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Dear Friend:

After 51 years, warm and tender memories are flooding my heart. I was an ROMG in B-24 bombers flying out of Morotai in WW II I was a close friend to your brother. I was thrilled to see your request in the 307th newsletter. Let me start at the beginning.

We met a few times in Radio School at Sioux Falls, mainly because we both sang in the Base chorus production of "AMERICA". We bumped into each other at Gunnery School at Yuma, AZ. At Walla Walla WA, we were in separate squadrons and didn't meet.

On the train going down to San Francisco, in our car, about a dozen of us started singing Gospel Hymns. It soon became obvious that J T Houston was a great tenor. I was, and still am, a deep bass. We had a boy from Indiana to sing 2nd tenor and Gene simply was a wonderful baritone. We really fit together and became a good quartette,

There were 72 B-24 crews supposed to fly new planes to New Guinea. At Hamilton Air Base above SF, we were soon told of a draft call to fill up a Navy Transport ship. They went down the line and sent every other crew to Pittsburgh CA to prepare for going on the U.S. General Hayes to combat in the Western Pacific. Gene's crew and the rest of the Quartette's crews, made that move too.

After going down the Sacramento River to SF on The Delta Queen, a sternwheeler, we boarded the Hayes and sailed. We were soon singing again. I determined to keep my Morse code sharp, so I went to the ship's radio room every evening and copied Navy code. I became acquainted with a boy from Tennessee who loaned us a Southern Gospel Quartette song book. We lived in it, and became very close to each other. We even became the Captain's singing team. We did several fifteen minute programs on the ship's P.A. system.

Gene taught us several songs from His background. I especially remember: "We'll Meet Again" and "My Thoughts are ever turning Home". I still sing them. One day, a Navy Ensign walked into our compartment and said: "I hear there is a Quartette in here". We all spoke up. He said "you have an appointment with our Captain at 1500 today. We were there and He asked us to sing several songs. We did and he said:" Men, I have a bargain for you. We will cross the Equator in four days. If you will learn some sea songs to do at my request during the initiation, I will excuse you from it. It went very good. We sang "Anchors Away", "Sailing, Sailing over the Bounding Main", and "Sixteen Men on a dead Man's Chest" It went very good. (The initiation was a horrible mess) It was after that when he asked us to sing on the P.A.

After we arrived in New Guinea we didn't get to sing much but Gene and I remained close. When we were sent to Morotai, the two tenor's crew was sent to the Island of Samar in the Philippines. Gene and I saw each other frequently. We

were faithful at Chapel. (when we were not flying on Sunday) Chaplain Dennis was a wonderful man, a friend of all, though true to God's Word.

Now, Stanley, let me tell you about my day of August 1 in 1945. My mission was to an area near Makassar Town where the Japanese had a huge barracks complex for their troops to gather before trying to get to an island out of our reach. On the way home, usually I was free from the radio between sending in position reports. This time, I was monitoring the net. I decoded Gene's message that they would have to bail out. Then I heard Him give their exact position to base. Then I heard him send: "We are getting out, now". I prayed for their safety, and as I always did, I committed Gene and his crew into God's will. I never heard the results until 1949 when I called your home and someone told me the news.

I am deeply moved to read your request. I wept again at the word. I do need to tell you what happened the day before. I never pressed Gene about his faith in Jesus Christ. When I or J.T. would mention it, Gene would say: "I would like to belong to Jesus, but I am afraid it would mess up my singing career." I had been pitching for the Squadron (424th) softball team that morning, July 31st, and on my way back through the 372nd, Gene called me over to his tent and told me: "Lum, I want you to know that last night I gave myself to Jesus to do as He wishes with me". That is the only comfort I can pass on. I expect to see him in Glory.

Thank you for your request. I did know your brother and loved him deeply. I hope my response has been of some help to you.

With belated precious memories

Rev. Earl M. Creamer

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I have added the "e" since.

"Lum"