

Chapter XXXV

Visitors from Afar

July 12, 1965 – July 31, 1965

Sheffield and Ramona watched as Janet boarded the 707 for her flight home. “That was sweet of her to come to be with me.” Ramona said. “She was a big help.”

“Yeah.” Sheffield agreed. “She's a good girl.”

They walked hand in hand back to their car and drove back to Mililani. The rest of that week was spent at the mission home preparing for a mission women's conference at the end of the week and got a head start on the transferrers since later in the month Elder Hinckley was scheduled to be in the Islands.

Ramona continued to regain her strength and energy and the next week accompanied Sheffield to the zone conferences since they didn't involve traveling off the island or any overnight stays. The scar on her throat also continued to heal although it was bound to be obvious. The one thing that concerned her the most was her voice. It remained deeper a somewhat raspy. She found that her laugh had become more of a cackle. As far as singing was concerned, she just couldn't produce clear notes. When she attempted to sing, her voice cracked. She held out hope that it would return. Now that her throat had sufficiently healed, she worked hard to restore her voice. She was concerned that it wouldn't be ready for the talk that she was to give at a women's conference.

Every chance she got, she would attempt to sing. It sounded so bad that she resorted to only singing in the shower where no one could hear her. It was discouraging, to say the least. It had only been a month since the incident, so she had hope that with time it would improve. It became obvious that Ramona's voice would not be back to normal by the conference. She concluded that the best she could do would have to do.

On the afternoon of Friday the 16th, Sheffield and Ramona accompanied Roy to the airport to greet their visitors from Salt Lake City. Not sure who they were looking for, they looked for three women traveling together. After several tourists had come through the gate, they spotted who they were obviously looking for as three women who appeared to be in their late fifties or early sixties came through the gate. From their appearance, they had to be who they were waiting for.

Sheffield and Ramona approached them and he asked, “Excuse me ladies, but do you happen to be from Salt Lake City?”

“Why yes.” one of them answered.

“I'm Sheffield Brason, the President of the Hawaii Mission and this is my wife, Ramona. We're here to take you to the mission home.”

A round of hand shakes and introductions followed. The three were Sister Margaret Fielding from Holladay, Utah; Sister Alice Shipley from Lehi, Utah; and Sister Carmen Pratt from Salt Lake City. They were general board members of the Relief Society, Young Women MIA, and Primary boards, respectfully.

When their luggage arrived, Sheffield and Roy gathered their bags and placed them on a cart. Sheffield and Ramona led the way to the mission van parked just outside of the terminal building in the loading zone while Roy followed behind, pulling the baggage cart.

“Have any of you been in the Islands before?” Ramona asked.

None of them had. Sister Fielding added, “But we hope to see some of the sights before we leave.”

“We’ll do our best to show you around.” Ramona replied.

On the way back to the mission home, they pointed out several of the sights as they went by and told a little about them. About twenty minutes later, they pulled into the driveway of Mililani and the van came to a stop under the porte-cochère. Elder North and Elder Phillips had heard them pull in and rushed outside to collect their luggage and bring it inside. They were shown to their rooms in the mission president's apartment upstairs and allowed time to rest and freshen up from their trip.

When dinner was served, Ramona went upstairs to invite them down for dinner. They joined the Brasons, the assistants, office staff, and sister missionaries at the dining table. Over dinner they had an opportunity to get acquainted with their guests.

All three had raised their families and were now proud grandmothers. Each was a native of the Salt Lake Valley from pioneer stock and had a broad background of church service. Yet they each had very different personalities. Sister Fielding was by far the most outgoing of the three. Sister Shipley seemed to be more pensive and reserved, while Sister Pratt had an infectious sense of humor.

When Ramona mentioned that they were from Roanoke, Virginia, Sister Fielding asked, “Then I’m sure you know Hyrum and Agnes Fielding.”

“We sure do.” Ramona replied. “They’re dear friends of ours. I assume you’re related.”

