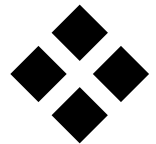


Meadowood Anthology



A publication by and for the residents
of Meadowood Retirement Community

Vol. III, No. 1 ❖ Fall 2007

From the Editor

It's Like Magic...

Each time an edition of the Meadowood Anthology comes together, I'm always amazed at how easy it is. It seems we get a variety of new submissions that "fit" just right – that represent, in some new way, the diversity of the Meadowood community itself.

Of course, it isn't exactly magic. Our editorial board members take time to consider all submissions and make their selections. Then we come together and discuss our choices, and in the process come to consensus on what the issue will contain. At these meetings we talk about changes and improvements to the Anthology.

The real magic comes from our contributors. We welcome our new writers and artists, and cherish our favorites. Thanks to your creativity, the magic continues...

Peace.

Sandy Lynch
Editor

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Meadowood Anthology

The *Meadowood Anthology* is a quarterly publication by and for the residents of Meadowood Retirement Community in Bloomington, Indiana, and is made possible by the Meadowood Memorial Fund.

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Take a Bus

By Olimpia Barbera

[As told to Barbara Restle]

I had not lived at Meadowood very long when I experienced a memorable evening that not only left me soaking wet while wearing a formal evening gown, but also found me chauffeured around Bloomington at midnight in a pizza truck.

The adventure filled evening began innocently, with Mary, who was my neighbor, suggesting that the two of us go together to a performance of an opera production at IU. Mary explained that she preferred driving us herself rather than taking the Meadowood bus. The evening of the opera we drove to the Musical Arts Center (MAC) where we parked in the large parking lot, and walked across the street to the MAC. We thoroughly enjoyed the opera..

After the opera, we found a torrential rain in progress. Mary told me that it was not necessary for both of us to get soaking wet and told me to wait a few minutes, and then walk to the corner of the driveway on Jordan where she would pick me up.

I walked to the corner in the rain and in a few minutes Mary drives up and as I tried to open the front door of the car, I found it locked. Mary could not figure

out how to unlock the door and as I and my formal gown were now drenched I decided to get into the back seat which fortunately was unlocked.

We drove in a hard rain without the windshield wipers. From the back seat I asked Mary to turn on the windshield wipers so she could see where she was going. By this time I figured we had driven about three blocks and I could not see street signs. I couldn't see anything and I knew Mary couldn't see anything either. Mary said she couldn't figure out how to turn the windshield wipers on. It was true that the inside of the car was very dark and there was no way I could help her. However, her next remark was quite alarming.

“Olimpia, I have lived in Bloomington for 35 years and tonight I do not know where I am.” I myself was a new resident in Bloomington and I knew, that on a rainy night, I also would not be able to find my way home to Meadowood. However, Mary had lived here for 35 years and I felt she should know her way home, she should be able to figure out how to turn on the wipers and she should have known how to unlock the front door of her car.

“Mary, I see a pizza place down the street. Let me go in and ask directions.” Mary agreed that this appeared to be the best move to make. Perhaps someone inside could advise us how to get home. Mary parked in a parking lot and I got out of the back seat and went into the restaurant feeling relieved that we had

made a good decision. I left my handbag in the back seat.

The man behind the counter looked at me in my wet formal evening outfit and said he could come out and turn on the wipers. However, I would have to wait a few minutes while he finished serving a customer. When the man and I came out into the parking lot, we found no car and no Mary. I was embarrassed and did not know what this good man must be thinking of me. I was at a complete loss to explain why Mary and the car had disappeared into the rainy night.

The man explained that he was the manager of the pizza parlor and that he would like to help me get home. He asked me where I lived. I told him and he said he did not know where Meadowood was and that he had only recently arrived from Chicago. The only directions I could think of was driving north on Walnut and then turning onto 46. I climbed into his pizza delivery truck and I was immediately aware of the strong aromas of anchovy, salami, and a half dozen cheeses cloyingly attaching to my wet formal gown.

We finally find our way to Meadowood and I guide my chauffeur to Mary's house so I can retrieve my handbag with the key to my front door. I knock on her door and there is no answer. It was now well after midnight. My pizza chauffeur then knocks on the door really hard and there is finally a

response. Mary's husband had been sound asleep and was puzzled as to why I am at the front door with a strange man and not his wife, Mary. I ask for my handbag with my door key inside and he answers that Mary is not home. This is alarming news for all of us. Where is she? And why did she leave me inside the pizza parlor?

