

LORAN STATION UPOLU POINT

1947 LIFE ABOARD

By Robert E. Johnson

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STATION PERSONNEL LIST

U.S.C.G. LORAN STATION UNIT 206 HAWI, HAWAII 1946

1- C.O. LT. (JG) JAMES CHRISTMAN

1- MM I/C SANDY _____

2- (ET) S/2C ROBERT E. JOHNSON
(ET) S/2C FRED- HOOSICK

5- SCOPIES _____ DONOVAN
_____ DONOVAN (BRO)
_____ LILJAROOS
_____ MOSKOWITZ
_____ SHUCKMAN

— loran operator

1-COOK (UNTRAINED) S/3C _____ FETZER

1- S/3C MM ASSISTANT RED BARBER

1- RM S/2C LEON COFFMAN _____

1- S/3C _____ CROWDER UTILITY DUTIES

AN OVERVIEW OF LIFE AT UNIT 206 IN 1946

There were no telephones other than one "battle phone" link with "battle wire" laid on the ground to the Navy base at the Upolu airport which was then in a caretaker status. *— 2 miles*
Several wrecked Navy fighter planes lay junked off the end of the runway.

Our only useful communication link was by way of a three hour scheduled link with the Hailupe main radio station on CW (no voice). No contacts were made between 10:00 P.M. and 8:00 A.M. unless we needed to reach them. They were unable to reach us during those hours.

Water came from a spring above the base and raw sewage ran untreated into the ocean.

All electric power was provided by diesel generators 24 hours a day. There were two large generators on line, (one at a time) ~~capable of handling the full load including two reefers (freezers).~~ If both of these failed there were two more smaller generators to run the electronics but most of the other loads had to be shut off. The cook stove and hot water heaters operated on diesel fuel. We had ~~one~~ clothes washer but it was usually out of order and clothes washing was mostly done by hand.

For recreation we could listen to Honolulu broadcast stations at night with very bad interference from our own transmissions. There was no FM or TV service. We could go a movie

4 miles

theater in Kohala off the weapons carrier (an open truck with no top) was operating which was about half the time. No one had an automobile except a Philipino cook who came with his family in late 1947.

There was a photographic dark room but no enlarger so only contact prints could be made. We also had a record player with 16" transcriptions of old radio shows from the Armed Forces Network. One Sunday a month the Parker Ranch graciously let us ride horses on their ranch.

A tour of duty at our base was normally one year and it was considered the best duty base in the Pacific. The Niiahau and French Frigate Shoals bases were six months maximum duty tours. These bases and all others were rated "worse" or "much worse." Service at several bases in the Far East meant contracting malaria and there was no complete cure at the time. Morale was generally bad. A rather extreme example of this was the murder of the C.O. by one of the crew at French Frigate during this time frame.

In view of the circumstances, food quality should have been a top priority. In point of fact it was not and I do not know the reason except possibly that there were severe budget constraints. All bread was baked on premises and the flour was maggot infested. In spite of sifting the maggots were baked in the bread and at first we tried to pick them out but later in period nobody cared. A basic staple was canned ox tongue from leaky gallon cans. Suprisingly no one died as a result. All other food was canned, there never was any fresh produce. A monthly trip was made to the Air Force or Army base at Hilo where rations were drawn, but on the return trip via the old coast road frozen items thawed and were then refrozen.

After a year of this I decided there was nothing to lose by taking drastic action and I (a S2/c) wrote a personal letter to a Lt. Cmdr Weir I met earlier in the engineering section at Pier 4 District Headquarters. I had it hand delivered to him personally by a scopic sent to Honolulu for dental work. Two days later a Grumman Goose amphibian landed at Upolu with an inspection team and the C.O. was read the riot act. Shortly thereafter a REAL cook from the Admiral's staff was brought in and the C.O. was required to submit daily menus to headquarters. The food was just fine after that. My part in the matter was never disclosed or at least never acknowledged by anyone.

I would welcome any communication from anyone who served at Unit 206 during the 1946-1948 era.