“Yes. Hyrum is my husband's older brother.” Margaret said. Then she added, “It never ceases to amaze me how small the world is, especially when it comes to the Church. It seems like wherever I go, I run across people I know or who know people that I know.”

“So how did the two of you meet?” Sister Pratt asked.

“Do you want the long or the short version?” Ramona asked.

“Oh the long version, of course.” Sister Pratt answered.

For the next several minutes the three ladies listened intently to a condensed telling of the long version of how they met, eventually got married, adopted their children, and joined the Church.

After dinner, there was better than an hour before the sun set, so with Sheffield driving the van, he and Ramona gave them a quick driving tour of downtown Honolulu. When they returned a couple of hours later, dusk had faded into a clear starry night. The three ladies spent the rest of the evening preparing for their meetings the next day. Ramona also reviewed her talk one more time.

The next morning, Ramona set out some items for a self serve breakfast in the small dining area of their apartment and she and Sheffield went downstairs while their guests finished getting ready for the day.

A little after nine they began finding their way downstairs one at a time. Roy had the van waiting just outside and at nine thirty, they along with Sheffield and Ramona boarded the van for the ride to the Honolulu Tabernacle.

When they arrived, several women were milling around while others were still arriving. Sheffield, Ramona, and the three ladies made their way to the front of the chapel, shaking hands and visiting as they went. When Sheffield settled into his seat and looked around the rapidly filling chapel, he and his counselors were the only men among four or five hundred women from the four districts and twenty four branches of the mission. They included the auxiliary presidencies, teachers, and anyone else connected to the organizations. The stakes and wards on Oahu were not included since they had frequent opportunities during their stake conferences to be so instructed.

At ten o'clock, he stepped to the pulpit and called the conference to order. "What a marvelous sight." Sheffield began. "I'm a lucky man to be in the company of so many lovely sisters. On behalf of the Hawaii Mission, I welcome you to this beautiful building for this special conference. I'd first like to recognize my dear companion, Sister Ramona Brason. We have with us today three members of the general auxiliary boards. We welcome Sister Margaret Fielding from the Relief Society; Sister Alice Shipley from Young Women's Mutual Improvement Association; and Sister Carmen Pratt from the Primary. We'll have opportunities to hear from each of them throughout the day. We will break at twelve o'clock for a sack lunch social which has been prepared for us by the Honolulu and Pearl Harbor Stake Relief Societies. Then at one thirty, we will reconvene in the individual auxiliaries.

"But first we will sing hymn number seventy five, 'It May Not Be on the Mountain Height'. Our Chorister is Sister Amelia Chow from the Kihei Branch of the Maui District, accompanied by Sister Valerie Kaumua from the Keeau Branch of the Hilo District. The invocation will then be offered by Sister Teresa Simon from the Kalaheo Branch of the Kauai District."

During the hymn, Ramona struggled to stay on key. Rather than sing out, she muted her voice. After the first verse, she didn't try to sing the rest of the song in an attempt to preserve her voice for her talk.

After the invocation, Sheffield returned to the pulpit. "The idea for this conference originated several months ago when a member of the the Relief Society General Board was here for a stake conference and held a training meeting for the sisters in the three stakes on Oahu. I happened to mention that it would be nice if we could do something like that for the sisters in the mission. Several weeks went by and I received a call from Sister Fielding saying that she had been assigned to come out to the mission and present some training. Then a few weeks later she called back to inform me that someone from the Young Women's MIA

and the Primary would be coming with her. I know that you have been looking forward to this conference ever since it was announced. I know that for some of you, it was a real sacrifice for you to be here today. Since I couldn't possibly contribute much of any value to what has been prepared, I'll sit down so you can be fed with what you came here to receive. First we will be pleased to hear from Sister Brason, who you all know and love. She will be followed by a choir from the Kona District who will sing 'Sister, Thou Wast Mild and Lovely'. Then we will hear from Sister Pratt, Sister Shipley, and Sister Feilding will be the concluding speaker of this session. Sister Brason."