My chauffeur, patient man that he is, drove me to the Health Pavilion where we finally were helped and told to wait a few minutes until one of the maintenance men could help us. When the maintenance man arrives he said he would drive me to my house and open my door. I replied that my chauffeur would be happy to drive me, and all I needed was a key. The maintenance man answered that it was against regulations to permit me to go to my home with a man not recognized by a staff member of Meadowood. The manager of the pizza parlor looked embarrassed at the suggestion that the two of us had anything in mind other than getting me home and out of the rain. I embraced him fleetingly and thanked him for all his help.

About one o'clock I was gratefully out of my wet and pizza-smelling clothes when the phone rang. It was Mary. She apologized many times and said the police drove her home. I was too tired to continue the conversation and suggested we talk again at some other time.

The next day Mary brought me a lovely bouquet of flowers and made every attempt to explain leaving me at the pizza parlor. I asked her a question that needed an answer. “Why did you leave me?” Mary answered, “I asked you several questions and you did not answer.” I responded, “Well, I wasn’t in the back seat.” Mary responded again, “Well, you never answered.”

It was not necessary to ask any more questions. I said to Mary, “This will be our secret.” I wanted to respect her.

With this experience in mind, I leave you with one message: TAKE A BUS!



Raccoon Tales

By Ledford C. Carter

Raccoons aspire to be humans. Like humans, their habitats are widely scattered. Like humans, they eat almost anything, cooked or raw. They even have fingers with thumbs to grasp and open things. Their intelligence is uncanny.

As a child, I played with my great-aunt Ella’s pet raccoon in her Moultrie, Georgia, home. A Cajun boy and his pet raccoon are the subjects of Robert Flaherty’s film, *Louisiana Story*.

Raccoons invade rural and suburban homes, but they believe we are the invaders of their territory. Once inside, they have been known to go straight to the refrigerator and open its door. Upon reopening her summer home in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, former Meadowood resident, Mab Parker Beck, found its interior severely trashed. She blamed raccoons who had entered through the chimney. Possibly the Wisconsin raccoons at Mab Parker Beck’s place damaged her house because they did not find food.

When we moved to Meadowood 25 years ago there were woods facing our garden unit on two sides. From our living room window I once witnessed and altercation between a fox and a raccoon. They wanted the same scrap of food. The raccoon won.

On the morning of November 1st about six years ago, I opened the inside door to my screened porch adjacent to the woods to discover its floor littered with sunflower seeds and the shredded bag that had held them. The night before, Halloween, the raccoons striving for domestication, had played “trick or treat.” Behind the mess on the floor was a ripped screen.

I repaired the screen the day I discovered it, and I placed a new bag of seeds in a new 55-gallon metal drum with its lid secured by a strap. That’s where we store sunflower seeds for refilling our two-gallon bird feeder that

is mounted on an animal-resistant pedestal on the lawn outside.

On the evening of the day of our repairs and precautionary actions, my wife heard a strange noise (raccoons can bark, growl, and whine). We quickly turned on the porch light and opened the door to identify two raccoons, clinging to the screen from the outside, staring angrily, eye-to-eye, at our faces. These mischievous creatures had come to laugh at us and tell us they had been there the night before.

There have been many incidents in the same location since then. Once I found the floor trashed and littered, as if to demonstrate their fury at not having been able to remove the lid from the seed drum that was secured by a fiber belt that passes through the drum handles. However, unlike the situation at Lake Geneva, I could find no signs of an aperture that could have provided entrance to my porch.

Another time I noticed a lower panel of the screen on the porch door that had been ripped and parted enough for an entrance. I could find no damage inside, and the door was promptly repaired.

Last December 24th I found torn and scattered bits of fabric from the belt securing the drum holding the sunflower seed. There were no other incriminating signs. I searched both inside and outside for possible places of

entry by raccoons, but could find none. I was mystified. Did rats assault the belt? They could enter through the gap between the screen panels and the floor. If so, their motivation escaped me. I suspect they were recruited by the clever raccoons.

Later in the winter, I opened the interior door to the porch to discover a raccoon resting behind the unopened drum. It quickly escaped through a hole in the screen it had torn. It must have learned that further entry by tearing the screen was useless until the lid of the drum could be opened.

During the next few months I observed the gradual widening of the gnawed laceration on the belt securing the drum lid.

The crisis came suddenly. I opened the door to find the lid removed, the floor littered, the screen torn, and from the can out jumped... a **squirrel**. Aha! It must have been a squirrel that severed the safety belt. Maybe it was a squirrel that had littered the place without an observable entry aperture.

I could tolerate such mischief no longer. I took the drum lid to Kliendorfer's Hardware to get a steel cable with a loop and a clasp to hold it. A Meadowood repairman used these materials to again secure the lid to the drum. However, I instructed him to wait a week before repairing the screen, so that the raccoons could come in

whenever they wished, only to find their larder permanently unavailable. .

