

Chapter XXXII

Inspection Tour

February 23, 1965 – April 3, 1965

At the airport, Ramona and Sister Rock meet up with Elder Marshall Cooper and Elder Jay Bryant who were on their way to their new areas. Their former companions, who were in the same district, teamed up during the transition. Since there were no other sister missionaries in the zone for Sister Rock to team up with, she was to accompany Ramona to the mission home where she would meet up with Sister Moody.

The four missionaries boarded the twin engined Hawaiian Airlines Convair CV-340 and took their seats. Ramona deferred her window seat to Sister Rock who hadn't flown much. The two Elders sat right behind them. Once the passengers were settled, the propellers spun to life. The plane taxied into position and was soon airborne. The short flight to Kona took them right between the two massive volcanoes, Mauna Kea to the north and Mauna Loa to the south. When the plane landed in Kona, they were joined by Elder Ryan Bradbury for the flight to Honolulu.

It was mid afternoon when they arrived at the Honolulu International Airport. Ramona was hoping that Sheffield would be there to meet her, but was disappointed. There to greet them was Brother Hanami with the mission van.

"The President wasn't able to come and meet you like he planned." Roy explained. "Just before we were going to leave, he got a call from Salt Lake."

Ramona and the others waited a few minutes to collect their luggage. Sister Rock had only an overnight bag, Ramona's luggage was fairly light as well. But the three Elders had everything with them. The bags were loaded onto two carts and were towed one each by Elder Cooper and Elder Bryant out to the van, where it was all stuffed into the back.

Ramona rode in the front seat on the way back to Mililani. When they pulled to a stop under the port-cochère, Sheffield heard them pull in and left his office and stepped outside to greet them. He opened the door for Ramona and she stepped out of the van and into his waiting arms.

"Welcome home, Sweetheart." he said before giving her a kiss. By now, any of the missionaries who had spent anytime around them at all were used to their displays of affection. "I missed you. It's good to have you home."

"It's good to be home, Babe." Ramona said.

They released each other from the embrace and Sheffield took Ramona's bags from Roy and they went inside. Sheffield handed them to Elder Stevenson, the mission recorder and said, "Elder, will you run these upstairs for me?"

He obliged and dashed upstairs with them and left them just outside of the door to their apartment.

As the other missionaries were bringing their luggage inside, Sheffield ushered Ramona into his

office. With his passengers and their luggage unloaded, Roy drove off to pick up three other missionaries who were flying in from Maui and Kauai.

"I'm sorry that I wasn't there to meet you." Sheffield said as they sat down. "Just as we were ready to leave, I got a call from Salt Lake."

"That's what Roy said."

"It was Missionary department. Evidently Sister Osgood who was supposed to arrive tomorrow had an appendicitis attack this morning. Consequently she won't be homing."

"Oh that's too bad."

"She was to go downtown be with Sister Draper while Sister Wheeler was going to be in a threesome with the lady missionaries upstairs, so I had to make a last minute switch. At least we won't have to have them in threesome."

"Is there any chance that Sister Osgood will come later?"

"It's hard to say. So how was your flight over?"

"Well, the pilot wasn't nearly as good as the one that I'm accustomed to flying with. He wasn't nearly as good looking either."

Ramona went upstairs to put her things away. In the meantime, Sister Rock went downstairs to the dorm room to put her bag away and the Elders took theirs out to the barracks. As the afternoon went on, other missionaries began showing up. Brother Hanami returned with Elder Dayley, Elder Fagen and Elder Blaine. Later, Sister Draper and Sister Moody arrived and went downstairs with Sister Rock.

Right on schedule, Sister `Auli`i announced that dinner was served and the office staff and the transient missionaries all gathered around the long dining room table. Later in the evening all of the missionaries who were at the mission home reassembled to hear Elder Miller, who had been an Assistant to the President, and Elder Dayley, who had taught Chauncey Haggerty, report their missions prior to going home the next day. Elder Miller to Syracuse, Utah and Elder Dayley to Oakley, Idaho.

After the meeting, Sheffield and Ramona retired upstairs to their apartment to get ready for bed. It was the first opportunity that they had to be alone together in two weeks.

On Wednesday, missionaries were coming and going as they exchanged companions. Elder Chance Williamson came down from Laie and assumed his new roll as Assistant the President, along with Elder Gibby. Elder Marshall Cooper from Preston, Idaho took over as the Travel Coordinator replacing Elder Masters. Sheffield interviewed Elder Miller and Elder Dayley one last time before they left for the airport with the others.