Ramona took a deep breath and stood up to walk to the pulpit. As she went, Sheffield was returning to his seat. He paused and gave her hug and whispered in her ear, "Good luck Sweetheart."

"Thanks, Babe." she replied. "I'll need it."

Ramona stepped up to the pulpit and took another deep breath. As she opened her mouth to speak, her raspy voice cracked with emotion. "First I want to personally thank you for all of your prayers in my behalf. As you know, a little over a month ago I had a run in with a honey bee. My husband says that I'm was so sweet that the poor creature found me irresistible. The resulting sting caused an allergic reaction that could have killed me. If not for a quick thinking by high councilman with a pocketknife and the proper training coupled with a priesthood blessing, I might not be here today. In the process, my voice was damaged. So please bear with me and offer just one more prayer in my behalf.

"Like many of you, about eighteen years ago, as a recent convert I found myself serving as a counselor in the Relief Society Presidency of our branch back in Virginia. I barely knew what Relief Society was, let alone what a counselor did. Over time I came to understand what that meant and what I was supposed to be doing. I had a patient teacher who lovingly guided me as I fulfilled my responsibilities. Then about the time I had that figured out, guess what happened. They made me the Relief Society President. How many of you have had something like that happen to you?"

Ramona went on to deliver a wonderful message of inspiration and encouragement to the sisters. All through her remarks, she was self-conscious of her deep raspy voice. Those who heard her speak didn't seem to notice as the Spirit conveyed the power of her message into their hearts as she talked about relying on the Spirit for guidance in their callings and to rely upon the blessing and gifts bestowed upon them when they were set apart under the authority of the Priesthood. She talked about coming to know the sisters, young ladies, and children that they had been called to minister to and to seek to fill their individual needs. At the conclusion of her remarks she bore her testimony and returned to her seat.

Sheffield leaned over and whispered, "Good job."

"Thanks, Babe. It sounded to me like I was stammering and crackling my way through it."

"Well if you were, it didn't sound that way to me."

After the choir finished their number, the three sisters from Salt Lake each delivered their messages and testimonies. With the time remaining, Sheffield opened the meeting for the bearing of testimonies. The response was impressive. Knowing how much time was left, he watched the stream of women come forward. He calculated how long they would take and at a certain point following the testimony of one sister he got up announced that the meeting would come to a close when the last of those currently waiting on the stand had finished. He hated to cut them off, but they were on a schedule.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Sheffield returned to the pulpit and said, "The Spirit had truly been there in abundance. The benediction and blessing on the food will be offered by Sister Cathrine Sumahara from the Hawi Barnch of the Kona District. After the prayer, please move to the cultural hall to get you're lunch. You're welcome to remain there to eat or feel free to enjoy it outside on these lovely grounds. Sister Sumahara."

Sheffield and Ramona held back to let the sisters go pick up their sack lunches. While they were waiting, several women approached Ramona and told her how touched they were by her remarks or how they related to her experience. Not one seemed to have been distracted by her voice.

She asked her close friend, Aloha Mahulu, "How did I sound. Please, be honest with me."

"Ramona, you sounded great. Yes your voice is a little different now. But what you said far out weighed and overshadowed how you sounded. Don't worry about it."

"Thanks Aloha. You're a real friend."

Her comment put Ramona more at ease.

Someone saw Sheffield and Ramona holding back and approached them with a box with a variety of sack lunches. They each selected one that appealed to them and went outside to eat. The grounds were covered with small and large groups of women eating their lunch and visiting. Again several approached Ramona to comment about her talk. It made her realize that maybe she had been too concerned about her voice, when it really wasn't an issue. She wished that she could do it over again with her new found confidence.

During the afternoon, the three auxiliaries conducted their own sessions, although they covered much of the same information. There were demonstrations on how to conduct presidency meetings and present lessons. For the latter, a group of children and young women from the wards around the tabernacle were the students. Sheffield and Ramona stayed with the relief society, while President Kaaloa went with the Young Women MIA and President Galloway went with the Primary. The conference lasted until around two thirty and when it was over, most of the attendees went their own ways in order to begin the trip back to their home islands, but many lingered to ask questions.