Now I intentionally leave the outside screen door unlatched, as if to invite them. There is again peace on the porch.



Spider

By Nancy Seward Taylor

I watch you not go off the frame.

You stay inside.

Why do you impale yourself there?

One limb going off, the other in?

You just hang suspended.

Do I suspend myself in such ecstasy?



Memories of War: A Series

Over the Pacific

Not my Time

By Bernard Clayton Jr.

As a war correspondent in the Pacific theater for Time-Life magazines during World War II, I often flew to the mainland to report to my editors in New York. This time I was aboard a Navy PB2y3 (flying boat).

* * *

It happened in the middle of the night and in the middle of the Pacific. I was alone, smoking – couldn't sleep – seated on one of the benches in the two-deck high open area below and behind the flight deck and forward of the quarters where the dozen or so other passengers, all Navy personnel, were asleep. The captain was in his bunk in a small compartment just below the flight deck. A short ladder connected the two. The copilot was alone at the helm. The plane was flying on automatic pilot.

Suddenly the plane, which was flying at about 6,000 feet, nosed into a steep dive. I sat transfixed and pinned by the force of the dive against the bulkhead behind my seat. I could see the co-pilot, his hands on the steering column, his

feet up and pushing against the instrument panel – pulling back with all the strength in his body to get control of the plane. It was deathly still except for the terrible sound of the air rushing over the wings and through the struts. No yells. No screams. Just silent prayers.

The plane was in a terrifying dive into the ocean and it couldn't be stopped, or so it seemed. The door to the officer's quarters burst open, and out crawled the captain, clad only in his skivvies, fighting powerful G force. He clutched the door sill and the guard rail and fought his way up the ladder to the flight deck. He pulled himself into his seat, grabbed the other steering yoke, jammed his feet against the instrument panel and, pulling with the copilot, tried desperately to control the plane.

My prayer, as I recall, was a simple one: Lord, don't let the steel cables connected to the control surfaces break!

It was strange. While I realized that I was about to be killed, I also knew that the pilots might succeed and I willed them to pull, pull, pull. So be it. There was nothing I could do. It seemed an eternity before I sensed the plane begin to respond and slowly come out of its dive.

The plane leveled off near the water and began a slow climb. The two men dropped their feet to the deck. The captain reached over and gave the

copilot a pat on the shoulder. They had done it. It was over. I felt drained.

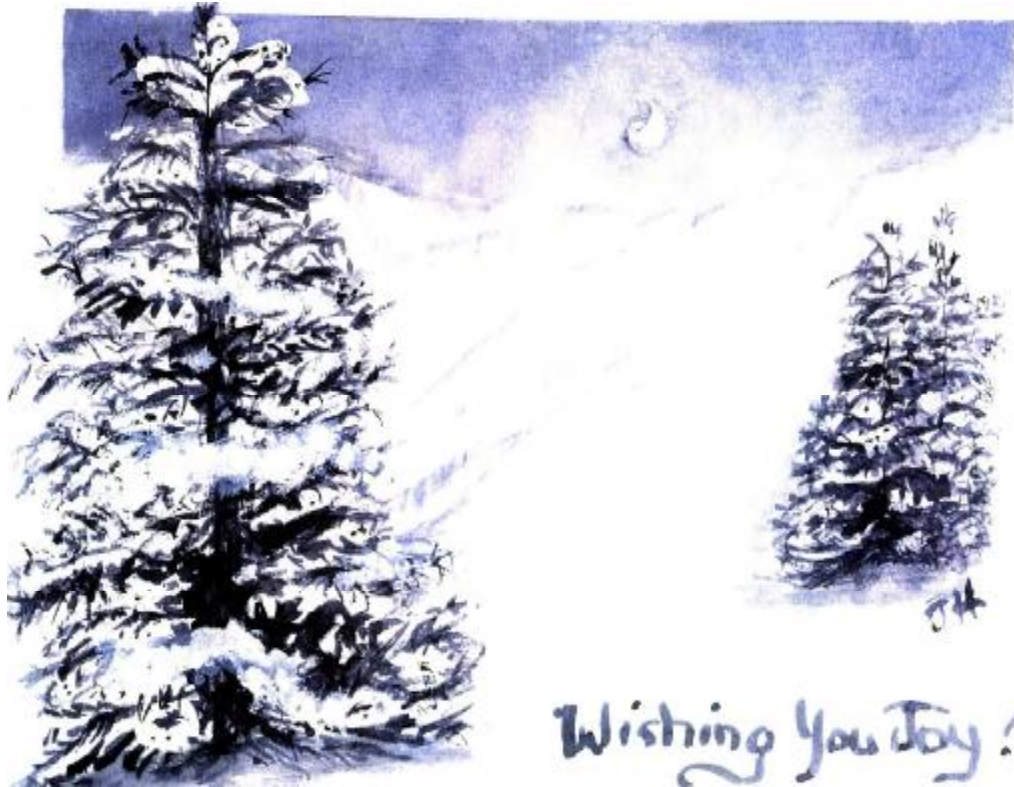
There was a celebration of sorts among the grateful passengers over coffee and Coke when the captain came down to explain that the automatic pilot which suddenly malfunctioned had been filled with faulty fluid in Australia. While it had been drained and replaced at Pearl Harbor Naval Air Station, obviously someone had done a poor flushing job. From this point on, the plane would have to be flown hands-on by a pilot at the controls. On long flights, this is a boring, tedious and tiring job that pilots hate. The plane had been flying at about 150 knots per hour.

