

Life on the Beach

We finally DID get to enjoy life as a family 'on the beach' in Hawaii.

It was not until my third year in Hawaii - 1962 after I had commanded a 35th Infantry (Cacti) rifle company in 1959, attended the New Zealand Army Staff and Tactics course for three months in 1960, became the S-3 Operations Officer of the 27th Infantry (Wolfhounds) and travelled to Thailand's jungles in 1961 to learn about how to cope with fighting and existing in that kind of jungle environment that we lived a very relaxed and recreational life where we moved to in 1961-62.

I took advantage of the comparatively quiet time for the 25th Division - the beginnings of the Vietnam War was a few years away - to move with family to Mokuleia beach due north of Schofield Barracks.

We spent a wonderful year living in a cottage RIGHT on the beach, which as you can see from the photo below taken from our 'front yard' was virtually deserted 90% of the time. There were several reasons for that.

First of all, the northwest shore of Oahu is the longest way from Waikiki and Honolulu, which you have to reach

either in a rented car or tour vehicle.

Secondly the cottages right on the beach were originally owned by the Sugar Cane managers, where the cane stretches even today southward up the slopes toward Schofield Barracks. In fact is it only about a 5 mile drive down through the cane fields to reach the beach.

Thirdly the cottages along the beach have a 'frontage road' behind them and there are only a few, state owned, strips from that road to the beach where visitors can park and walk.

Fourth, that roadway goes past deserted Air Corps Dillingham Field and around famed Kaena Point (which had that Army radar station that detected the enemy planes coming, but which information junior officers at Pearl Harbor ignored while over which the Japanese planes flew on to bomb Pearl Harbor). But it was, at the time we lived there, a dirt road around the point that the Rental Car Companies refuse to let tourists drive over. So very very few cars passed by behind out house. You can see that point in the photo below.

So we had that magnificent stretch of beach virtually to ourselves and those few families who also lived in the small homes.



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I took this picture from the edge of the beach in front of our cottage.

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Here is a picture of what we saw out our front window of our cottage

Mokuleia is also an ancient Hawaiian fishing grounds. For the shallow reef extends out for over a mile. Some evenings we could see the torches of locals who venture out to catch fish. Really large fish do not venture in close to the beach, although smaller sharks often chase sting rays fairly close to shore, causing a great splashing commotion in the shallow water very close as they try to shake off the sharks. And of course eels lurked in every

reef cropping.

Once in a while we could see whales blowing and surfacing beyond the edge of the reef.

We had over 50 coconut trees right in our front and side yard. Young David could shimmy up those trees with ease. And he went to elementary school - 2d grade I think - barefoot, in Waialua, just a few miles to the east. He was, being not a native, considered by the natives who made up the majority of the students, a **HAOLE**

There was one problem with those coconut trees. They had plenty of coconuts high on them - a good 15 to 25 feet up. Whenever we held evening beach feasts and parties for officers of the Battle Group and their wives, as they milled about drinking my famed 'Fishhouse Punch' on the grass where the lighted torches were, I was always worried that a coconut would decide to fall - and brain either one of the officers or their wives.

It never happened, but we would hear the occasional 'thump' as they fell, day or night.



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This is our 'front room' and kitchen behind the counter, with young David on a stool.

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And of course we would go 'native' at the drop of a hat.

And we would even make our Christmas Card tropical, while our Christmas Tree was something called Ironwood

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Seasons Greetings
and
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But of course the real draw was the sea itself. And we would spend every day doing something on the beach or in the water. It was Paradise.

The only bump in our married road came when Patsy, pregnant, miscarried a fetus at about 3 months. Cindy Adams, next door, took care of David and Rebecca while I hung out in the hospital. There were no complications. It was that our next child would not be born in Hawaii, but Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

I would go out with my snorkle, a spear gun and try to spear the delicious clawless lobsters that abounded around the reef. Then we would cook them over a fire right on the beach.



When I finally got the recipe from a reluctant fellow beach bum for making Fish House Punch, I started up a batch of that. That involved getting a 5 gallon class jug (the type the local 7UP plant used), put the ingredients in it - basically Rum - put the whole jug down in the sand with only the top sticking up, let it moulder for a week,

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then ply all our guests - from Schofield, or up and down the beach - with it.