The one thing the three ladies from Salt Lake wanted to do before leaving was to spend the rest of

the afternoon at Waikiki Beach and enjoy the sun, sand, and surf. They had brought a change of clothes with them, so Roy dropped them off at the beach before taking Sheffield and Ramona back to Mililani. Later in the afternoon, they rode a city bus back to the mission home.

On Sunday, they attended the local ward with Sheffield and Ramona and on Monday, Sister Pratt had to leave to go home. Sister Fielding and Sister Shipley had planned on staying an extra day to see more of Hawaii. Sheffield and Ramona took them up to Laie to see the Polynesian Cultural Center, the Church College of Hawaii, and the Temple grounds. Being a Monday, the temple was closed so they weren't able to attend. After spending quite a while in Laie, they took them up around the North Shore and back down through the Central Valley. They stayed at the Mililani again that night before flying back to the mainland on Tuesday.

While Sheffield and Ramona were showing Sister Fielding and Sister Shipley around on Monday, the Hanamis came in on their day off to make sure the the mission home and the grounds were ready for Elder Hinckley's visit. The Assistants, office staff, and the lady missionaries all pitched in. When they were done the mansion and the grounds could pass any inspection.

After seeing Sister Fielding and Sister Shipley off at the airport, they had a little while to wait for Elder Hinckley's flight to arrive. When he did, he greeted them with, "President and Sister Brason, its so good to see you again."

Sheffield helped him take his luggage out to their car and drove him to the mission home. On the ride back, they engaged in conversation about his flight and what his trip held in store.

Once at Mililani, he was introduced to the Assistants and the office staff. Elder Hillard took his luggage up to the guest room while Sheffield ushered him into the office. For the first little while they just chatted casually. He asked how they were doing and Ramona's told him about her recent ordeal. He listened as they unfolded the story of what had happened.

Elder Hinckley told about the Japanese saints who would be arriving the next day and the sacrifice that they had made to come and attend the temple. As the supervisor of the Hawaii-Oriental Missions, he had made several trips to Asia in that capacity. He told of some the experiences that he had and the miracles that he had witnessed. "I don't intentionally ignore the Hawaii Mission," he said, "but the church is so well established here that it doesn't require much of my attention. Everything runs so smoothly here because of folks like you and the local church leaders. Now its a different story in Asia. The church is so new there that they lack the leadership that you have here."

That lead into a review of how the mission was doing. Sheffield was prepared with all of the statistics from the number of convert baptisms to the attendance in the branches of the district. Elder Hinckley took a casual look at them and said, "This all looks very good. In fact their as good as anywhere in the heart of

Zion. He commented, "I see that the number of baptisms had increased considerably in the year that you've been here. I'd say that its a direct result of your inspired direction and leadership. As impressive as the statistics look, I'm more interested in the people that these numbers represent. The gospel is all about people, not numbers. Tell me about some of the success stories that you have had."

Sheffield pushed the rest of the statistical reports that he was prepared to review aside. Leaning back in his chair, he said, "We'll, there are so many. Where do I begin? We've had a few of our own personal successes as well."

"Splendid. I'd love to hear them."

Sheffield told the story of Chance Haggerty, and about Harvey and Marcella although they had been taught by the missionaries in Texas. Ramona told about her experience in Keeau and of Janet's encounter with Tim and Millie Garcia and the progress that they were making.

"I'm glad to hear that you're personally involved in the work, and not just setting back and calling the shots. That's what I call front end leadership."

"We really love being involved." Sheffield said.

"I understand that ever since the two of you joined the Church that you've had an influence on countless people. Tell me about your own conversion."

"Its a rather long story." Ramona explained.

"Thats alright. I'd love to hear it."

Sheffield began at the beginning and over the next quite a while, together they retold their story, not leaving out any of the import aspects. Throughout their story, they talked about the influence that Geannie had in helping them to find the Church, including her appearance to them.