When it went into the dive, it reached an estimated 250 knots, the captain said. He said had we crashed, the plane would have been reported missing since he had no opportunity during the struggle to send a radio distress signal to locate us.

The plane would never have been found in the vastness of the Pacific. I didn't ask how close we came to crashing, but the ocean seemed only a few feet away when I looked out of the window to see the waves close by, rolling and breaking in the moonlight.

I guess I didn't want to know.





Holiday Card

By Jean Herrmann

Write about life at Meadowood...

Become a Roving Reporter.

You are invited to write a short account of life at Meadowood for The Roving Reporter column in the *Meadowood Anthology*.

- Acts of friendship you have observed
- What it means to live in a community
- Surprising people you've met here
- Wisdom you have discovered and want to pass along

Limit to 250 words, please. Leave a copy with Jan Skinner in the administrative offices or e-mail to: jan.skinner@meadowoodrc.com

Roving Reporter

By Virginia Gest

I was on foreign assignment in London for the *Meadowood Anthology*.

My British friend Carol invited me to visit her daughter Eleanor's school. The Allen family chooses to live in East London where they are surrounded by immigrants mostly from Pakistan and Bangladesh. For years they had lived abroad so their six children might experience an international world.

Blond and blue-eyed, Eleanor is just 8. We went to pick her up at school and stayed for about an hour during "homework club." Most of the children and teachers are from immigrant families, and my friend Carol regularly helps with English language problems.

I sat down at a low table with Eleanor. The children-- of all shades and colors -- kept looking at me, looking at me. We drew some pictures and I showed them where Indiana is on the map. They drew more pictures for me, and some carefully wrote their names and addresses complete with postal code.

They thought I might be Eleanor's grandmother. "I wish I were," I said, smiling at her. Other children pressed around us. One little boy asked, "How old are you?" I told him. Then he said, "Are you a queen?"

Love that little boy! I suppose gray hair and an older face reminded him of Queen Elizabeth. She was in America that week, with many pictures of her in the news. Maybe I was taking her place in his mind.



WANTED:

**Your stories, memoirs, poems, art, photos, and
yes, even your haiku!**

E-mail submissions to jan.skinner@meadowoodrc.com or drop them by the administrative office. Deadline for next issue is January 18, 2008.

We love our contributors!

The Problem of Being Robert Burton

By Robert Burton

One's name should identify--but that is not always true!

Trouble started, probably when I was in junior high school, with a headline in the *Muncie Morning Star*: "Robert Burton struck dead by train." The name was the same, the age in the story matched mine. My address was the only thing that saved me from a horrible death, I assured classmates who inquired.

Shortly after moving to Bloomington in 1941 and early in our marriage, I wrote a check to my father-in-law to pay for meat butchered for us--but the check bounced. "Surely," I thought, "I keep better records than that." Then, in those days of using an individual ledger card for each depositor, came the bank's explanation. They had tried to post my check to the depleted balance of another Robert Burton.

Right after World War II when passenger cars were scarce, in order to have adequate breakfast help at University dorm kitchens, station wagons were sent out to bring cooks in from rural areas. Several times, about 4 o'clock in the morning, I was awakened by a phone call to my number, the only Robert Burton listed. "Have they got you yet? They ain't got me." Each time, hoping the caller would remember, I explained I was not

the Robert Burton who worked in a dorm kitchen. Finally the school year and car shortage ended, and so did the early calls.

That was about the time I got a phone call one evening about dinner time from a man whose voice indicated he had spent most of the afternoon in a bar. He slurred, "Robert Burton, I'm gonna come beat you up if you don't stop bothering my wife." "You have the wrong man," I said and hung up. I never did get to meet his wife.

Once a Robert Burton ran in the primaries for the office of Monroe County Sheriff. In campaigning he claimed to be the candidate best qualified to run the jail because he himself had been incarcerated so many times!

