

Sandy Hook, Gateway NRA, NPS
An Oral History Telephone Interview with Patricia (Penny) Corley
Officers' Wife, 1964-66
Interviewed by Mary Rasa, NPS
August 18, 2005
Transcribed by Mary Rasa 2010



Newspaper clipping of welcoming tea at Fort Hancock Officers' Club, 1965.

All photos courtesy: NPS/Gateway NRA



A birthday party at Quarters #9



First Communion at St. Mary's Chapel, 1965.



Christmas morning in Quarters #9



Penny Corley models at Officers' Wives Club fashion show, March 1966

Editorial notes in parenthesis ()

MR: My name is Mary Rasa, Sandy Hook Museum Curator. Today is August 18, 2005. I am doing, connecting a telephone interview with Patricia Corley. Would you please state your full name?

PC: I am Patricia Ann Corley and am known by the nickname Penny.

MR: Okay, the first thing I am going to ask you is when and where were you born?

PC: I was born on March 13, 1936 and it was a Friday.

MR: And where was that?

PC: That was in Leavenworth, Kansas.

MR: Was your father in the military?

PC: No, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas is just right on the outskirts. The military is right there.

MR: Okay, where did you graduate from school?

PC: Leavenworth High School.

MR: So you stayed there the whole time?

PC: Yes, I was born and bred there.

MR: Okay. And how did you become involved at Fort Hancock?

PC: By marrying an Army Officer who was working at Fort Leavenworth at the Command and General Staff College. And that is where we met and we married.

MR: In what year?

PC: In 1956, I believe it was. And he was at that time a member of the faculty at Fort Leavenworth. A Lt. Colonel at that time and then from there we went, let's see, to Colorado Springs. No, that's not it. From there he was sent on what they called a hardship tour to Turkey for one year. At that time, the children and I came to Florida to live for the year that he was gone. Then after that, we went to Colorado Springs, Colorado to Headquarters North American Air Defense Command, known as NORAD. And we were there for two years. And during that time he was promoted to full Colonel. And we had our fourth child there. I had two children when we married. And we added

two boys, William and Patrick and the children from the first marriage Lisa Marie and Michael. So we were a family of six when we left Colorado Springs and from there we went to the Army War College. I don't know how much you know about the military, but that's in Harrisburg, PA. And then from there he was posted at Fort Hancock as the Brigade Executive Officer. Which meant he was #2 in command.

MR: Who was the commander?

PC: At the time we... now are at Fort Hancock...

MR: Was it General Clappsaddle?

PC: June 1964 is when we arrived at Fort Hancock, okay. And Brigadier General Clappsaddle was there.

MR: He was there?

PC: His wife's name was Martha and I can't remember his first name.

MR: I have it written down, I can't remember (General Clarence Clappsaddle).

PC: And they were there for the first year. And since he was my husband's immediate boss, we were very close. And then in, I think it was in 1965, there was a change in the Commanding General and that was Walter and Alethea Vann. And we had known them at Fort Leavenworth. They actually gave an engagement party for us at Fort Leavenworth. So, we were delighted to have them coming out to Sandy Hook. Now, my position was rather unique as a senior officers' wife because I was only 29.

MR: Really.

PC: He's 17 years older than I am. So, the other Colonel's wives are 15, 16 years older than I am. And their children are mostly grown or maybe off to college. And they're in those big houses with just them and their spouse. And of course, I was just thrilled to be in that house with four small children ranging from let's see... Lisa was born in '55, so she was 10, Michael was like 8, and William was 6 or 5 and Patrick 2. So, I had four little kids. And the back stairs and the huge upstairs where they could play and I could have areas like the living room and dining room and front room where I could have areas that were clean and neat all the time.

MR: And now you lived in House # 9?

PC: Right. So, I was totally delighted. At age 29, better physically able to handle a big quarters, because it was a handful.

MR: Did you ever get a maid or anyone come in?

PC: I was going to say, the difficulty was because at that time, we are talking 40 years ago, transportation to Sandy Hook, we are talking Sea Bright was a little summer town. You couldn't get someone to come out there.

MR: It's kind of still that way. It's pretty isolated.