Fish House Punch

2) - 1/5ths dark rum (Don Q ...not Meyers)

1) -1/5th brandy (Grener French)

1 1/2 pints lemon juice

1 pint strong tea

1/4-1/2 lbs sugar (add up to 1/2 lb as needed)

1 wine glass peach liqueur

Let sit for 1 week ----gets better with age. Very expensive and VERY POTENT.

Guests would get properly snockered and then we all would swim out and spear our own lobsters for dinner by torchlight.



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While we were interested in the lobsters, there were so many colorful tropical fish that Patsy and the two children loved to wade out on the reef at low tide, look at them swimming around, and young David like to try and spear them.

I even tried to start a salt - ocean water - aquarium. Got about a 20 gallon glass sided tank, took a slurp gun - a transparent plastic tube with a plunger at one end, swam out with glass and snorkle and sucked in a variety of just colorful fish and put them in the tank.

That lasted about 2 months, until I caught a small octopus, tried to put it in the aquarium with all the other

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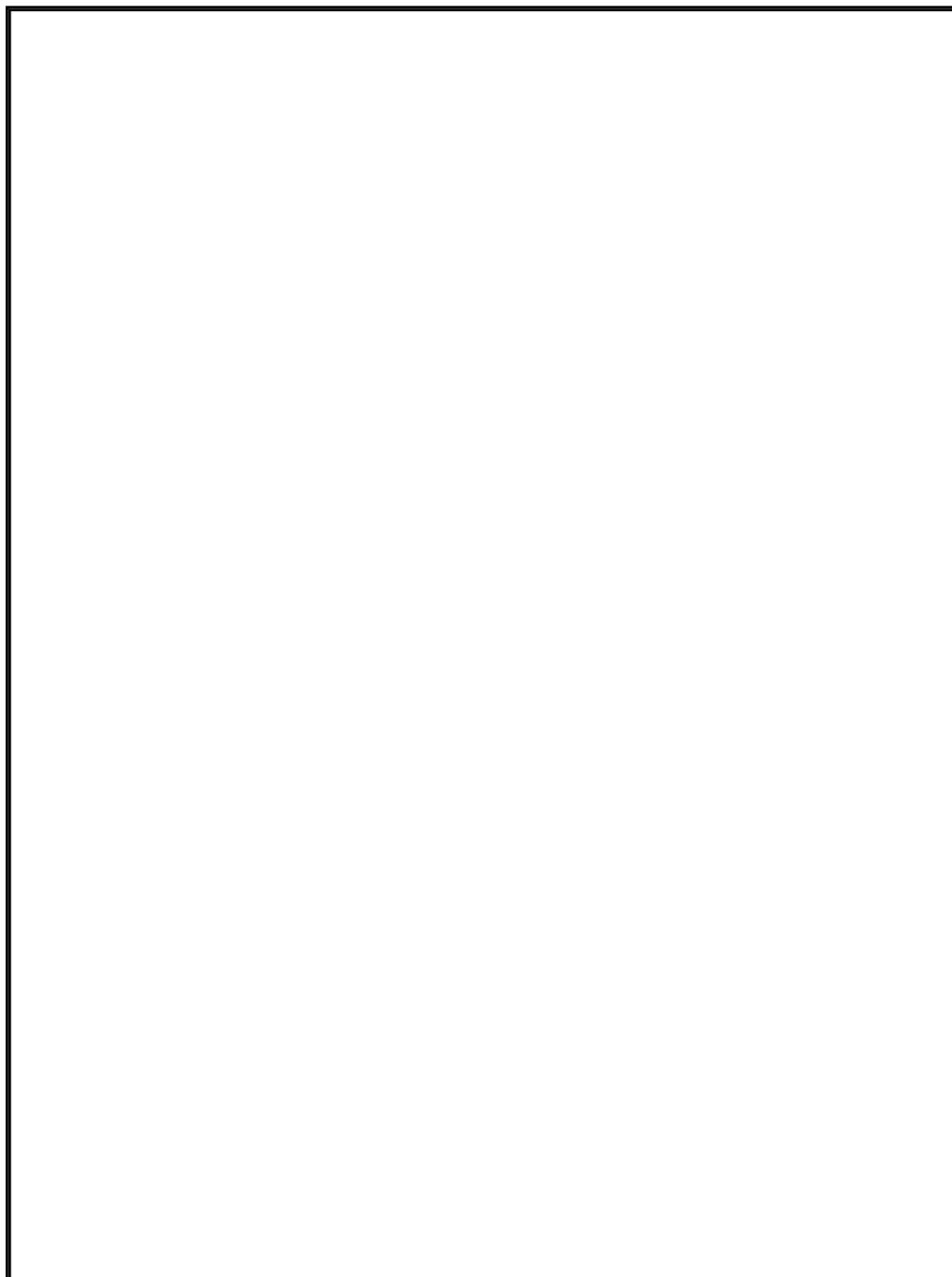
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critters, but it kept climbing out of the tanks. The labor to keep all the fish and tiny 'horsemen' and octopus alive got to be too much trouble, so that ended. Below is Patsy with the net the octopus is in.