Robert E. Johnson





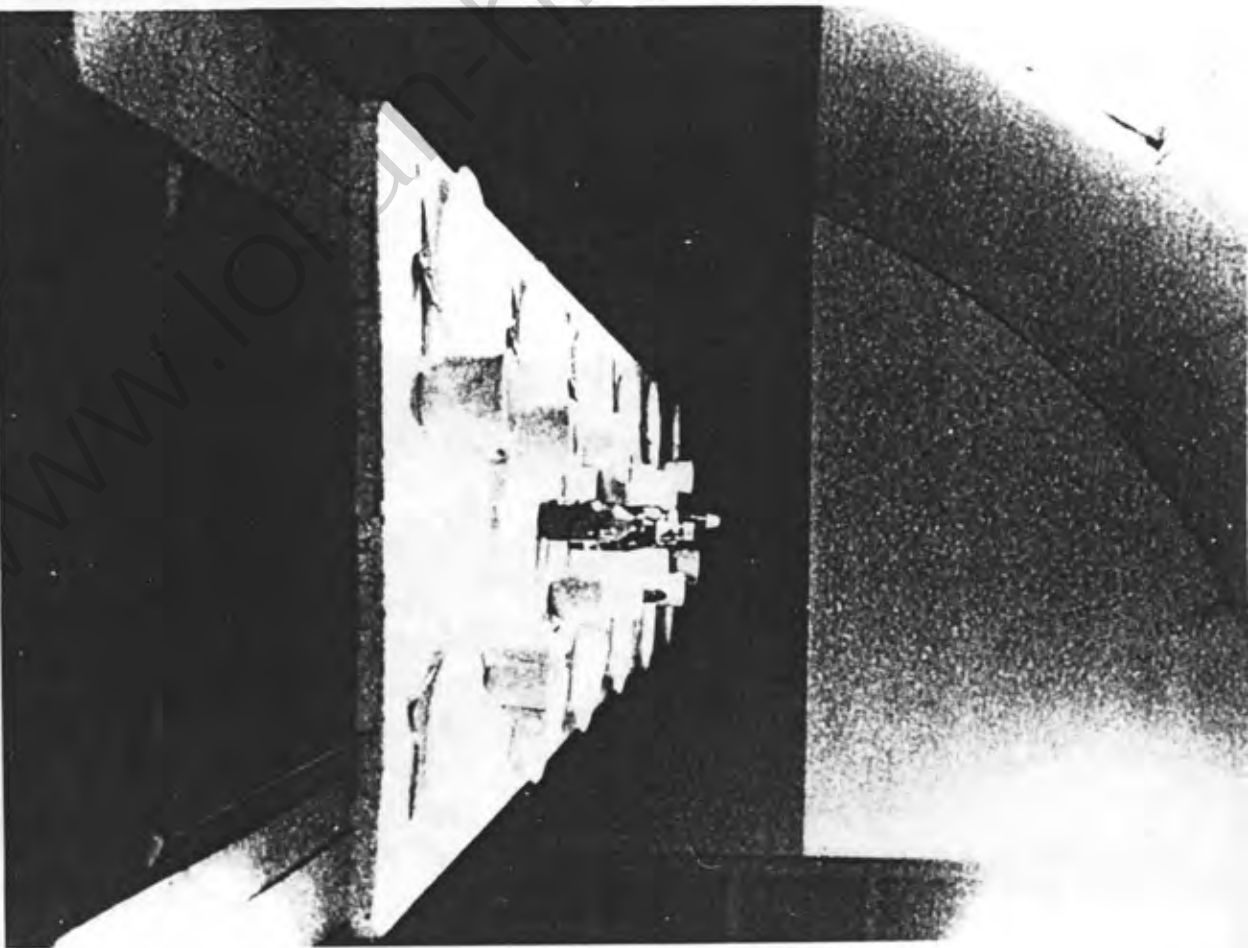
U.S.C.G. Grumman Goose at Upolu Airport, Hawi, HA.
Used for personnel transport from Honolulu on
about every six weeks schedule. 1947