PC: The last time I was there was I guess in '95 and to me it looked extremely built. With the little two road, macadam road out to Fort Hancock sometimes if we had a nor'easter it was cut off by water. So, anyway, I had a wonderful time. The quarters were being excellently maintained by the Corps of Engineers, the Post people. You know, the civilians that were employed were the ones that took care of the quarters. And they were very fond of the quarters. Number 9, they had redone all the hardwood floors, just before we moved in.

MR: That was nice. Did they paint for you?

PC: I was going to say, of course when we got there, you know everything, all the walls were white. The woodwork was all white and the walls were maybe off white. And it was fresh, but I wanted color, so we painted the walls, I think it was called Sandstone, which was kind of a medium tan. And then the little bathroom, the half bath under the stairwell, I painted that lavender because my daughter's bedroom was always done in lavender. And I had some cute curtains that were of course way too small, you know those (bedroom) windows were four feet by six feet. And how tall are the ceilings? Are they ten feet or twelve feet?

MR: They are twelve.

PC: Yes, I was going to say, I would say from time to time, those ceilings were twelve feet high and they would say, "Oh that is ridiculous." Anyway, using her little curtains, I think they were swayback print so I used the violet and painted it lavender and made it a cute little powder room. As I recall it had the porcelain sink, not built in or anything, it wasn't just the sink and plumbing, it had the porcelain legs, if you will.

MR: Right, right, the pedestal.

PC: That's back in fashion now as you know. So, then the basement which was huge, and my husband painted it with something like Kilz or whitewash. In inclement weather the children were down there riding bicycles.

MR: It's pretty big, did you have your laundry room down there?

PC: The laundry room, you know the washer and dryer in, you know, number 9 was between the kitchen and the butler's pantry. I had a washer and a dryer under the window.

MR: Oh, okay.

PC: But for the old laundry room downstairs....

MR: Yes.

PC: I was Cub Scout den mother and that was just wonderful because we would have our den meetings down there. And of course, they were all children of people at the post. So, they could come by whenever they wanted to during the week to work on their projects because someone would come in and go down the back stair and work there.

MR: Hmm.

PC: And just the space, you know, every house I have lived in since, including this one which is not small, it has four bedrooms, two and a half baths, family room, etc. And then when we left Fort Hancock we went to Germany, where we lived in a huge set of quarters. Once you live in a house like that, I never found anything with all the features that it had.

MR: On the second level, where everyone had basically, probably their own bedroom then?

PC: Absolutely, well, the two... you know, the master bedroom, I have photos of that. There was a bathroom associated with it and a huge walk in closet. And then, a little front bedroom on the other side which was probably a study at one time. My oldest son was in there. And then my daughter was in the other large bedroom. And that was fun for her because this was during the period when little girls like to have slumber parties. So, it was so big she had her full size bed and a double.... And there were seven fireplaces. The master bedroom, yeah, they all had fireplaces, except for the bedroom above the kitchen. But anyway, so Lisa's room was so big we were able to put in, we had some twin beds from the boy's rooms in other quarters. They were in there kind of like little sofas so she could have plenty of room for little girlfriends to come and do slumber parties. Now, the two younger boys were in the third larger room towards the back of the house. And I am a seamstress and I had the smallest bedroom as my sewing room.

MR: Now, did you use the third level at all?

PC: The third level we used... the large back room which was above the kitchen, I understand when those quarters were first built, when it was for Lieutenant's and Captain's, that they had what was called a striker and his wife living there.

MR: Well, they were officially known as Servant's Quarters. So the striker typically, from my understanding would have typically have been an enlisted man who would just come over and not be there all the time, and typically there would be one or two servants up there, but that is possible, it could have happened.

PC: Right, well I guess originally the fireplaces were used for heating in the wintertime so someone would have had to stoke them. But that was what we always considered them, where the servants would have lived. They were very nice. There was a beautiful front room, which was above the master bedroom. The houses faced the bay, right?

MR: Yes.