When they were finished, Elder Hinckley said, "That is one of the most fascinating conversion stories I believe I've ever heard. Now I'd like to hear more of the stories behind some of the recent converts in the mission."

For the next little while Sheffield and Ramona retold stories that the missionaries had told them. Some of them Sheffield and Ramona had first hand knowledge of, others they didn't.

After a while, Elder Hillard knocked on the door and announced that lunch was served.

Elder Hinckley joined them at the long dining table and over lunch, he talked to each of the missionaries who were there and asked them about home and how their missions were going. As he listened to their stories and asked them questions, the lunch hour went way passed the a lotted time.

After lunch had been cleared away, Elder Hinckley had every one gather around the dining table and began teaching them. The Sisters had to leave to for a teaching appointment, but the Assistants and the office staff listened as he taught them and Sheffield and Ramona the significance of their callings as

missionaries.

Elder Hinckley had dinner with them and then spent the evening meeting with Sheffield and his counselors in the mission presidency. It was during this meeting that Elder Hinckley paid more attention to the statistics. He was particularly interested in the growth and activity levels of the districts. He predicted that at the present rate of growth that within the the next few years, Hilo in particular would be ready to become a stake. The others would be a few years after that.

That night, he stayed in the guest room and the next next morning, Sheffield and Ramona drove him back to the airport to greet the saints arriving from Japan. At the Japan Airlines terminal, they met up with the President Edward L. Clissold, the temple president and his wife and Paul Andrus, a local busniessman who had presided over the Japanese Mission, and his wife Frances.

A large crowd of Hawaiian saints, particularly those of Japanes decent themselves, had also gathered to greet their brothers and sisters. Takara and her in laws, Manti and lolani, were among them. Excitement in the terminal mounted as the chartered plane landed. Once the one hundred thirty one adults and twenty nine children, who ranged in age from an infant to eighty years old, deplaned and entered the terminal they were greeted by the waiting crowd who had brought with them scores of leis which they placed around the necks of the visitors from afar. Tears of love and appreciation were shed by both groups.

After the greetings subsided, the crowd cleared out of the terminal to the chartered buses that were waiting to take them to Laie. Elder Hinckley shook hands with Sheffield and Ramona, "I'll see you on Saturday." he said before boarding one of the buses.

"We'll be there." Sheffield assured him.

They had a moment to talk to the Morleys before they had to leave to follow the buses to Laie. Manti explained that while they were there, they would be staying in the dormitories at the college while school was out. He told about all of special things that were planned for them over the next few days, in addition to attending the temple.

Sheffield and Ramona returned to the mission home to prepare for their zone conferences in the Honolulu, Pearl Harbor zones on Thursday and Friday, and Oahu on Saturday.

On Saturday morning, they left early and drove to Laie to attend the temple, but first they stopped by the Morleys to drop off their overnight bags. Manti and lolani accompanied them to the temple where they met up with Takara and Teancum. One of their neighbors was watching their kids.

It was the final day the Japanese saints would be able to attend the temple before returning home. They had already received their own temple ordinances and had been busy doing the work for hundreds of their deceased love ones and ancestors.

In the temple, Sheffield and Ramona found themselves surrounded by scores of Japanese people,

all speaking in their native tongue. Takara fit right in and was able to communicate with them. Elder Hinckley saw Sheffield and Ramona enter the chapel and came over to greet them before going to the Creation Room. The session that they attended was presented in Japanese. As familiar as they were with the ceremony, they still found themselves getting lost at times.

After the session, Elder Hinckley came over to talk to them before they had to leave for their meeting. After visiting for a moment, Sheffield said, "This is Takara Morley from here in Laie. She lived with us as an exchange student when she was a senior in high school. She's originally from Japan."

"Yes. I met Sister Morley the other day. She told me all about how you were instrumental in her conversion. I'm afraid that I can't talk now, I'm supposed to be in the sealing room to perform some more sealings, but I look forward to seeing you this evening." At that, he was ushered away.