Before leavening, Sister Rock got to say goodbye to Ramona. "Thank you so much." Sister Rock said. "The ten days that we spent together will definitely be a highlight of my mission."

"I'm sure it will be for mine too." Ramona assured her.

Brother Hanami made a couple of trips to the airport with those who were flying out to their new areas on the other islands. When he returned, he brought with him the two new Elders and one Sister who had just arrived. Sheffield interviewed each of them, gave them their area assignments, and sent them on their way. By late afternoon, Mililani was quiet again with only the Assistants and the office staff about their work.

Ramona had only one day at Mililani to rest up before a busy rest of the week. On Thursday they had a zone conference in the Honolulu Zone and on Friday one in the Pearl Harbor Zone. At least the only traveling that was involved was to the respective stake centers. Then on Saturday morning they drove up to Laie for the day. In the morning they attended the temple and had lunch with the Morleys and Takara brought her kids over. Omni was already six weeks old. Then that afternoon, they had a zone conference in the Oahu Zone. In each of the three conferences, Ramona shared her experiences in Keaau and what she learned from them. They came back to Mililani Saturday evening without having to leave again for another ten days.

There was news from home. Craig and Wade, along with Roger and Reed were going to take care of the annual Two Star Round Up on the following Saturday. The Magicians had had a good season going into the district tournament. And Norma was expecting. She was pretty sure that she got pregnant while in Hawaii for Christmas. That particular piece of news wasn't all that good after the trouble that she had with her last two babies, especially Marty, who was now four years old. Doctor Weston told her to expect an even more difficult time this time around. There was other bad news as well. Shenan had taken a turn for the worse and was in a great deal of pain as the cancer continued to eat away at him.

During that week, Sheffield received a telephone call from President Hanks in Las Vegas. Sister Cooke's mother did finally get a post card from her. She didn't say much other than that she was alright and didn't know if she would be coming home or not. She didn't say where she was, other than the postcard had a Los Angeles postmark.

During that week, Sheffield read in the newspaper and watched on the ten o'clock news as the United States involvement escalated in Southeast Asia. On the 2nd of March came the first American air strikes on Communist targets. Then six days later on the 8th thirty five hundred Marines made an amphibious landing at Da Nang, South Vietnam, the first of more who were sure to follow. To Sheffield, it looked like Korea all over again.

That same day, Sheffield held a tri-zone activity for the missionaries on Oahu. Back at Thanksgiving the subject of the movies based on his book came up. There was interest expressed around the table in

seeing them. Craig brought the movie reels with him when they came over for Christmas. The problem was finding a time and place to show one of them.

So on Monday the 8th those who wanted to attend, which was nearly everyone, gathered at the Honolulu Tabernacle to watch "Mediterranean Summer". They chose that one because it was the story of how they finally got together. Chairs were set up in the cultural hall and Sheffield even rented a big popcorn popper and bought a dozen six packs of various sodas which were packed in ice chests. Sister Knight, who had expressed an interest in seeing it when the subject came up at Thanksgiving, was not disappointed. She and the other lady missionaries particularly enjoyed their love story. The Elders on the other hand enjoyed the action scenes, despite the fact that their hero was badly injured. The movie not only made a great diversion for the missionaries, but it gave them a better appreciation for President and Sister Brason.

In talking about it that evening back at the mission home, they thought that the activity had gone quite well.

"It was too bad that the missionaries on the other islands weren't there." Ramona lamented.

"I just had a great idea." Sheffield announced. "We're going to be in Hilo this weekend for a district conference. Why don't we stay over through Monday and get both the Hilo and Kona zones together and do it there too."

"I think that's a terrific idea." Ramona agreed.

Sheffield had Elder Stearman make the arrangements for the use of the cultural hall in the Hilo Branch meetinghouse and contact the zone leaders to get the word out. On Tuesday night during their Presidency meeting, Sheffield told his counselors about it. President Kaaloa offered to send a boat over to Maui to bring the fourteen missionaries in the Maui Zone.

Wednesday morning, the 10th, Roy Hanami took Sheffield, Ramona, and the Assistants to the airport so they could fly out for the second round the March zone conferences. The Cessna was fueled, ready, and waiting for them. After stowing their gear in the storage compartment, they took off for Lihue on Kauai for that day's conference. On Thursday they were in Kahului on Maui, and Kona on Friday. Their last stop of the trip was in Hilo on Saturday. In each of those conferences, Ramona related her experience in Keaau. Ramona was happy to see Sister Rock and to hear about the progress of the people that they had met with. She was particularly excited to learn that Wanda Makuola was being baptized that very evening.