PC: So, they were facing west. And I had always hoped, and I don't know where I was going to get the time, but when you are 29 you think you can do everything. I had taken some oil painting lessons when we were in Colorado, and I had always dreamed of making that room into the studio, the art studio. There was another huge room up there on the other side. Of course, the big hallway, and then the bathroom and another big room to the back which the children made into a huge playroom.

MR: Oh, that must have been fun.

PC: My older son is very creative and of course that is how he makes his living. He went to school and graduated with an art degree. He's a graphic artist. So he took one of the wardrobe boxes that you ship the clothes in, he made computers and stuff out of them. I don't know how long you have to listen.

MR: No, this is very interesting.

PC: Because I will tell you a really funny story.

MR: Okay, that's great.

PC: As I said that big room, which is to the rear of the house overlooking the parade ground was where the children could go up and play and they could make all the noise they wanted and it was all their stuff. And this was when we were having the change of command when the Vanns were coming. So we were planning a welcoming luncheon for Alethea. And in those days, all invitation were done by hand and three or four of the ladies had come over to my house and we were doing the invitations and the kids were, their kids and my kids and they would be running up and down the back stairs having a good time. And it got to be about five o'clock or so and the Headquarters was right across the Parade Ground. The men would walk out the back door and walk across the Parade Ground and be at work. So, anyway, my next door neighbor's husband came in, and she was there and said, "Penny, I think you are going to have to go up and check on the children." I said, "Oh, what's wrong?". And he said, "Well, Michael had your douche bag and he's hanging it out the window spraying the men as they are going home."

MR: Oh, my.

PC: Well, yes, indeed he was.

MR: Oh, boy.

PC: And he said, "Well Mom," you know, I guess I had it hanging on the bathroom door. And kids you know they poke into every crevasse of your house. So, he thought that and said, "hmmm." He's very imaginative. So, anyway that's one of the funny stories. And then of course, I made, Roman shades for the living room. And then draperies for the dining room. And a lot of military wives would say, "Well, I'm only going to be here two years." and they would do very little. I just moved in and did, you know, act I was going to be there for the rest of my life, because you know, after all, it was my life. So anyway, I always had a good time. When I saw the Officers' Club, of course, I was enchanted. First, I was appalled, because the Bachelor Officers' were kind of using it. They had shuffleboard in the bar.

MR: Really.

PC: Apparently the group of senior ladies that was in the crowd before me they didn't care too much. I think they were just enjoying a two year vacation in a big house on the bay. But anyway, then I saw the powder room or the big ladies bathroom with those beautiful French doors. I said, "Oh my goodness, we've got to do something about this." As I said, well, my husband was the #2. So, I told him, and then I thought we didn't have the proper, we weren't living as Officers' Ladies at the Officers' Club so something was going to have to change. And then of course, that made me immediately popular (jokingly) with everybody. (Laughing) And it did change. And everybody was happy in the end. So, one of the first things that we did as far as decorating over there was, we must have gotten some money from the Post Commander, because I had the idea that those French doors would be just gorgeous if they had the Austrian valence above and just long sheers on either side. As I recall they were just two big French doors.

MR: Yes.

PC: And so, maybe I brought this up. As wife of the second in command I had a seat on the (Officers') Wives' Club board. I didn't have to be elected or anything. I was just there. So anyway the decision was made that we would buy fabric and it was nylon or something, but it looked silk like. And the valences were made of a real pale turquoise and I forgotten if we put fringe on them or not. And you know Austrian shades are the ones that are gathered and looped.

MR: Yes.

PC: And the side sheers would just be white. So it would be light and airy and feminine. And what were there, three commodes, stalls in there?

MR: It's different now, I'm not really sure.

PC: But anyway, so the decision was made that we would do this. The word went out and the Post Chaplain and his wife wanted to participate and then there were two or three other ladies who had machines and liked to sew. So we, one day went over there with

our sewing machines and another officers' wife and I had gone down into Rumson and purchased the fabric. Of course, I had made the design, made the measurements, came up with the amount, the hardware, the drapery rods etc, that we would have to have to hang these. And by the way, you probably already know this, but all that woodwork in Philippine mahogany.

MR: No, I was not aware of that.