Sheffield and Ramona left the temple and went and got something to eat before driving over to the stake center for the conference. At end of the conference rather than having their usual luncheon, Sheffield and Ramona and the missionaries joined with the members of the Oahu Stake and their guests at the Polynesian Cultural center for a luau.

That night Sheffield and Ramona spent the night at the Morleys and attended church the next day in Laie. Ramona was watchful for any bee that might be attracted to her gardenia. That evening a special fireside was held before the Japanese saints were to fly back to Japan the next day. Elder Hinckley presided at that fireside and Sheffield and Ramona were invited to sit on the stand along with the Clissolds and Morleys and Elder Hinckley recognized thier attendance.

Elder Hinckley called on President Morely, President Brason and Presient Clissold to each say a few words. Since many of the Japanese saints did not speak English, interpiters were provided. Takara had the privledge of translating for Sheffield.

He said, "My dear brothers and sisters, I am truley honored to have been with you what little I could over these past few days. I was first introduced to your county in nineteen twenty two when as a young naval officer I had the privilege of visiting Tokyo during a world cruise. I found your homeland to be lovely place as I had the opportunity to go ashore. I found your people to be quite charming.

"Unfortunately my next encounter with your people was not so pleasant. I realize that it wasn't the people but rather your government at the time that brought war upon our two nations. You see, my wife Ramona and I were here in Hawaii on that terrible day when the war started and I lost my first wife and two children that day.

"As a naval officer, I was involved some months later when the war was brought to your homeland, and again during the final days of the war. Despite my own personal loss, I made it a matter of personal policy to not let the business of war, as I called it, bring hatred and bitterness to my soul. Thats just the way I

had been raised.

“I later remarried and after the war retired from the military. It was a couple of years after that, that we found the Church and were baptized. Then during the Korean War, I was recalled to active duty and had the privilege to return to your country. I was disheartened to witness for myself the destruction and devastation that had befallen you and I knew that I was the cause of some of it.

“At the same time I was encouraged to see the great city of Tokyo undergoing a rebirth. I was also happy to see the missionaries there laboring to bring you the gospel. Our son in law was there at that time. Perhaps someone here was taught the gospel by Elder Wade Rowan.

“Then a few years later, a lovely young Japanese woman came to live in our home in Virginia while she attended high school as an exchange student. It is through her that I now speak to you. It was my privilege to baptize her and later attend her marriage in the very temple that you have come so far to attend.

“I am honored to have been here with you. Elder Hinckley tells me that you are poised on the crest of marvelous times to come. He tells me that in the years to come, your humble beginnings will become many thousands of members of the Church and one day, you may even have a temple in your own land.

“I believe him, because in my years in the Church, I have seen things transpire that I would not have thought possible. I have seen first hand the gospel spread over my home state of Virginia and now these beautiful islands. I know that God's hand directs this great work and I'm happy to be a part of it. I know that it is true. I know that the Lord's prophets and apostles once again walk the face of the earth. I have met them and know that they are men of God. We have one with us this evening. I look forward to hearing from him as I know you do. So I will close now so that we can hear from him. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.”

After the brief remarks of President Morely, President Brason and President Clissold, Elder Hinckley spoke for about twenty minutes and then opened the meeting for the bearing of testimonies. One man said, “We thought that we were making a real sacrifice to come here, but after going through the temple we know that we have received more than we gave.”

After the meeting a couple who appeared to be in their mid forties approached Sheffield and Ramona. Takara was nearby and they asked her to tell them that they had actually been taught the gospel by Wade and that he had baptized them. They said that their names were Hayate and Emiko Nakamura. He went on to say that he was now the president of their small branch.

They asked about Elder Rowan. They told them about his family and that he was now a veterinarian. They had Takara write down their address and asked them to get it to him. In return they had Takara write down Wade's address for them.