After the luncheon, Sheffield and Ramona attended the baptismal service which was held in the Hilo meetinghouse, since the one in Keaau didn't have a font. Sister Makuola was thrilled to see Ramona enter the Relief Society Room. She was baptized by President Spamm, the Branch President. Following the baptismal service they had the evening session of the district conference and that night, they stayed in the

home of Max and Aloha Mahaulu.

Sheffield had a district leadership meeting that morning, which was followed by the general session at ten. Following the conference, they had lunch with Max and Aloha and spent the rest of the day with them and again that night.

On Monday, the missionaries in both zones on Hawaii made their way to Hilo and as promised, Dick brought over the ones from the Maui Zone. It was pretty much a repeat of the activity a week earlier, right down to the popcorn and sodas as thirty four missionaries enjoyed "Mediterranean Summer". They had pretty much the same reaction as the first group had the week before. That afternoon, they flew back to Honolulu.

Even though they weren't scheduled to be off the island, the next week proved to be very busy. The first thing that had to be done was to workout the transfers for March. As with the month before, it wasn't as involved as it only affected seventeen missionaries.

During the rest of the week, Sheffield and Ramona conducted inspections of the living quarters of the missionaries on Oahu, beginning with the Honolulu Zone on Wednesday. The Honolulu Zone corresponded to the Honolulu Stake. The two wards south of the freeway each consisted of two areas, thus having two sets of missionaries in each ward. The wards north of the freeway each had just one set of missionaries.

They already knew that the lady missionaries upstairs were in a good place and didn't inspect their apartment. They had appointments with each companionship in the zone and paid them a visit, beginning with the zone leaders in Kalihi. Their area included everything south of the Lunalilo Freeway between Kahili Street on the west and Punchbowl Street to the east.

Ramona, the real estate expert, had a good eye as what to look for after all of the property that she had bought over the years. She knew what to look for and where to find it. She looked for things that most people wouldn't think of to look for.

The zone leaders were in a good neighborhood and they had satisfactory living conditions. The next area over was called Honolulu West, and included everything south of the Freeway between Punchbowl Street on the west to Kalakaua Avenue on the east. They too had adequate housing.

That was bordered by Honolulu Central to the east. It included everything south of the Freeway from Kalakaua Avenue on the west to Kapahulu Avenue on the east.

"This place is scary." Ramona shuddered as they pulled up to the apartment where Elder Campbell and Elder Idler were living.

"This is a seedy neighborhood known to harbor prostitutes." Sheffield observed.

As they went in and climbed the stairs to the second floor, they didn't see anyone. They knocked on the door and Elder Campbell opened it and invited them in. They found their apartment to neat and tidy and everything seemed adequate.

After looking around, Sheffield asked, "How do you like your apartment?"

"I've seen worse." Elder Campbell responded. "It's not bad and the rent is affordable."

"Have you observed any unusual behavior around your apartment?" Sheffield asked.

"Well," Elder Campbell explained, "there are a lot of people coming and going late at night."

"Anything else?" Sheffield asked, pressing for more information.

"Yeah, there is." Elder Idler, who was brand new spoke up. "The lady in the next apartment likes to bounce on her bed. At odd times during the night we can hear what sounds like squeaky bedsprings. Then when that stops, the shower comes on. It seems to happen two or three times every night. We have no idea what's going on over there."

"Well I do." Ramona blurted. "This simply won't do! It's worse than the Sisters in Keaau living above a liquor store. Something has to be done, and fast."

"I agree." Sheffield decided. "We need to find a better place for you to live as soon as possible."

"But everything in this area is so expensive." Elder Campbell protested.

"Something will work out." Ramona assured them, the memory of Keaau still fresh in her mind.

"Can we have a prayer with you before we go on our way so you can get back to work?" President Brason asked. As the four of them got down on their knees, Sheffield said, "If you don't mind, I'll say it." He proceeded to ask a blessing on Elder Campbell and Elder Idler, the area, and their investigators. Then he asked for a blessing of protection upon their apartment, and prayed that a way would be opened for them to find a place that was both suitable and affordable.

As Sheffield and Ramona left their apartment, the Elders followed them downstairs and outside to where their bicycles were chained up. They exchange handshakes and Sheffield and Ramona got in their car and drove off. That's when they noticed the tattoo parlor across the street. In the rear view mirror, Sheffield could see them get on their bikes and ride off in the opposite direction. As they drove on, within a couple of blocks they left behind the bad neighborhood, finding themselves in much more desirable surroundings.