PC: Well, of course it has many layers of paint on it. But its Philippine mahogany and my dear, it's almost like stone. Go over there to any sets of quarters and try to drive a nail with a hammer into any surrounds around the windows and see how it works.

MR: Hmm. (laughter)

PC: I had to do it with just a screwdriver and we didn't have an electric drill and stuff then. And my wrists paid for it to this day. But anyway, we went over. We had a wonderful time. We make these drapes and they looked wonderful. And everyone oohed and ahed for the next year and half or so when you walked into the ladies' room. And I had forgotten what else we had done. Maybe it was paint or maybe some chairs were brought in from somewhere and maybe we had a little powder table in there. So anyway, it looked like an Officers' Club ladies' room should look.

MR: Did you take any pictures of it?

PC: I did not and I don't know why not.

MR: Just curious.

PC: Yes, I know I have quite a few pictures inside my house, from birthday parties and things. But I am sorry I just didn't take a whole lot more. And in Quarters #9, in the dining room the built in buffet was still there.

MR: Yes.

PC: And I think that in some of the quarters for some reason those had been taken out.

MR: Yes, it depended on the quarters. Was all of Officers' Row occupied when you were there?

PC: Oh, yes. The base was full. There was a Nike Hercules site out there.

MR: Yes, was your husband involved in that?

PC: Oh, yes. He was the Brigade... that's what was there... the Headquarters of the 52nd Artillery Brigade. The General and they (commanded) over all the Nike Hercules sites (in the NY-Philadelphia area). My husband visited the sites up and down. For instance

there were two full colonels that lived on the base. And their posts were actually where there were a couple of other Nike Hercules sites.

MR: Okay, so they were living there but working at another site.

PC: They were living at the base, then they would go off base to their headquarters which was along the coastline there. And my husband, this was another thing; a helicopter would land between the house and seawall to pick him up when he would go to make inspections of these sites.

MR: Really.

PC: So, the children thought that's where my Dad goes. You know how kids are. They were so young. They used to tell people who would ask what their Dad did. And Michael would say, "Oh, he's a postman". Well, he wore a uniform. And that's the way we played it.

MR: The reason I asked is because the last commander of Fort Hancock was in charge of the facilities, he was not involved with the missiles, but your husband definitely was, okay.

PC: Well, now, I told you I had two people I would give you the names, and well Dorothy Johnson, well there was always a Post Commander as well, yes. And that is what Dorothy's husband was at the time when we were there. Colonel Dan Johnson and he was the Post Commander. And then you had the Brigade Headquarters which was the General and the Brigade Executive Officer and their staff.

MR: Oh, okay.

PC: Okay. But I guess once they removed the Nike sites, then...

MR: Well, they closed down in 1974, was when the military left the facility and the last commander I was talking to a few times and that's how I had that information.

PC: What was his name?

MR: Well, Victor Hugo was in charge of the Nike part and I'll think of it in a couple of minutes (Herbert Hayes).

PC: Well Dorothy Johnson and I'll give you her address and also I'll give you the address of Arlie Seitz who was my next door neighbor and a good friend. Her husband was a Major there. And she was voted in as the Officers' Wives Club President. We would have monthly luncheons and it was as we would say in those days, "Hats, gloves and girdles." And we would take the summer off. When the children weren't in school we didn't do anything, any Wives Club thing. We were all stay-at-home moms in those

days. When the kids were home, they were home. Now, the three older children of mine which were in grade school and they went to the Catholic School.

MR: Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

PC: Yes, and then Patrick who was just two, if I did anything I would have to take him to, they did have a Post Nursery. I would take him to the Post Nursery. I believe it was manned by maybe an enlisted wife. And we would have board meetings. The wives would have board meetings once a month. And I guess a luncheon once a month. And I believe Arlie who was the President, maybe can tell you, I've forgotten if we had programs or whether we got together and just had lunch and visited.

MR: Now would you meet in the Officers' Club all the time.

PC: It was always at the Officers' Club. And that was why it was important to me that it looked like an Officers' Club. Also we would have fashion shows. And I was in one of the fashion shows. Modeled in it and I have some photos of myself and one other wife standing by the mantelpiece in the entryway. Posing. Very funny. But at this luncheon that we planned for Alethea, was quite an affair. We had to take our own tea services over because the club didn't have its own silver and that was fine. And I think its Fort...Fort Monmouth?

