

AMBASSADORS SAILORS; SAME SAME.....

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Our next port was Sasebo, and although at the time we didn't know it, Sasebo was to become our "Home away from home," for we were destined to return there for an extended import period. The southern and western-most city of our visit in Japan was host to us for two weeks, and from here we had a chance to visit Nagasaki and Arita (where much of the dishware and ceramics of Japan are made), a pearl farm, Madame Batterly's house and Hirado Island.

Then on we sailed; our bow headed for the port everyone had been waiting and saving their money for, the most mysterious and intriguing Far East port; Hong Kong. When we named the flight deck, that bright sunny morning, we beheld a circus of ships, junks, and sampans as we maneuvered into the channel. Sampans skimmed across the water in all directions, with beautifully colored fish fin sails.

In Hong Kong we discovered large, modern buildings, at the base of which were the little tailor shops, the jewelry stores, the cabarets, and...the children, playing where they could find room. Hong Kong had a touch of San Francisco, New York City and Miami, for if you can't find what you want in Hong Kong, you won't find it anywhere. But running side by side with the modern and the rich, is the poverty. You may take a bus or a taxi, or even a rickshaw, but sooner or later you'll find it. One tour, from Kowloon, took us to a barren open valley with a

view when we got to the P.I. It was completely different from Japan or Hong Kong. Between the larger cities, Manila and Olongapo, the inhabitants, called "nigritos," lived in small huts, raised from the ground by poles. The vegetation is thick, and where the underbrush stops, large rocks or rugged mountains jut upward into the azure sky. From Subic Bay, where we moored, we took land and boat tours to Manila and Corregidor. In Manila we visited the Memorial Cemetery for the dead of WWII in the Philippines. We saw the gutted bomb-shattered barracks and twisted gun batteries of Corregidor, the tiny island fortress, where General MacArthur defiantly uttered the now immortal phrase, "I shall return."



Then back to Sasebo for a second look before steaming to Kobe, where we celebrated the Fourth of July by hosting 9,000 Japanese on board at "Open House." Here we made use of the opportunity to travel to Nara, Kyoto, Osaka, the "Venice of Japan;" and on to Takarazuka, where we saw the all-girl opera.

After two days in Kobe we sailed south around Kyushu, then north up the Sea of Japan to the northernmost island of Hokkaido, for a visit to the port city of Hakodate.

Hakodate enabled us to see Japan as we had imagined it to be. Here no anticipation or definite image of the "American Sailor" pre-existed. There was very little Western influence in the area, and we were able to view the Japanese as themselves; happy, friendly, and hard working people. People who would smile at you before they frowned, and shake your hand rather than bow because "it is your custom."

In Hakodate the essence of our People-to-People program became more vivid as we were invited to visit homes, taught English in High Schools, had discussions, and even played baseball with two local Japanese teams. Our efforts as U.S. Navy Ambassadors in promoting good will and making new friends were stronger, and judging from the friends we made, the hands we shook and the smiles we returned, our mission was accomplished.



river running down the middle. There were a few rice paddies, a few duck farms, and a barbed wire fence; The Chinese Communist Border. Not such to see, but a lot to think about.

Then back to the Victorian side and Tiger Balm Gardens, "The Disneyland of Hong Kong;" the floating village of Aberdeen; Castle Peak, Repulse Bay, and a world of marvellous sight seeing and fascination.

But we carried our clothes and gifts aboard, loaded and crammed every corner of the ship, and gathered steam for the Philippines. And if we thought it was hot in Hong Kong, we changed our