It was lunch time and Sheffield and Ramona stopped off for something to eat at a drive-in burger joint on Kapahulu Avenue, which was the boundary between Honolulu Central and Honolulu East. As they sat in their car eating lunch, Ramona looked across the street and commented, "I can see what they meant about finding a place that they could afford."

"Yeah, I can see that." Sheffield said. "But something will turn up, just like it did for you and Sister

Rock.”

After lunch, they pulled over next to a park to rest a minute before going on to keep the rest of their appointments for the day.

Next, they came to Honolulu East where Elder Garfield, the district leader, and Elder Sinclair were assigned. Their area took in everything south of the freeway from Kapahulu Avenue on the east to Wailupe Beach on the east. Sheffield found the address and pulled into the parking lot of a very nice four story apartment building. They went up a flight of stairs to the second floor apartment and rang the doorbell. Elder Sinclair opened the door and invited them in.

“This is a very nice apartment.” Ramona commented upon her first glance.

They looked around the one bedroom apartment and found everything to be very adequate, almost luxurious for missionaries.

Upon completion of their inspection, Sheffield asked the same question that he asked at the first two apartments that they visited, “How do you like your apartment?”

“I really like it.” Elder Sinclair said. “It’s a lot nicer than our old farm house back home.”

Elder Sinclair was from Declo, Idaho and had only on his mission for five months.

“The only problem,” Elder Garfield said, “is that it is more than we can really afford. Our families are having to send us extra money each month to cover the rent. For not much more than what we’re paying, we could have a two bedroom apartment.”

Ramona turned to Sheffield and said, “That’s the answer.”

“You know, you’re right, Sweetheart.”

Then he turned back to Elder Garfield and asked, “You’ve been to Elder Campbell and Elder Idler’s apartment, what do you think of it?”

“It’s a real dump.” Elder Garfield, the district leader said. “It gives me the creeps when I have to spend the night there when we’re on splits.”

“Here’s what I’m thinking Elder. Yours is too expensive and theirs is unsuitable. Why don’t you and them get together and find a two bedroom apartment that is centrally located to both areas and go in together on it. We saw several over on Kapahulu Avenue.”

“Yeah,” Ramona added, “in the end it will be a lot less costly when you divide the rent four ways than what you’re paying here.”

“I’ll get with them,” Elder Garfield said, “and see what we can do. That will sure make it a lot easier on my folks.”

“Before we go, can we have a word of prayer?”

As they got down on their knees, Sheffield asked Ramona to offer it.

Her prayer was similar to the ones offered at their previous three stops and in particular asked that they be able to find an apartment that they could share with their comrades.

The rest of the afternoon was spent inspecting the Elders apartments in Kahala and Manoa. Kahala included everything south of the mountains from Palolo Valley all the way out to Makapuu Point, including where Ramona's beach house used to be. The area took in the ward in the immediate area and the branch to the west in Hawaii Kai. Elder Bradbury, the district leader, and Elder Gordon occupied the second story of a member's home which had been converted into a self contained apartment and was very adequate. Their last stop of the day was in Manoa where the Elders had a nice affordable apartment adjacent to the University of Hawaii. On Thursday, they visited each apartment in the Pearl Harbor Zone and found everything in order.

They took two days to cover the Oahu Zone since it was more spread out. They began in Kailua and went to Kaneohe and Kahaluu and on up to Laie. That day they found everything to their liking and stayed with the Morleys on Friday night.

On Saturday, their first stop was in Kahuku, just up the highway a little north of Laie and found where Elder Sorenson and Elder Wild lived on the edge of town. "My goodness." Ramona gasped.

"I see what you mean." Sheffield responded. "This place is nothing more than a shanty."

"I know. It reminds me of some of the shacks that my mother and I lived in when we worked in the logging camps."

The Elders heard them pull up and came out to greet them and invited them in. They didn't have to look very far before they came to their conclusion.

"What are the buckets on the floor for." Sheffield asked as he looked up at the obvious reason.

"They're for when it rains." Elder Sorenson answered.

There were not only openings in the roof but there were cracks in the walls as well.

"Do you know the story behind this place?"

"From what they tell me," Elder Sorenson explained, "it used to be used by plantation workers. It's been used by the missionaries ever since area opened. I know its a dump, but we're not here much."

"Look at these light switches." Ramona commented. "They've got to date back to the twenties." She pushed the on button which caused a spark. "Why this place is just one spark away from burning down."

"Thats why we just leave the light on and screw the light bulb in and out to turn it off and on." Elder Wild replied.

"What do you think of this place, Elder Wild?"