MR: Yes.

PC: Which was quite big. And its still there?

MR: Yes it is.

PC: Okay, because that is where I would go to the commissary. And the General and the senior officers all knew each other. My husband called over there and made arrangements. They had a band over there and they had a string quartet. And so they agreed to come over and play during the welcoming luncheon for Alethea. I think it was a tea. I think it was a welcoming tea. I think the Commanding General at Fort Monmouth at the time was a two star. So he and his #2 and his wife and the wife of the #2 which I believe was a one star they came to the luncheon. They were invited and came. And I have a photo with them, myself and the two of them. I don't remember their names, I didn't write it down. This was long before the days of scrap booking. Like today it's almost like to have some in the house working on photos and scrapbooks all the time.

MR: I just need to pause because the tape has to be turned over.

PC: Formal event, the ladies all wore cocktail dresses and the men all suits and ties. And I would always give a big brunch every year. I think the biggest one was for forty-eight or fifty people.

MR: Wow.

PC: And you know when you are doing it all yourself, well it takes good planning. You just plan it for a couple of weeks. You know everything you have to do for four children goes on around that. And we had the good fortune to and this is because my husband had a driver. A young enlisted fellow. And his last name was Rouse. R-O-U-S-E. And when sometimes my husband would be picked up by the helicopter, or sometimes he and the driver would do the drive to the different places they would have to go. Which would be an hour or two up and an hour or two back. Whatever. And after they spent a few drives together, why the driver said to my husband, "I think you would like to meet my Mom and Dad". And it turns out, his mom and dad were Marilyn Rouse and I can't think of the Dad's first name yet. But anyway they have a lovely home there in Rumson. And Daddy is chief chemist for Avon. And yes, indeed they are very interesting people. We became close friends with them. We exchanged dinners back and forth with them. There home in Rumson was huge, bigger than the places at the Post. It was the kind of place where in the wintertime you would put up glass around the porticos so you wouldn't get all messed up getting out of the car.

MR: And their son was an enlisted man. That is interesting.

PC: I think those were the years when we still had the draft. The 18 year old males would enlist. And I guess because of Daddy's influence he just got posted right there at Fort Hancock and he could live at home. And Fred being chief chemist at Avon, which was no small deal, he had his own plane, his own race horse. It was fun. I'm not sure how we met this other couple. We had three civilian couples living there in the Rumson area that we became fast friends with. The other couple was Bill and Francy Wright and he was a retired Counsel General. His last job was had been Counsel General of Mexico. And Francy became my mentor, because she had long ago, she had probably forgotten more about protocol than I knew. I was still learning. So she was very, very helpful for me when I was doing my entertaining. And she would fill in serving pieces on things that I would need now and then. Things she felt that I could use. One time she brought over, when I was doing one of the large brunches, one time, I set up the dining room table. You know 'cause you could serve on each side. I was going to have a big salad on each end. She said, "I know just what you need to serve the salads. I will send Bill over." So her husband arrived at the back door with these two gorgeous armoire porcelain bowls. And I looked at Bill and I said, "You know I have four small children in this house." And he said, "Francy wants you to use them. Use them." So I did and was able to get them back the her safely. It really made my table look lovely.

MR: Now, did you have a car you could use with the children?

PC: Well, we had one car. I had a Mercury Colony Park 9 passenger station wagon.

MR: Wow.

PC: So I could carry the cub scout troop in it. We only needed the one car because he had the staff car. So in those days, people by and large just had one car.

MR: Now, where would you typically go to go shopping? For children's clothes? Would you go to Red Bank?

PC: Yes, there was a shopping center there. And I kind of lived and died by the Sears Catalog. As I did in Germany. I planned as far as the day to day routine. There were two butler's pantries in House 9. One when you came in the back door to the kitchen. And say you are going to walk straight to the back stairs there was one there. I had a big chest freezer and I would plan a month's meals and I would go to Fort Monmouth and buy a month's worth of groceries, except for perishables. And that was almost essential because it was a whole day thing to go shopping.

