

Here is how I got to visit Tokyo. I was stationed at Mactan Air Base in the Philippines during the Vietnam War. Mactan was just a ferry boat ride offshore of Cebu, the second largest city in the Philippines. It cost fifty cents for a first class seat (rattan chairs on the cooler top deck). Otherwise it was about twenty-five cents for the main deck, joining the farmers, pigs, chickens, and just regular good folks. These Filipinos were very friendly.

Our unit was the 463rd Troop Carrier Wing with three squadrons of C-130 transport planes. Over half the planes were in Vietnam, moving supplies and troops. The rest of the planes were at Mactan AB. They would rotate crews and planes back and forth. At Christmas there was a truce with the Viet Cong. Bob Hope was to be at Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon. I got a hop with one of the rotating planes. We landed at Cam Ranh Bay airfield to drop off some supplies before going on. When we got to Cam Rahn Bay we were ordered to ferry some South Korean troops and their vehicles to Tuy Hoa, about forty-five minutes north. When we made our approach some farmer took a shot at the plane and put a three inch hole in the fuselage. No one was hurt and the plane landed OK, but the ROK troops (about twenty) did not waste any time getting out of the plane and heading to the outskirts of the base. We had to make two more trips that day and were scheduled for the next day also. The next day I caught a C-123 shuttle plane to Tan Son Nhut but I missed the Bob Hope Show.

Later one of our planes was going to make a "supply" run to Tachikawa AB in Japan. (To pick up supplies in Japan and deliver to a base in Thailand.) They also happened to pick up three Honda motorcycles. Another guy I worked with (Filipino ancestry) and I asked if we could go. We got approved. Later we flew to Tachikawa AB. The next day I took the train to the Tokyo Station. I knew we lived by the Harajuku train station. I took the train to Harajuku. One time, when we were living there, I missed the stop at Harajuku and went all the way to Yokohama, the end of the line. It had been

thirteen years since we lived there but somehow I found my way right to it. It still looked the same. I could imagine Carole & Cheryl standing on the driveway getting their photo taken. The little window on the third floor where Joe had his ham radio. The moss (no grass) growing in the yard. The only real difference was what looked like garage doors cut into those thick walls so cars could be parked inside. That photo in the heritage site is the street in front of the house.

I thought how our lives have all been changed by the events that took place in Japan. If Dad had not passed on I would not have met Jean. Maybe no four sons, five grand daughters, four great-grand kids. Maybe yes. God has plans for all of us. We don't know what they are but it's a good plan.