"I've seen chicken coops in better shape."

"Why hasn't anyone ever looked for a better place?" Ramona asked.

"I don't know if you've noticed, but there isn't much available around here." Elder Sorenson assured them.

"We'll see what can do to find you something better than this." Sheffield promised them. "Can I use your telephone for a minute?"

Sheffield called Manti and explained the situation to him. He had no idea that the Elders in Kahuku lived in such bad conditions and promised to personally see to it that they got into something better.

Before leaving to continue their tour, they knelt in prayer with them. They drove up around the tip of the island and down the North Shore to Waialua where they found the Elders there to have a decent place to live. Before continuing on, they had had lunch at the little place where they liked to eat while in the area.

After lunch, they drove on down through the Central Valley to Wahiawa, where they found the Elders there living in what used be an Army barracks that had been converted into apartments after the war. It was bit shabby, but it passed their inspection.

Sheffield and Ramona returned to Mililani late Saturday afternoon and had Sunday and Monday to rest up before commencing another busy week. On Monday morning, Sheffield received a call from Elder Garfield to say that he and his companion and the Elders in Honolulu Central were moving into a two bedroom apartment on Kapahulu Avenue. Split between the four of them, the rent was less than what the Elders in Honolulu Central had been paying. In the end it worked out well for everyone.

Then that afternoon, he got a call from Elder Sorenson in Kahulu to say that President Morely had made good on his promise. He had talked to the Bishop in Kahulu and a call went out for better accommodations for the missionaries. An elderly sister came forward with an offer. She had never married and had lived alone in her little two bedroom house for many years. She was having difficulty caring for it and herself but stubbornly resisted moving into the home for seniors. When the announcement was made, the Spirit whispered to her that now was the time, and that she should offer her home to the Elders. The arrangement was made. In lieu of rent, all she asked was that they pay the taxes and utilities. She stipulated that when she died the house was to go to the church for the missionaries to live in. The ward offered to see to the upkeep. She was in the process making arrangements with the senior home in Laie and as soon as she moved out, they could move in.

Sheffield and Ramona were satisfied that all three situations that they had encountered had been resolved so quickly. It was a testimony that the Lord looks after his missionaries. They wondered what conditions they would find when they toured the rest of the mission. That would have to wait until the following week even though they would be traveling to the other islands for conferences later in the week. There just wouldn't be time to do both.

On Tuesday afternoon, missionaries began arriving at Mililani while on their way to their new areas. That evening after dinner, Elder Gibby, one of the Assistants to the President, Elder Cooley, who had once worked in the office, Elder Darrington, and Sister Carmichael reported their missions prior to going home the next day.

That evening, after returning to their apartment, Sheffield watched the ten o'clock news to catch the highlights of the Gemini III space flight which signaled America's return to space after almost two years. The two man space capsule of this and subsequent flights of the Gemini program had the mission to develop space travel techniques with the goal of landing men on the moon. This was the first manned flight of the new spacecraft with the objective of testing its maneuverability. After three orbits of the earth, the capsule splashed down in the Atlantic Ocean near Turks and Caicos just under five hours after blasting off from Cape Canaveral.

The replacements for the three Elders and one Sister who were going home arrived on Wednesday. In their place, the mission received five Elders and two Sisters for a net gain of four, which brought the number of missionaries to one hundred two. That meant that two new areas could be opened. One was on Kauia in Koloa, which was part of the Kalaohe Branch, with the idea of one day creating a new branch there. The other area was in Honokaa on the north shore of Hawaii in the Kona District. Two lady missionaries were being sent there, one being Sister Talia Faaitu from Apia Samoa, who had just arrived in the mission. Sheffield interviewed those going home and those just arriving, before sending them off. Elder Grant Moore, who had once served on the office staff as the financial secretary was the new Assistant. Another new arrival was Sister Natalie Ricks from Rexburg, Idaho. It didn't take long to figure out that her father and Chantell Rowan were cousins.

The rest of the week was taken up in zone conferences. On Thursday it was in the Honolulu Zone. During their interviews, the four Elders who had just moved into the new apartment were eager to tell President and Sister Barson all about it. Friday was spent in the Pearl Harbor Zone Conference. Then on Saturday they drove up to Laie. As usual, they went to the temple that morning and had lunch with Morleys. During the interviews, Elder Sorenson reported that they would be moving the following Monday.

After the meetings they spent the night in Laie with the Morleys and attended church in Laie where Sheffield and Ramona had been invited to speak in Sacrament Meeting in one of the wards.