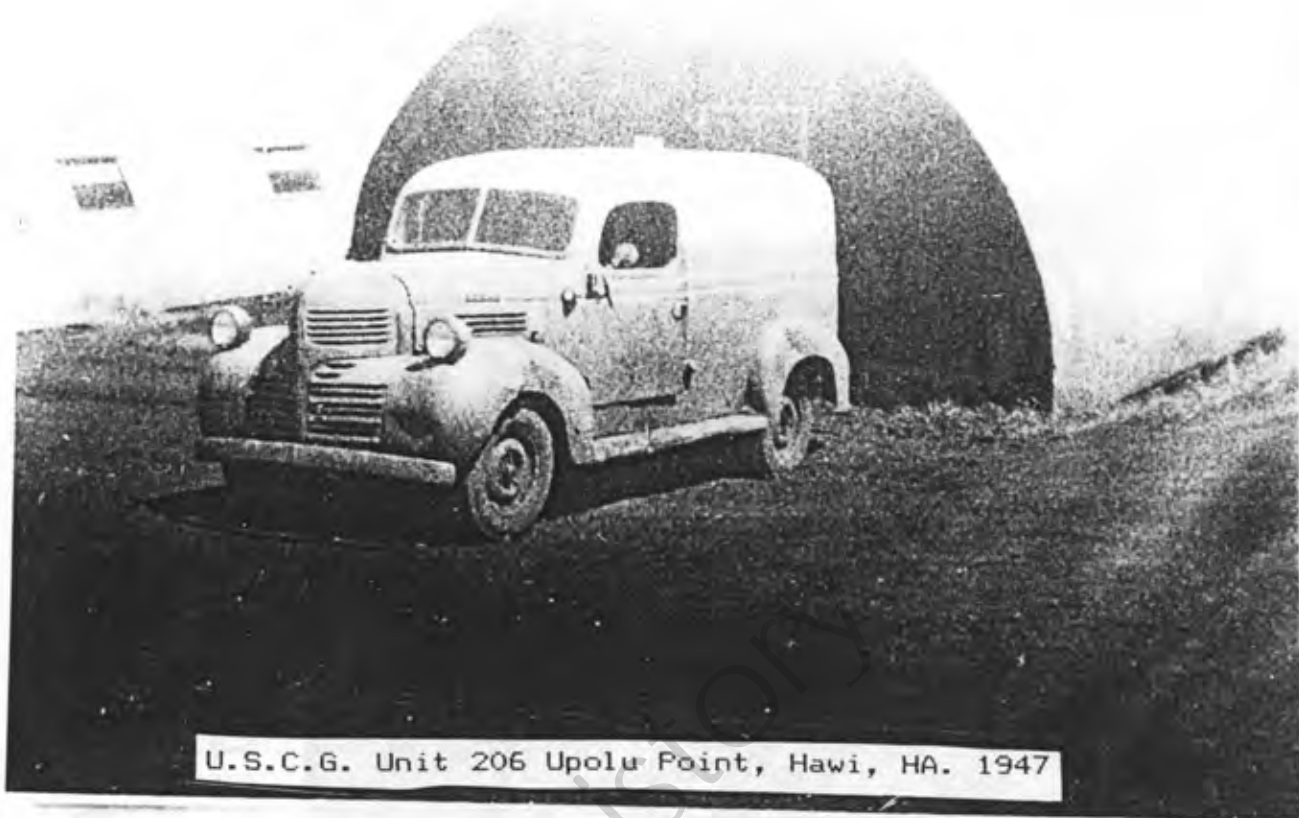
Sandy _____, MM at Upolu Airport, Hawi, HA. 1947