In Peru several years ago, I answered our hotel room phone. "I heard you were in Lima and I would like to come up and interview you, Richard, Explaining I was Robert, not Richard, the reporter for an English language newspaper replied, "Oh well, then I would like to interview *you*." I declined.

Now there must be a bunch of us. When I call a doctor's office they ask for my birthday, saying they have more than one Robert Burton in their files.

Even at Meadowood--once the office got word that somebody had escorted a Robert Burton home at 1:45 a.m. Of course, I had been in my apartment all evening after dinner, was asleep at that hour, and didn't hear about the incident until the next day--but I may have missed a good party! ❖

My Friend Jane

By Joseph Rezits

I was twelve years old, waiting patiently in a darkened theater for the feature presentation to begin. The film, *Lost Horizon*, based on a novel by James Hilton, was the fantastic story of a secluded utopian land high in the Himalayas called Shangri-La. I was totally unprepared for the powerful impact it had on me; it immediately became my favorite film, and remained so for the past 70 years. Jane Wyatt played a leading role (opposite Ronald Colman) and I was absolutely captivated by her performance.

It took 46 years for me to gain the courage to write and tell her so, and I was ecstatic when she wrote back to me and enclosed an inscribed photograph. Since that exchange, we have corresponded dozens of times and became close friends. My wife Roberta and I had the pleasure of visiting her in California a number of times. I still have all her letters and copies of my own. When I re-read many of Jane Wyatt's letters, I became even more aware of her remarkably positive attitude toward life. Several years ago, her son Michael explained why: "My mother always thinks about the future, rarely about the past. Mother's idea of nostalgia was what happened over the weekend. Banished from her consciousness were all thoughts of what was 'the good ol' days.' She lived in the present."

I discovered early in our friendship that any setbacks she experienced always came with a silver lining. For example, on October 20, 1995 she wrote, "Dear Joe... I loved hearing from you on my birthday. What a loyal friend you are! I didn't thank you [sooner] because, most unfortunately I had a stroke on the 14th of August. I was happy and relaxed and can't imagine why it happened! Damn, double damn... I am home now after five weeks of hospital and rehab. I have my left leg working fairly well, but my left arm is still useless. The docs say it will eventually be OK. Let us hope...."

Invariably there were words of kindness for any difficulty I experienced. Once she wrote, "I don't think I knew that you had surgery. I am so sorry for all you had to go through.... You've been shaken up a bit, I'd say. I am going to say some prayers that all will be super OK from now on." Although Jane was best known for her motion picture and television appearances (Father Knows Best was a special favorite), in 1991 she was asked to play the title role of the stage version of *Driving Miss Daisy*. She commenced her letter with an apology (as she was so concerned about how I would feel about her tardiness!) "I've had your letter and fascinating enclosures for a month and have never written you! Oh dear, oh dear. As you can imagine, rehearsing and playing 'Miss Daisy' took up every minute of my day. It was a glorious experience for me-the best role I've had for ages and

I adored every minute of it. We were a big success.”

In 2001, her husband Edgar E. Ward died. I wrote to her expressing my deep sympathy, and she responded, “You are right, dear Joe, nothing truly prepares you for the death of a loved one. Eddie and I had 65 years of fun and happiness, with not a quarrel I can recall. How blessed I've been!” (Her son Michael later wrote me that their marriage was the longest in Hollywood history.)

I could always look forward to an extra-special letter following my annual greeting to her on her birthday; that is, until August 12, 2005. There was no response. When I called Michael to inquire about his mother's health, he said that although her mind was as sharp as ever, there was an overwhelming fatigue that wouldn't even permit her to change TV channels with the remote control. Knowing that I could no longer expect answers, I continued to write in the hope that I could ease her discomfort in some way.

When Jane died in October, 2006, at the age of 96, I was profoundly saddened, as my friendship with Jane Wyatt was one of the most rewarding of my entire life. When I recently wrote a friend about my friendship with Jane and my preoccupation with *Lost Horizon* and the ethereal paradise of Shangri-La, he responded with a paragraph which touched me greatly: “Joe, I saw that magnificent film for the first time only a few years ago, and often think the place for which we are destined in some

manner of afterlife will be something like Shangri-La.” If this could be true, we can be assured that Jane Wyatt has again found her Shangri-La.....



Christmas in Wales

By Myfanwy Richards

Adapted from *The Baking Sheet*,
December 1995

There are many modes of travel, but the quickest way by far is through the mind, and I often travel this way, to the land of my birth - Wales. An acquaintance recently mentioned a chocolate marzipan bar that she'd just discovered, and the mention of marzipan brought to mind the preparations for Christmas when I was young.

