as well as more training at the Navy Aiea Electronics School at a later date. This required being transferred to Navy jurisdiction for awhile.

I loved my work and I guess it showed because I was offered the rate of Chief Petty Officer on my 21st birthday. It was very tempting but I wanted to go on to other things and wound up with a Juris Doctorate degree from the University of Louisville and practiced law in Kentucky for a time.

Russian military people attended the same loran school as we did but with different classrooms and via interpreters. At the time loran was classified "Restricted and Confidential." We couldn't even take our personal notes out of the class rooms and all waste can contents were burned daily under the supervision of an officer. We ate meals with the Russians but they didn't speak English and we certainly didn't speak Russian. Overall we got along with them o.k. In April of 1946 they were suddenly removed from school without finishing the course and that was the last we heard of them. I believe the Cold War started shortly thereafter.

At the completion of school we boarded a train to Floyd Bennett Field at New York City for transportation to the Pacific for duty. I was in charge of the group and we were to have a meal on the train enroute to be paid with government vouchers. When I compared the voucher value with the dining car menu prices I realized that we couldn't order hardly anything at all. I explained the problem to the dining car supervisor. He took the vouchers and said to forget about the prices, order anything we wanted and consider the bill paid in full.

We boarded a MATS (Military Air Transport Service) C-47 with bucket seats at Floyd Bennett with a No. 1 priority to Oakland, Ca. This coast to coast with seven en-route stops took about 15 hours. A Navy admiral with a low priority was bumped off at Phoenix and made quite a scene about we S 2/c staying on the flight. It didn't do him

any good however and we all waved good-bye to him (after his back was turned).

Several days later we boarded a MATS C-54 for a 13 hour flight to Honolulu where we arrived at the Wailupe receiving station for posting to duty stations all over the Pacific. The Wailupe base also included a large primary communications radio station across the road (two lane at the time) where the park is now located. There were many radio towers out in the water and the main building extended over the water. A radio repair Quonset hut and sleeping huts were also located there. There was quite a bit of activity with people going home from war time duty and the replacements going out to duty stations. I bunked next to a grandson of Henry Ford who told me he had received the first Lincoln Continental off the post war production line. I don't remember his first name but the local media was giving him a lot of attention.

On the uphill side of the present Wailupe location were fully equipped large trucks with complete loran stations set up in the trucks needing only interconnecting cabling to go on the air. These trucks were designed to be quickly landed during proposed invasions of Japanese held islands and together with portable antennas be operational on very short notice. I don't know if any were actually used in this manner during the war.

Robert E. Johnson