Another man, perhaps in his fifties came up to Sheffield and in very good English said, “President Brason, thank you for your remarks. I too was a naval officer during the war. Regrettably I was young and

got caught up in the frenzy of war and was not able to keep myself above the fight. I'm so sorry for the loss that it brought you. You see, I was a Lieutenant aboard the Shokaku. I remember standing in the catwalk, cheering as the planes were launched for the attack on Pearl Harbor."

Sheffield looked him in the eye and said, "I don't blame you brother. That is the past. The important thing is that you are here and I am here, brothers in the gospel."

He went on to explain, "I was severely wounded when the Shokaku was damaged at Coral Sea. Because of my injuries, I was discharged and sent home. As the war came to our homeland, I began to realize that the warlords in the military brought it on us, so I don't blame you either, brother."

"Tell me, how did you come into the church?"

"My wife and I and our children managed to survive the war through what I see now as a series of miracles. Then when the war ended and the Americans occupied our country, I met an army major who was a member of the church. Because of his compassion toward us, I sought him out and we became friends. It was he who introduced my wife and I and our children to the church and baptized us. That was in 1946, so we were among the first"

"Is your wife here with you?"

"No. Sadly, she died about five years ago."

"I'm sorry to hear that."

"It's alright. Now we have the hope and promise of being together forever."

The two men shook hands, knowing that they would most likely never see each other again, but parted as friends for life.

On Monday morning, Sheffield and Ramona got up and got ready to go home. As they drove out of town, they could see the charter buses at the dormitories loading up for the trip back to the airport. Once they got home. They had the rest of the day to take care of their personal affairs, Ramona wrote a letter to Norma and Wade to tell them about meeting the Nakamuras and to pass along their address to him.

Wednesday the 28th was transfer day. They said goodbye to Elder Miller, who had been one of the Assistants, along with Elder Aaron Romney, Elder Douglas Allen, and Elder Gale Wells. In their place, they welcomed four new elders. In all, twenty eight missionaries were affected by the transfer. New to the mission home were Elder Jeffry Wallace, who had once been the travel coordinator, as an assistant, and Elder Dewayne Phillips who replaced Elder Cooper as the new travel coordinator.

That same day, Sheffield read in the newspaper that the United States announced that fifty thousand troops had been ordered to Vietnam. That announcement was coupled with a statement that the number of draft calls would double to thirty five thousand a month. Sheffield couldn't help but wonder how it would affect the number of missionaries that would be available.

After a very busy month, Sheffield and Ramona had a light schedule for the rest of the last week of July. On Saturday the 31st, they did attend the baptism service for the Garcias, who Janet and Sister Ricks had found.

During the time that Sister Hansen and Sister Ricks had been teaching them, they kept Sheffield and Ramona apprised of their progress. They had the opportunity to get to know them and feel their spirits as they attended the ward, particularly the Gospel Essentials Sunday School Class. From time to time Sister Ricks would write to Janet to keep her informed. Janet also kept in touch with them as well.

The Garcia's quickly became friends with the Peabody family, who had children the same ages, and they had been with them every step of the way as well. As they progressed they made other friends in the ward as well and had been well received. Their story was a classic example of how missionary work was supposed to be done. In fact, a good number of ward members turned out for their baptismal service. Brother Peabody baptized and confined not only Tim and Millie, but also their son Henry who had just turned eight two weeks earlier.

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The women's conference is based on an article in the October 24, 1964 edition of the Church News that reported on a leadership conference that was held at Pulehu, Maui under the direction of the president of the Hawaii Mission. The three auxiliary board members from Salt Lake are fictional.

Elder Gordon B. Hinckley flew to Hawaii in July 1965 and spent several days in the Laie Hawaii Temple with 166 members from Japan performing sealings and participating in temple instruction. The story was adapted from the July 31, 1965 edition of Church News. (See also page 265 in "Go Forward With Faith" the biography of Gordon B. Hinckley.)

President Edward L. Clissold was the president of the Hawaii Temple at the time and Paul Andrus was mentioned in the Church news article.