They returned to Mililani late on Sunday evening and had Monday to take care of their personal business and get ready for the week which would take them to the other islands as they concluded their inspection tour.

On Wednesday morning, the last day of March, Roy took Sheffield and Ramona to the airport so

they could fly out. Their destination that morning was Kona on the Big Island. When they decided to make the inspection tour, Sheffield had Elder Cooper, the travel coordinator, line up a plane for him. The Cessna 210 that he usually used wasn't available so a Piper Comanche 250 was substituted. The Comanche was not as fast and smaller as the Cessna, only carrying four people. Since it was just the two of them on this trip, it didn't matter.

Roy dropped them off at the hangar and Sheffield and Ramona stowed their luggage in the storage compartment.

Sheffield checked with the chief mechanic, who said, "She's all checked out and ready to go, Admiral." (Sheffield was known as Admiral to the charter company.)

Sheffield and Ramona climbed in and got themselves situated. Sheffield conscientiously checked everything out. All of the gauges read as they should and everything looked good. However, when Sheffield started the engine, he had a nagging feeling that something wasn't right. He double checked everything and then checked them again. Everything still checked out.

He radioed the tower to let them know that he was ready and they directed him to the auxiliary runway. After taxiing into position and waiting for the clearance to take off, he looked over everything once more.

"Comanche November-six-five-eight- zero-one-Papa, this is Honolulu Tower. You are clear for take off."

"Roger, Honolulu Tower."

At that, Sheffield nervously throttled up and released the brakes. A moment later they were in the air. Once the landing gear had retracted, Sheffield breathed a sigh of relief. Without letting Ramona know of his initial concern, he decided that his mind was playing tricks on him.

Then thirty miles out over the ocean, his uneasiness was back. Again he checked everything over.

"Turn back!" a voice shouted in his head.

Sheffield had become acquainted with the whisperings of the Spirit but was not accustomed to it shouting at him.

"Somethings not right." Sheffield announced to Ramona.

"Why, whats the matter Babe."

"I don't know, but something is wrong. I'm turning back."

He picked the microphone and said, "Honolulu Tower, this is Comanche November-six-five-eight-zero-one-Papa. Request permission to return and and land."

"What seems to be the problem?"

"I'm not sure. I suspect a malfunction of some kind."

“Roger Comanche November-six-five-eight- zero-one-Papa. Stand by.”

A moment later, “ Comanche November-six-five-eight- zero-one-Papa, this in Honolulu Tower. You are cleared to land on runway four Lima.”

“Roger, Honolulu Tower.”

A few minutes later they were on the ground and taxied up to the charter hangar and shut off the engine.

“Whats the matter, Admiral?” the chief mechanic asked.

“I'm not sure, but something is definitely wrong.”

“I'll tell you what, I'll look it over myself. Give me about twenty minutes.”

Sheffield and Ramona waited while the plane was inspected. When he was through, the chief mechanic reported, “I looked it over throughly Admiral. I didn't find anything wrong.”

“Thanks.” Sheffield said. “But I'm sure theirs somethings not right.”

“I can't imagine what it would be.”

“Get in with me,” Sheffield insisted, “and lets start her up.”

As soon Sheffield started the engine, they both saw the fuel gage drop from full to just a hair over empty and then bounced back to full.

“Well, I'll be.” the mechanic said. “You were right. Not only do you have a faulty fuel gauge, but you're out of gas. If you hadn't turned back when you did, they'd be fishing you out of the drink about now.”

“That just goes to show that you can't trust everything you see. Whoever checked it out must have looked at the gauge and figured that it had already been fueled.”

“But how did you know something was wrong?”

“Do you believe in God?”

“Yeah, but I ain't exactly on speaking terms with him.”

“Well, I am and thats how I knew something was wrong.”

The mechanic didn't respond to that. Rather he said, “Give us a few minutes and I'll have someone replace that gauge and get it fueled.”

While waiting, Sheffield told Ramona what they had found.

“Its a good thing.” she said. “I really didn't want to go for swim today.”

Before long, they were winging their way to Kona. They were behind schedule, but at least they were confident that they'd arrive at their destination. Sheffield radioed ahead that he was running late and asked that they relay the message on to those who would be waiting for them so they wouldn't be concerned.

When they landed in Kona, they were an hour and half behind schedule. The Zone Leaders, Elder Bateman, who had been the mission secretary, and Elder Tyler were waiting for them. After getting word

that they were running late, the Elders rearranged the schedule.