MR: Right.

PC: You know with small children. And I never, never, would take my children with me. I either had a sitter or take them to the nursery. It was just too easy, you know, I never, small children in a grocery store.... I took my grandchildren once, the youngest granddaughter (I) pulled the car over and I said, "See you were right Penny, they don't belong in a grocery store."

MR: (laughter.) Was the Theater open when you were there?

PC: A little movie theater? I suppose so. I remember a bowling alley. The Y(MCA) had a bowling club. And I think I went bowling a couple of times. The children maybe went to the theater. I remember a small PX (Post Exchange). And I think the kids used to go over there and buy this or that. As you know, PX's are mostly for the soldiers.

MR: Was there any boat service when you were there? Because I know it stopped at a certain point in time. Could you go to the city or was that all disbanded?

PC: You had to drive.

MR: Okay.

PC: You know Fort Hancock was very secure. We retired after we left Germany. And we came to Jacksonville and that's when gated communities were just coming into vogue and of course, I had lived in gated communities at posts and I was looking forward to not having that. Because you know with my civilian friends if I was having a dinner party I had to be sure to remember to call the MPs (military police) at the gate to let these people in. And I came hear and couldn't believe the real estate agent who said, "Well, you know, these gated communities are so secure." Well, they had a guard shack out front, but I'm talking about out there at Fort Hancock with the Nike Hercules site, it was totally fenced and they had guard dogs and guards walking the perimeter 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

MR: So, did you ever go, since your children were going to school in Highlands did you go to that church?

PC: No. We went to the one on the base. Lisa did her First Communion up at Our Lady of Perpetual Help. And then I guess Michael did his, let me take a look here....It's only been 40 years....

MR: Did you have to drive the kids or was there a bus that brought them?

PC: A bus picked the children up to take them to the school. And I got really angry one time. My middle son, William, I'm going to call him my sweet William because he is. You know the middle child and just so good. Well, the nuns called me. They didn't let him come home on the bus because they said he had done something wrong. You know we are talking a seven year old, eight at the most. And it was during the school year, and during the cold months which can be very cold there. They said, "You'll have to come and pick him up." And they told me what time I could come pick him up. And it was maybe only six o'clock, but it was dark. And so, I knocked on the door of the nunnery as I called it and I said I'm here to pick up William. And they said, "Oh, he's standing there on the street corner."

MR: Oh my.

PC: They opened the door and there was soft music and dinner's cooking. They were nice and cozy. And my little boy is standing in the dark on a street corner. They don't let me carry guns for that reason. But, anyhow. I'm looking at these photos. It must have been Michael's First Communion. There were four little kids, four little boys and three little girls all in their veils. I guess it was in May of the first year we were there. And then Lisa's which I guess was all little girls was at Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

MR: Now do you remember the name of the chaplain?

PC: No.

MR: Just curious.

PC: And we must have had scrapbooks and flyers and stuff, but I don't have any of those. Sorry I don't.

MR: Oh, did your kids get to go to the beach while you were there?

PC: Oh, we went to the beach every day in the summer when we were there.

MR: Was it in the north of Fort Hancock?

PC: I'll tell you that story.

MR: Okay.

PC: I was surprised to find that, I inquired about that right away, because just coming out of Florida, the children and I had spent every day on the beach down here. Well, we had not just come out of Florida, but having been to Florida in the last five or so and I was looking forward to being back in a beach atmosphere. I inquired about the post beach and found out there wasn't one. I, you know, we had driven over there and there was a beautiful beach there at the end. So, the arrangement was made with the Post Commander, Dan Johnson. I am a strong swimmer. I was in a water ballet group since the time I was 13 years old. And so they had a sign made up. And I don't know why they didn't keep this sign. And it said, you know, Michael reminded me of this, it said Corley's Beach and they named me as the lifeguard. And so everyday we'd go, I would load the kids up. And I don't think I took too many of the neighbors kids, but if they wanted to go I suppose I would. And of course my sister and her husband and their children came to visit and we went there. I would load everybody in my station wagon and all the gear, the umbrella, food and stuff and we would go over there and we had our own private beach.