In my home, Christmas started early November, when the mincemeat was made. The mincer was screwed firmly to the white scrubbed kitchen table, and all the fruit boxes assembled in a row like soldiers.

The raisins, sultanas, currants, mixed peel and apples were placed in their turn in the mincer, and all of us took turns turning the crank while the fruit oozed out into a bowl, then to be transferred into a crock. My mother cautioned us not to let the juice run out on the floor, but it was

inevitable! The suet also came in a box, ground into little pieces, each piece bathed in flour to keep it light. The suet was mixed into the fruit, and the whole concoction placed in the crock. Some women added brandy, but my mother, being a staunch temperance woman, wouldn't use any! The mincemeat would be stirred often during the next six weeks.

Then came the plum pudding. All of the ingredients were assembled again, but this time, white bowls, carefully greased, sat in a row. The bread crumbs were prepared, and all of the ingredients mixed well and placed in the bowls until they were half-full. Grease-proof paper was placed on top, then a piece of white clean sheet, tied on the bowl with string, which was brought up on top and tied to form a handle. In a big pan, water would be boiling on the coal stove, and the bowls were carefully set in the water to boil for six hours. They were then carefully removed and set on a shelf until Christmas.

The Christmas cake was next. The cake was lighter than the fruitcake we have in this country, and the same recipe was also often used for wedding cake. About two days after it was baked, the marzipan was prepared. Ground almonds, egg whites, and confectioners' sugar were mixed into a paste-like dough, rolled out, and cut to completely cover the cake. The thicker the marzipan, the better we liked it! Then came the royal icing, made with egg whites and confectioners' sugar which, when set, made a hard icing. We

decorated the top of the cake with a skating scene or some other Christmas-related scene. The cake was then stored in an airtight container and would keep for months - if not eaten!

There were two sisters in my village who owned a sweet shop. One of the highlights of the Christmas season for me was to go with my mother to this shop to purchase the goodies: Turkish Delight, cups filled with chocolate, cigars for father, paper crackers which we pulled during teatime on Christmas Day, figs, nuts, and many other things - but none of it would be touched until Christmas.

One of my brothers had started working and he decided to buy my mother a tea set for Christmas. Christmas Eve he told my brothers to watch for him coming down the street and to open the dining room window, so that he could hand the box to them. There was a lot of excitement - my parents knew there was something going on but pretended not to notice. The cups of the set were filled with chocolates!

Then came Christmas Day, with a goose for dinner, and all the trimmings. After a few hours of cleaning up and re-setting the table, it was time for Christmas tea. The Christmas cake was the centerpiece of the table, surrounded with small individual mince pies, trifle, scones, shortbread, thin slices of bread and butter, and jam.

Another custom on New Year's Eve when the clock struck twelve, the children went out on the street going from door to door, wishing all the family a happy New Year. They were given money, much as we give candy to children on Halloween.

This was my Christmas! Isn't it amazing what our minds can remember upon hearing of a marzipan candy bar?



Memories of War:
A Series

Stateside

Tour of Duty, # 1

By Bob Hart

At the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, I was a senior at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. I can still recall the feeling of futility that descended on the students in the Cooperative House where I lived. I also remember that my roommate and I were convinced that continuing our studies was pretty much useless, so he and I played five hours of bridge every night for the following week. Thirty-five hours of bridge in one week was considerably more time than we spent in classes that week.

The feeling persisted but I felt that I should do something to help in the war

effort. A couple of weeks later I saw an announcement concerning a civil service examination to become a government inspector of ordnance. I took the test, passed it, and was offered a position. I quit school, at the end of the semester, in February, lacking eight semester hours to graduation, and took the job.

The first assignment was to attend classes at Lewis Institute in Chicago to learn the procedures I would need in the inspection process. While I was in training, my fiancée, Shirley Bane, was working in an office in a plant in Mendota, Illinois. One weekend, we traveled to Carlinville, Illinois, the home of Blackburn College, where we had met. We were married in the college chapel by the president of the college, William Meztrazat Hudson. We were both back to our respective jobs on Monday morning.

Upon completion of my training, I was assigned my inspection duties at a plant in Mattoon, Illinois, where they were making 37 millimeter armor-piercing shot and 155 millimeter high explosive shell casings. (I still have one of the shot, a reject, on my desk as a book end.) Shirley and I found a furnished apartment in Mattoon and settled in to begin our married life.

Several weeks later, we heard from my father, who was the assistant postmaster in Carlinville, my home town. He informed us that the local Draft Board had sent out notices. My notice was among them. I received no notice. When we heard from my father again, he suggested that I had a friend in the post office since my notice had been returned

because of insufficient address. The Draft Board had put the street but had failed to put the house number where we lived. This meant that I would not receive my notice until the following month.