U.S.C.G. Unit 206 Upolu Point, Hawi, HA. 1947



Mess Hall U.S.C.G. Unit 206 Upolu Point, Hawi, HA. 1947

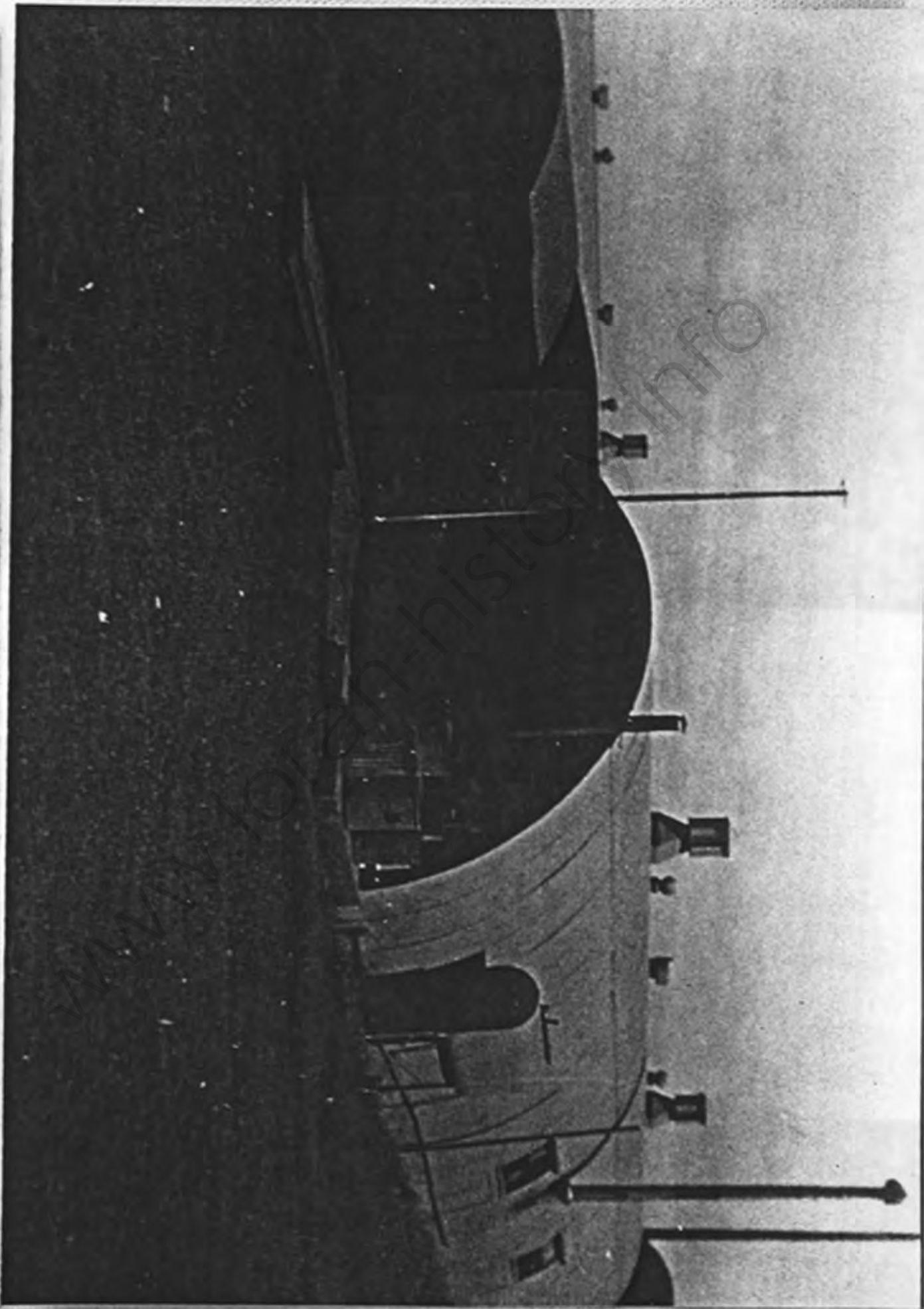


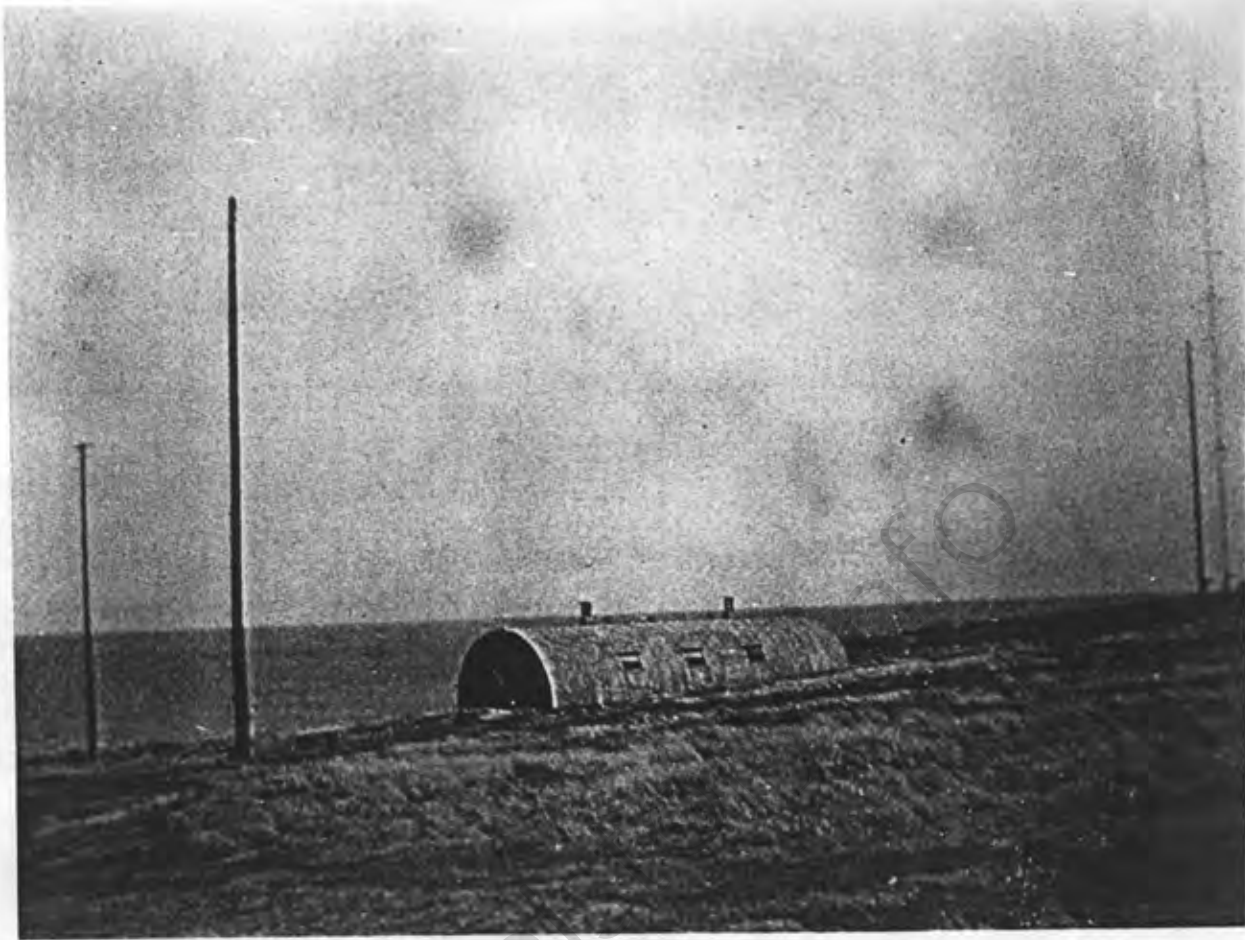
U.S.C.G. Unit 206 Upolu Point, Hawi, HA. 1947



U.S.C.G. Unit 206 Upolu Point, Hawi, HA. 1947

Rear of mess hall and kitchen. U.S.C.G. Unit 206
Upolu Point, Hawi, HA. 1947





Transmitter building and antenna systems.
U.S.C.G. Unit 206 Upolu Point, Hawi, HA. 1947



U.S.C.G. Unit 206 Upolu Point, Hawi, HA. 1947



U.S.C.G. Unit 206 Upolu Point, Hawi, HA. 1947



A LORAN TRANSMITTING STATION