

USMC LEAVE

June 20, 1957 – June 30, 1957 **Trailways bus**, ITR leave from Geiger. I had all but completely forgotten this leave until recently. In my scrapbook I found a bus ticket stub dated 6/29/57 from NYC back to Camp Lejeune, NC. I have memories of being on this return bus but none of the trip home. The only memory I have of the leave itself was going to up to the lake to see everyone in my tropical uniform. It is interesting to have an almost total mental blank on this time frame.

January 4, 1959 – January 7, 1959 **MATS plane**, flew to Hong Kong from Kadena Airforce Base on Okinawa. Stayed at the Clover Hotel in Kowloon. My orders say the leave requirement was \$9.00 a day to cover expenses. The expected expenses for a three or four day leave would therefore have been around \$36.00. I probably had \$50.00 since I bought some things and I still have them. One is a concentrically carved ivory ball. It came with a stand but over the years that has been lost. There is a photo in my Bishagawa section unpacking on return. I have Hong Kong leave photos but they are not on this website.

December 4, 1959 – January 8, 1960 **plane**, commercial DC- 6 non-sched airline BUR-LGA-BUR. This was my big homecoming Christmas leave after Okinawa. See the photo of me taking Sandy Robinson to the Mountain Lakes Club Christmas dance in my personal photo gallery. This was my most memorable leave. It was exciting to finally be on a date with Sandy nearly five years after my first crush on her. I also met my first wife, Carolyn Smith, at the Brennen's and saw her again at another Christmas party. I did not see her again until March of 1962. Fate!

December 20, 1960 – December 27, 1960 **bus** to LA and back to Pendleton. Christmas leave in LA with a family Mom knew. They had a daughter with a married sister in the San Fernando Valley. I remember driving out to Canoga Park and there was nothing but horse farms. In less than eight years the Valley was an urban sprawl. I know, because I moved there in 1968. The daughter also had a very attractive cousin, but I was sort of with the host. I saw the hosts' daughter years later, when Carolyn and I split, and there was still no attraction. On this leave, I spent my evenings at the Top Hat bar in Burbank, went to the horse races with the family and saw the movies *Exodus* with the girls and *Spartacus* alone.

July 11, 1960 – July 31, 1960 **bus** to LA, **plane** to SFO and back to LA on the **train**. Mom met me in LA. I was dating Nancy Kronung at the time. She was a high school senior in South Pasadena, and a great artist. I still have one of her framed works in my music room. Mom and I then went to San Francisco, I visited Steve Niebur and his girl friend Corky and we then spent two or three days with the Murphy's at Hamilton Air Force Base in Marin County CA. "Murph" was the base commander and a Navy Captain. I remember how "cool" it was when he lent me his car to drive around base. A PFC being saluted by everyone!

July 31, 1961 – September 9, 1961 Round trip on the **train**. The Santa Fe Chief to Chicago and then a less than lavish ride from Chicago to Penn Station. I had an interesting stopover at the Dearborn Hotel in Chicago. The train went through Buffalo, where I saw the Brown family at the station. Near the end of my leave, I drove Sandy Robinson back to Washington, DC, where she worked in a law firm. In those days Elkton, MD was famous for walk in weddings. I had a ring in my pocket but was too shy to propose. As we passed Elkton I asked her if she would like to stop. She said no and I assumed my "proposal" had been rejected. Years later when we talked about this she told me she had no idea what Elkton was famous for and that I should have just asked her. In Washington I went to see *The Guns of Navarone*, and she and I saw *La Dolce Vita*. This was my Sandy Robinson leave!

March of 1962, I was discharged and took the train home from LA to Newark, NJ