

HOW WE MET AND THE REST OF THE STORY

John and Bobbie Harms

It was October, 1960. I had just returned from Okinawa and was now stationed at the Marine Barracks, Norfolk. Most Friday night's about six to eight of us 1st Lieutenants would go to the Breezy Point Naval Air Station for happy hour and a buffet. One such evening, two Naval Aviators and their dates sat at a nearby table. Was this coincidence or was it meant to be? One of the ladies was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. She had lovely long black hair, stunning features, and her "tucks" and "outcroppings" were all in the right places. I was mesmerized. One of our crew said she was Bobbie Gaylor, a nurse at Norfolk General Hospital. After the buffet and a few more libations, one of my fellow Marines bet me a dollar I would not get up and ask her to dance. I did and before her date could respond, we were up on the dance floor.

She was a terrific dancer. I escorted her back to the table and thanked her date. Then it hit me. I did not get her "rank and serial number", no phone number. I got a pen and paper and asked her date if I could dance with her. He was prepared this time and with a growling gruff voice stated very clearly, "NO!". However, after some time her aviator friend went to the "head" (restroom). As soon as he cleared the door I whisked over, and we were dancing again. This time I got her phone number. When her date exited the restroom and saw us on the dance floor he was one angry aviator. Not long after that the aviator foursome stormed out of the Club. Bobbie told me later he drove directly to her apartment, let her get out by herself, and roared off -- no sports, those naval aviators.

One year later on 28 October 1961 we were married at 1st Lutheran Church in Norfolk. But, all was not over yet. We had planned a small wedding -- 7 - 10 people. Then, at the weekly meeting the Commander, Col Capehart announced that all officers and their ladies would attend Lt. Harms' wedding. Our wedding party was now over 65.

I made a frantic trip to the officers club's caterer to inform him of the change. On our wedding day Bobbie was delayed by a large coal train; it took 45 minutes to cross Granby Street. Waiting at the altar I asked Pastor Strickler, "Do you think she is having second thoughts?" He replied, "Don't worry."

It is now 53 years and counting. I am grateful that I went to Breezy Point O Club that evening, O so long ago.