The Elders first took them to their apartment which passed the inspection. Then they drove President and Sister Brason the twelve miles down to Kealakekua and then another ten miles to Honaunau. Again they found everything satisfactory. Sheffield and Ramona treated Elder Bateman and Elder Tyler to lunch before they returned them to the airport.

The next leg of their flight only took twenty minutes to get to their next stop to meet with the Elders in Naalehu. The nearest place to land was the Kaalaiki Airstrip, four and half miles away. Elder England and Elder Alexander were waiting for them and drove them straight to where they lived. Naalehu was more of a village than a town and their area was quite spread out and included number of villages. Naalehu was centrally located and was where the branch meetinghouse was located. The area didn't afford much in the way of housing, so the Elders lived in the home of Brother and Sister Matthias Kaluhiokalani.

The Kaluhiokalanis lived on the Mamalahoa Highway, about a mile east of Naalehu, in a small three bedroom house with one bathroom. A number of years earlier when the area was first opened, Brother Kaluhiokalani was the Branch president and invited the Elders to live in his home. At the time their children were small. The Kaluhiokalanis insisted that the Elders were a blessing in their home and not a burden.

But their two daughters were now sixteen and nineteen and had grown into very beautiful young women. Sheffield and Ramona saw that as a potential problem and strongly recommended that the Elders try to find another place to live. Since housing was scarce, they recommended that they seek out a couple whose family was grown and had the room for them.

Before they went on their way, Sister Kaluhiokalani insisted that she let her feed them, even though they had lunch before leaving Kona. When they were finally able to get away, the Elders had an appointment so she took them back to the airstrip.

Once in the air, their flight path took them over the Volcanoes National Park and Mont Kilauea, that they had visited a few months earlier. From the air, they could really see the vastness of the lava flows. Sheffield circled around a couple of times to get a good look before flying on to Hilo.

Elder Austin and Elder Harmon, the zone leaders of the Hilo zone were waiting to meet them. They first took them to their own apartment and then drove them the eleven miles up the coast to Honomu to meet with the Elders there before driving back to Hilo and the five miles over to Kaumana to meet with the elders there. They found all three apartments acceptable. When they finished with their inspections, The zone leaders took them to the Mahaulus to spend the night.

After breakfast on Thursday morning, Max took them back to the airport. It was just a short hop up to Honokaa where the lady missionary were waiting to take them to see their apartment. Their living conditions were a bit primitive but acceptable. For Sister Faaitu, they were better than what she had been accustomed

to growing up in Samoa.

Two more short hops took them to Waimea and Honokaa. In both of those places they found the missionaries to have adequate living conditions as well. The Elders Hawi had a somewhat unusual arrangement; they lived in a sugar mill. Some years back, part of the second floor office facilities were converted into an apartment for the plant manager to live in. With time, needs changed and the apartment was no longer needed and was rented out. After a few tenants had lived there, it came available again, just when the Elders who were there at the time needed to move out of where they had been living. It had been a missionary apartment ever since. Other than being in an operating sugar mill, it was nicer than some of the apartments they had looked at on the tour.

After having lunch, they took off again. Leaving the Big Island behind them, they flew to Hana on the eastern tip of Maui to meet with the sisters there. From there they hopped over to Kahului where they were met by Elder Miller and Elder Blaine, the Zone Leaders, who first took them to Kihei to meet with Elder Allen and Elder Mason. In taking them to where they lived, all of a sudden Sheffield and Ramona found themselves in a ritzy part of Kihei. They pulled into the gated driveway of a mansion. Elder Miller pressed the intercom button and announced their arrival. Momentarily the gate opened. They drove on in and around behind the mansion to a separate detached house. It was considerably smaller than the mansion but was constructed of the same material.

The mansion belonged to a wealthy attorney who was a member of the branch. When he bought it, he had no need for the guest house and made it available to the missionaries. It was by far the nicest accommodations in the entire mission. It was also the most affordable because he let them live there rent free. Looking through the house was more of what one would expect from a home show tour than an inspection. Just like the exterior, the guest house had the same furnishings and fixtures as the mansion. These missionaries truly had it good when it came to a place to live.

From Kihei the Zone Leaders next drove them to Pukalani to the Elders apartment there before taking them to their own apartment in Kahului. Having found all well, they spent the night Syllas and Minnie, Collins, the district president and his wife.

Sheffield and Ramona had come to know the Collins well, as they had the Mahaulu's in Hilo, the Drayton's in Kona, the Alapai's in Hanamaulu on Kauai, and especially the Kaaloas and Morleys, as they had spent time in all of their homes as they traveled the mission. Each was a gracious host and the Brasons had become good friends with all of them as well as many others.