During this period I was able to get to Chanute Field, Illinois, and start proceedings to get an appointment as an Aviation Meteorological Cadet. When I received my notice the next month (with my house number on it) it ordered me to report to Scott Field, Illinois, as my Reception Center. Here, I was given a battery of tests to determine where I should be assigned. Fortunately, I must have done well on the tests since the Sergeant in charge of my barracks told me I was off to a good start and one of my test scores was the highest ever made by anyone staying in that barracks. This good fortune, along with notices of my possible appointment as a Cadet, enabled me to convince the classification people that I should be assigned to the Army Air Corps instead of Army Ordnance.

When my Cadet appointment was received, the Meteorological Cadet School I was to attend was in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and I was in the opening class. Shirley came to Grand Rapids, found an apartment and went to work for Ernst and Ernst, Accountants. A second class of cadets which started its training several weeks later included Meadowood's own Bob Blakely. My class continued for the entire eight months of its schedule with classes for 48 hours per week.

When my class graduated, the whole operation was moved to Chanute Field. Upon receiving my commission as a 2nd Lieutenant, I was designated an instructor and moved with the school where Bob Blakely then became one of my students. While I was teaching at Chanute I completed the eight hours needed for my degree and graduated with the College of Education of the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana in 1944.

My next assignment was to work with several Signal Corps installations in New Jersey. Shirley was able to join me there but very shortly my interest in radar brought me an assignment to attend an intensive Radar School at Harvard (four months) and MIT (three months) in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Shirley was employed in the Radiation Lab at MIT. From Cambridge we were transferred to a SCR 584 (Radar) Installation at Hill Field outside of Ogden, Utah. Shirley and I rented a small furnished house almost in the foothills of the Wasatch Mountains on the outskirts of Ogden. After a few months' duty at this site (we were there on VJ Day) I received unexpected orders to report to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, for duty. I discovered this was to enable two of my friends to attend school at UCLA under Air Corps auspices.

After a total of 40 months of active duty, I was separated and returned to graduate school at Illinois in February of 1946. After a semester and two summer sessions, I was awarded my Master's Degree in 1947. Shirley and I decided it

was time for a family since I was now teaching high school in Monticello, Illinois. Our first born son was born on my birthday in 1948, two months after I had returned to active duty in June of that year. That tour ended in 1953. The story of that tour and the years after are subjects for another story.



Russia – Once Over Lightly

By Naomi Osborne

[Excerpted from *Meadowood Messenger*, September 1988]

We were a group of seven on our first trip to Russia, arranged by the United Nations where five of us worked together for 25 years.

Our introduction to Russia began with the flight from New York to Moscow on Aeroflot, the Soviet airline. Physically, the plane left much to be desired, even for a small person. It was packed with Russians who were returning home with every kind of electronic gear imaginable, shoved in whatever space they could find. Our seats were supposed to be non-smoking, but the stewardess said it was okay for anyone to smoke once the plane was in flight and the air conditioning was on. And smoke the Russians did.

The following are brief notes and comments regarding our stay, which took

us to Moscow, Leningrad, Tbilisi, Tashkent and Sarmarkand.

Guides – First class. All graduates of the Institute for Foreign Languages. Our overall guide, Igor, looked like a typical American boy in his early 20s, spoke excellent American English (he'd spent 6 months in the U.S.). He wore a Colgate sweatshirt and a Mets cap. He usually had a date in the various cities we visited, but he wasn't much in favor of marriage. He told us a couple had to pay the government a sizable sum when they marry, which is returned if they stay married two years.

Igor made everything easy for us and spoke very frankly on whatever subject we wished to discuss. In each city, we had another guide who showed us the places of interest. All the guides were well-versed in dates and history (rather *ad infinitum* in some cases.) We were free to go our own ways, which we did constantly.

Food – Good to bad. Sometimes the offerings were rather peculiar to our tastes: sardines for breakfast, demitasse instead of full cups of coffee at breakfast (but at other meals full cups), liquid sour yogurt instead of milk. Bread was good but heavier and more compact than ours. Mealy apples were the only fresh fruit offered. Ice cream was delicious but served in small balls and not as often as we wished. No salads except cabbage which sometimes appeared three different ways. The soups were usually good, the meat usually tough.

In the farmers' markets in Samarkand, there were many kinds of vegetables and fruits in large quantities. Our mouths watered over the sight of enormous mounds of strawberries and cherries. One wondered why some of this produce was not available in the western cities – particularly in the hotels. The farmers were permitted to sell produce they raised over the government quota in the marketplace for a small rental. They were doing so well selling their own produce, the government was thinking of charging them income tax!