MR: So that's interesting because at various points in time there were life guarded beaches and beach houses for the people to change in.

PC: Well, that was further down.

MR: Oh, so there was another location.

PC: Yes, well this was way, at the far end of the tip.

MR: Okay.

PC: I was trying to remember the road I would drive on. We would drive by, I think there's the road that goes down to the Officers' Club and then there's some houses down in there. And then there's a road you kind of take it straight out from there. And park behind the dune and go over the dune and there's the beach.

MR: yes, I think that's North Beach now.

PC: Okay, probably is, but at that time, civilians, at the time we were there, could not, you know where the big restaurant is now?

MR: Yes.

PC: Civilians couldn't even go that far.

MR: Oh, Okay.

PC: Almost immediately when you came out of Sea Bright, within just a few hundred yards the gate was there and that was it.

MR: Okay, you were at the point. When you were there, Sandy Hook State Park was there?

PC: I don't think so. I remember we had a tour of the Holly Forest at one time. So they were in charge of the Holly Forest, but I don't know when that restaurant was built.

MR: Oh, that's recent.

PC: It was there in '95 I guess.

MR: Yes.

PC: But there was nothing like that. I think yes, between where the guard shack and where Sea Bright began there was a beach, but there were really no amenities there.

MR: There were trailers. From the post cards I've seen it looked like little trailers.

PC: Yeah, that's about it. I don't even remember the trailers. I was up there one time. I happened to be at the beach without the children. It was two or three couples. One of the wives and I decided to walk south and so we did. We walked quite a ways south and we started to run into people on the beach sunning themselves as people do on the beach. Well, that's that, what else?

MR: Did anybody have any servants that you knew of?

PC: No, well, the General's wife had her, was the only one. It was the General's Orderly, but he was there everyday and he did whatever she wanted done. No. None of the (other wives). And as I say that was the big complaint of the older wives and I can certainly understand as I became older, I said, my goodness, yes they didn't have the energy that I did. Maybe you could have. I actually tried to explore, I couldn't see why you couldn't find someone who might need a place to live. There certainly was room for someone to live with us, but nothing ever came of it.

MR: Oh, okay.

PC: Because I certainly would have liked to have had any kind of help. My babysitters, Dorothy reminded me of this, one of her daughters was my regular babysitter.

MR: Oh, okay. And what year did you leave Fort Hancock?

PC: We left in June '66.

MR: I am actually on the computer right now. What we have been doing is we have been taking digital images of the Officers' Wives Club (photo album). It's from about 1960 to 1967. I'm trying to find your picture in here.

PC: Well, that would be after I left.

MR: Well it started in 1960. Because there are pictures of Mrs. Clappsaddle, Mrs. Nolan, Mrs. Frank, Johnson.

PC: Okay, that's Dorothy.

MR: I'm just kind of perusing through it right now. Okay, so does anything else stand out in your mind? It sounds like you really enjoyed your time there.

PC: Oh, I'd go back there to live in heartbeat. The only place that I would move to I think. What is happening with the environmental lawsuit?

MR: Let me finish the interview and I'll talk about that.

PC: Sure.

MR: Well, thank you very much and I'm going to stop the tape right now.

END OF INTERVIEW

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Editor's note: Penny Corley was married and later divorced Colonel William (Bill) Corley. He graduated from West Point in 1942. He was with the Artillery Corps in the European Theater and did participate in the Normandy Invasion. Upon returning to the States after the end of the war he was sent to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma (advanced training), then a year or two at a post in the northwest U.S. and then to Ft. Leavenworth, KS, to attend Command and General Staff College, or CG&SC as it is known. Upon graduation he was selected to stay on at CG&SC as part of the Staff & Faculty. Thus, he was stationed at Ft. Leavenworth for a total of five years, 1 year CG&SC and 4 years on Staff & Faculty. This is where he met and married Penny. From there, the Colonel went to Turkey without his dependents. The family reunited and moved to Colorado Springs at NORAD. Fort Hancock and then Germany were the Colonel and his family's last duty stations. Upon his death, Colonel Corley was cremated and is interred at the Columbarium at West Point.