On Friday morning they continued the tour with stops in Lahaina on the western end of Maui and Kaunakakai on Molokai. Finding everything in order, they flew onto Lihue on Kauai, arriving around noon. As in other areas, they were met by the zone leaders and were taken to their apartment for inspection. Then the

zone leaders drove them up to Kapaa to meet with the Elders there before being brought back to Lihue and taken to the home of Frank and Olina Alapai, the first counselor in the district presidency, where they stayed the night.

On Saturday morning, Frank drove them over to Koloa to meet with Elder Wylie Hendricks and Elder Russell Kaye who was brand new. They were new to the area and had only arrived in the area ten days earlier to open the area. The Elders met them at their mail box on the main road. To get to where they lived, they had to follow a path for about an eighth of a mile. Sheffield and Ramona had seen some pretty bad places on this tour, but this had to be the worst.

When the Elders arrived in the area, the only housing they could find was nothing more a hut situated in some trees. They walked past their bicycles, which were parked out front, up a couple of rickety steps and through the open door, with a bamboo curtain that rolled down to close the opening. The openings for windows had window screen up to them with wooden shutters that closed from the inside. Inside they had a table with two chairs and an old ice box. On the table was an oil lamp, their only source of light, there being no electricity. Off to the other side were stung two hammocks. The only place to keep their clothes was in their luggage.

Not only was there no electricity, but there was no plumbing either. They got there water from a hand pump and behind the hut was an outhouse. If it wasn't for the fact that it was the 3rd of April, they would have thought that it was an April Fools prank.

After their initial shock, Elder Hendricks told them that it was just a temporary arrangement and that on Monday they would be moving into bungalow that was being refurbished for them. He said that they didn't mind, it was kind of like camping out.

Ramona asked to see the place that was being fixed up for them.

The Elders walked with them back up the path to the road and got on their bikes and led the way. The bungalow, as Elder Hendricks called it, was a small one bedroom house that belonged to member of the branch that had been used for storage for a number of years. Because of neglect, it needed some repairs. In the process, the electrical and plumbing had been replaced and all that was needed was a fresh coat of paint. As far as furnishings were concerned, the members of the branch who lived in that area had come up with what they needed and were just waiting for the bungalow to be ready.

Sheffield and Ramona were satisfied with what they would be moving into.

From there, Frank drove them over to Kalaheo where the branch meetinghouse was located and where the other Elders assigned to the branch lived. Elder Carlson, who had been the mission secretary, was the district leader. They found their living arrangements to be in order. The only other missionaries in the district were Elder and Sister Wynn. As with the other senior couples, they didn't inspect their living

accommodations.

Frank drove them back to the airport in Lihue for the remaining leg of their tour. A short time later they were met at the Princeville Airport, by President Carl Tanaka, the district president. He came to meet them since the Elders in the area were on bicycles. President Tanaka drove them the five miles to Hanalei to his home, where the Elders lived. They had an upstairs bedroom with their own bathroom, but shared the kitchen with the family.

Sheffield and Ramona had met President Tanaka on a number of occasions but this was the first time that they had been to his house, since their business in district was always conducted in Lihue. One of the items they discussed with him while they were there was to hold the upcoming district conference in Hanalei rather than Lihue since the Lihue chapel was undergoing some renovation that wouldn't be finished in time. He took them to the Hanalei meetinghouse, which they found to be rather small, but would do.

They had lunch with Carl and Ruth before they took them back to the airport. With the tour now complete, they took off for home. On the way back to Honolulu, they discussed what they had found over the last four days. For the most part, their missionaries had satisfactory places to live. In those cases where they didn't, ways had been opened so they would.

The tour did turn up one unsuspected concern for Sheffield. They discussed how some of the Elders in remote areas had to rely on bicycles and rides from members to get around. Now that he was more familiar with the areas that his missionaries served in, he wanted to take a closer look at the distribution of the mission fleet. Perhaps some cars could be moved around and he wanted to talk to Manti Morley about requisitioning a few more.

It was mid afternoon when they landed in Honolulu. Roy was there to meet them and take them back to Mililani. It was good to be home.

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All boundary descriptions are strictly conjecture, although the street names are real.

In one area on my mission, we lived in a duplex apartment and a young woman lived in the other half. Two or three times a night we could hear squeaky bedsprings, followed by the shower running.

In one of my areas we lived in a house that an Elderly woman who lived in a nursing home let us live in for only the cost of the utilities and taxes.

In one district I was in, the elders in one area had an apartment in a potato processing plant.