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Patsy and our Octopus

One of the lasting (50 years) keepsake from those Beach

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Living Days was a colorful fish I speared and mounted - more from its famous name that gave rise to a song about Hawaii in the 1930s. One line in the song is

"...and the humuhumunukunukuapua go swimming by"

Here is that mounted fish I speared 50 years ago



An Hawaiian waters
humuhumunukunukuapua

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And of course the children thrived.



Becky in her mumu



Listening to the world's sounds

But all good things come to an end. I was preparing to ask for a fourth year in Hawaii - which the usual rules would permit - but I was stunned to get the news I was selected to go for a year at the Command and General

Staff College to graduate from it. Rats!

So that nipped our Tropical Paradise plans in the bud. So sadly in April of 1962, Patsy, I, David and Rebecca packed our bags, drove our Morris Minor down to the dock at Pearl harbor to be loaded, and we boarded the ocean liner. But the Aloha spirit was still alive, as a whole gaggle of friends from Schofield Barracks showed up in our stateroom, to party with us before sailing.



You can see me getting kissed, Patsy is up there in the back with a crown on, bemused David and Becky are to the right of center. A few other departing military

families were there too.

So sadly we sailed back to the US - where we would live for a year in lovely, hot, dry Leavenworth, Kansas. Aloha.

A Sad/Happy Epilogue

Just a week before the love of my life, Patsy died, her greatest friend, Cindy Adams, herself getting elderly, was able to talk by telephone to Patsy, and then send an hilarious story about Life on the Beach which the two of them kept secret from both their husbands - me - and Charlie Adams, all these 60 years. Here it is full text, just as Cindy wrote and sent it, and I put it here.

HELICOPTER STORY: (For Patsy from Cindy, her best friend)

Once upon a time many long years ago there was a beautiful, beautiful island and the name of the island was Oahu and the people who lived there loved the greenery, the flowers, the ocean and the coral reef. One young captain warrior who was American and his wife who loved to wear bikinis and their two children lived in an ocean front house.

The children were quite- young and quite blonde and the natives of this beautiful island were dark -skinned; some were Hawaiian and some were Portuguese. The children went to school with these little Hawaiian children and the Japanese children, they rode a school bus and the school bus was a big

orange bus and it was driven by George and Annie. It would come down the little gravel road behind the house and the radio would be going full blast with George and Annie and all the children would be squealing.

They would go through the cane fields and wind up at the school that looked like something out of a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. Anyway, one day the mother just for the heck of it - let's call her Cindy) loved to sunbathe and she was lying out in the front of her house at the edge of the ocean – (there was a very narrow strip of sand) in her favorite bikini having a wonderful sun bath and her next door neighbor and dearest friend was Patsy. Patsy and Cindy sometimes got into a little mischief –(not intentionally mind you) but things seemed to happen to them - people called them Lucy and Ethel and probably some people called them other things. One day Cindy lying out in the bikini having a wonderful sun bath and a helicopter descended right over where she was – it was stirring up grass and sand.

She thought “oh, that idiot”, but she was getting kind of use-to people hovering in helicopters if you spend much time in bikinis on the beach, I guess. There was a passenger in that helicopter and he kept pointing and making gestures and them took off. A little while later Patsy called me and said, "Cindy come over here, I want you to swear on the Bible." It wasn't an ordinary request like come get a cup of coffee - come swear on the Bible - didn't sound like Patsy. I went over and she sure enough had a Bible and she said, "Now David's career and Charles' career probably depend on what's going to happen and maybe on what's already happened. You are sworn to secrecy and so am I."

