

**AN ALEUTIAN JOURNEY**  
By Lt. Col. Eugene M. Landrum, Jr.

**(EDITOR'S NOTE: THE FOLLOWING STORY WAS SENT BY RETIRED LT. COL. EUGENE M. LANDRUM JR. TO E.B. WHO THEN FORWARDED IT TO ME. ALTHOUGH COL. LANDRUM WASN'T ON SHEMYA DURING THE WAR, HE WAS ON SEVERAL OTHER ISLANDS, INCLUDING SHEMYA IN 1948. HERE IS HIS STORY.)**

**I DON'T SUPPOSE I AM REALLY A SHEMYA VETERAN. WHEN I GRADUATED FROM OCS (OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL) AT FORT SILL (OKLAHOMA) AT ABOUT 10 AM ON MAY 14, 1943, I BOARDED A C-54 AT POST FIELD, FORT SILL, ABOUT NOON THAT SAME DAY WITH ABOUT 10 OTHERS FROM MY CLASS. WE FLEW DIRECTLY TO McCORD FIELD, WASHINGTON, REFUELED, LEFT IMMEDIATELY AND LANDED AT ADAK THE NEXT MORNING.**

**WE WERE ISSUED WINTER CLOTHING (WE WERE STILL WEARING COTTON KHAKI AS IT WAS HOT IN OKLAHOMA) AND FIELD EQUIPMENT AND GOT ON A C47 AND FLEW TO AMCHITKA. SINCE SEVERAL OF US WERE TO BE FORWARD OBSERVERS WE WERE SENT OVER TO THE 54th FIGHTER SQUADRON FOR A RECON FLIGHT TO GET AN IDEA OF WHAT THE TERRAIN WAS LIKE. THE WEATHER WAS TOO BAD TO FLY THAT DAY BUT WE DID GO THE NEXT DAY.**

**I REALLY FELT LIKE I WAS MOVING TOWARDS MY DESTINY TOO FAST AS I HAD JUST GRADUATED FROM OCS LESS THAN 36 HOURS AGO --- NOT EVEN A 90 DAY WONDER, AS OUR CLASS HAD BEEN CURTAILED TO 83 DAYS! ON THE FOLLOWING DAY WE WERE TAKEN TO ATTU ON A LANDING CRAFT.**

**SEVERAL YEARS LATER, AFTER THE WAR, I COMMANDED A SPECIAL ARTILLERY BATTERY AT ADAK PERFORMING WINTER (WET/COLD) EQUIPMENT TESTS FOR 17 MONTHS. WHEN I WAS STATIONED AT ELMENDORF IN 1948 I WAS SENT OUT TO SHEMYA ON AN ARMY FS SHIP TO RECOVER OFFICE EQUIPMENT (DESKS, FILING CABINETS ETC.) AND AMMUNITION. BY THIS TIME SHEMYA HAD BEEN ABANDONED BY PEOPLE AND AIRCRAFT BUT ALL THE EQUIPMENT HAD BEEN LEFT BEHIND.**

**IN 1952 ON MY WAY TO KOREA BY WAY OF A CONTRACT AIRLINES FROM SEATTLE, OUR PLANE STOPPED AT SHEMYA FOR REFUELING. ONE HANGAR AND THE TOWER WERE BEING OPERATED BY NORTHWEST AIRLINES. WE WERE SOCKED IN FOR TWO DAYS AND HAD ONLY ONE MEAL --- STONE COLD FRIED EGGS! I NEVER MINDED LEAVING SHEMYA BUT PROBABLY NOT AS MUCH AS YOU FELLOWS WHO HAD TO STAY THERE A LOT LONGER THAN I DID.**