PEOPLE – Friendly, but kept their distance. Many returned our smiles, particularly when they saw us admiring their children. Lack of common language made verbal communication difficult. The farther east we went, it seemed the people were friendlier and more relaxed. I saw only one person looking slovenly, a man who might have been inebriated, slinking behind pillars in a Moscow subway. Efforts were being made to curb alcoholism by shortening the hours bars and liquor stores were open. We were told that generally Russians find a way to get a supply or else make their own home brew (hence the scarcity of sugar). In the warmer climates, we saw grapes for wine growing everywhere, even in small spaces.

One distinguishing trait Russians have – patience. The wait outside a shop to get in (to prevent overcrowding), once inside, for example in the supermarket, they stand in line for eggs (if there are any), then stand in line at the cashier to pay for

them; then in line for potatoes...and so one for each item on the grocery list. Buying anything is a chore, but all the division of labor adds up to full employment.

ENTERTAINMENT – In Moscow we attended an exhilarating concert by young dancers from which the Kirov and Bolshoi companies pick their future stars. This night's performance was to celebrate the lead dancer who had been awarded on the country's highest honors for his extraordinary talent. I thought he was every bit the equivalent of the best ballet dancers I've seen (his leaps were incredible) – and he was in his early 20's.

For my part, I had the most fun at a Russian nightclub in Leningrad, in spite of my toes being stepped on while dancing. Our guide Igor arranged this special treat through his Armenian friend who worked there. The floor show was mediocre but the dance music (mostly American) was good. The food and drink were excellent: the best of Russian vodka, red and white wines, black and red caviar and untold Russian dishes, all delicious. The evening ended with Russian champagne.



Contributors

Olimpia Barbera was born in Cordoba, Argentina, graduated at the age of 18 years, with Honors, from the Provincial University of Cordoba with a major in piano. During her early career she performed with chamber orchestras in Argentina and Brazil. In Venezuela, Olimpia formed and conducted an orchestra for deaf children, performing for TV, in theaters and schools.

Robert E. (Bob) Burton was secretary of the Indiana University Board of Trustees and president of six Bloomington community organizations. He is a Sagamore of the Wabash and one of the founders of Meadowood Retirement Community.

Ledford Carter is a retired Indiana University professor, filmmaker and Army officer. During his 24-year residency at Meadowood, he has been a board director and Resident Council president, and he has served on numerous Meadowood committees.

Bernard Clayton, Jr. was a war correspondent in the Pacific theater for Time-Life magazines for most of World War II. He is well known for his best-selling cookbooks.

In spite of rumors to the contrary, **Virginia Gest** and her husband Howard, reside most of the time on Juniper Place. However, they like to travel, specializing in museums and music. In the past year they traveled to Wales and Williamsburg and places between.

Bob Hart is a retired science teacher and U.S. Air Force meteorologist was engaged in Research and Development for US Air Force.

Naomi Osborne, an alumna of Indiana University, had a professional career with the United Nations in Gaza, Congo and the Philippines. She was director of university relations at Indiana University East. Naomi died in 2006.

Joseph Rezits is professor of music, emeritus, Indiana University. His performance career has embraced solo and duo piano, chamber music, and recordings. Piano teachers worldwide have known him through his lectures, published articles, and six books on pianist art. His mother-in-law, an early resident of Meadowood, painted the watercolor above the drinking fountain opposite the receptionist's desk.

This will be a special Christmas for **Myf Richards**. She will fly to Cardiff, Wales, for her granddaughter Sara's wedding. Myfanwy and her husband John left Wales in 1952 to serve churches in Welsh communities in Utica, NY, Chicago, and an American church in Warren, MI. Myf's father was well known in Wales as a minister and poet.

Elisabeth Savich and her husband, Ted, were active in politics in Jasper County, Indiana, and summered in New Brunswick, Canada.

Nancy Seward Taylor, a Bloomington native whose great, great grandfather constructed the fish above the Monroe County Court House, returned this year with her professor and author husband of 30 years to continue their retirement. Nancy, whose youthful portrait adorns a wall of the Brown County Playhouse, later pursued a professional stage career. She now reads weekly to residents of the Meadowood Health Pavilion.

Where Are You, Guardian Angel?

By Elisabeth Savich

I know you are here.

I can feel your aura.

Is that you in the vibrant colors

Of my crystal wheels?

Is that you in the music

That make my feet tap?

Is that you in the fragrance

Of baking bread?

Is that you in the softness

Of the rose petal?

Is that you in the taste

Of chocolate?

You provide my pleasures

My joy and my treasures.

Thank you.