It seems like a Lt. Col. Metz was a Battalion Commander of her husband's outfit had called Patsy and had made arrangements for an anniversary party for a couple (newlyweds) in their Battalion and it was to be a surprise. Now the surprise was to be that (this was their first year anniversary) Patsy was to turn her house over to this young couple and Col. Metz would see to it that a helicopter brought this young man - didn't tell him where he was going- brought him on orders (field training and camouflage wear and all of that) and told him he was dropping him off in this secret spot on the beach and he was to go up and deliver this package at a house there. Col Metz told Patsy "Cindy was out sunbathing when I came over to show the pilot where to let this young man off on the day he is to do this anniversary drop off and where to pick him up. And Cindy saw me and I know she must have recognized me and she'll be wondering so you have to let her in on the secret too - just swear her on a Bible."

So we went through that and Patsy and I started making arrangements for this anniversary that was coming up that these people didn't know anything about and we didn't know them. We had some fishhouse punch left over from David's promotion party and odds and ends of food but we swore the children (our children) to secrecy, that if a helicopter came to land to just get out of the way it was alright and not to say anything about it.

At the appointed time Patsy and Cindy were watching very carefully and listening - Jody 's husband was a helicopter pilot himself and he was pretty picky and we knew that if Jody found out about this misuse of Government property she probably would tell and our husbands might get into a little trouble but

our husbands didn't know anything about it - we never did confide in them to this day. This will be the first.

Anyway we got everything all ready and we were out watching anxiously for the helicopter and we heard the chop chop chop and saw it coming and then the pilot was coming down and it looked good, he was almost to my spot on the beach in front of my house but he kept on going, the helicopter kept skimming right along. Well, that wasn't supposed to happen, he was supposed to land and let this young man out in a hurry and then take off and not let the helicopter stay on the beach. As we looked the helicopter descended on a grassy spot up the beach (Where the civilian aide for the Army, the VIPs who attended all of the parties and things the military gave the liaison I guess it was with the military - where he had his lovely beach home.)

The helicopter was there and this young man sprang out of the helicopter, full camouflage thinking he was on a secret mission on a maneuver- carrying this package. We were trying to yell "come back, come back, come back," but of course he couldn't hear us with that engine going, so we sent Bucky and fortunately he was fleet-footed and he went running down the sand and we said, "Bucky tell that young man he is in the wrong place, tell him to come here, tell him to come to us." So, Bucky ran down there and he told him and he said, "No, I'm supposed to give it ... " and Bucky said, "No sir, my Mom says for you to go to our house." So the helicopter pilot took off again and came down and landed and let the young man hop out in a hurry, and then because we were sure we were going to be caught (you know helicopters are pretty noisy on a quiet beach) and the young man went running up in Patsy's yard and Patsy was at the door saying, "Come on in, come on in, hurry, hurry,

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hurry." He thought we really were crazy, he was being kidnapped, I guess, and here was this woman saying come on in to her house. He had no idea that his bride was there waiting for him. She had no idea that her husband was supposed to come. She understood that Patsy had been nice enough and kind enough to invite her as a newcomer to come down and spend the night and enjoy the beach and now look who's here - her bridegroom. Oh, then Patsy turned the house over to them and they had the punch and the food and everything else and Patsy and I rounded up the children (swore them to secrecy - and swore each other to secrecy again for good measure) and went to my house with Patsy and her family (they stayed with us while her house was occupied) Patsy and I have to confess looking out the window at her house some that night and Patsy kept getting fussier and fussier about it. She said, "would you believe that he's asleep on the couch!" We stayed up as late as we could.

We thought- well we've done all that we can, if we can just get that young man in the helicopter at the right stop tomorrow morning/and he must not be late because they barely stop long enough to throw him aboard' and then he can go merrily on his way. So we never did tell anybody our story and we were a little uneasy and a little leery that something might be said. But, as it turned out a month later, Patsy was at a party and heard Col. Metz talking and he was telling someone our story, and there we had been so quiet about it. But anyway, we don't know whether the young couple enjoyed their anniversary or not but we do know that we gave it our all.

From the Island of Oahu I'll say aloha now.

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Cindy Adams

Only David, then about 10 years old remembers oddly being asked to sleep at Cindy's house, instead of our house, when that happened. Rebecca, younger, didn't remember it at all. I never knew, being gone at the time, anything about it - until now. 60 years later.