

**PART II**

**Project Long Shot**



Corps of Engineers Crew, Original Camp Site, Project Long Shot

I cannot identify all of the personnel, but will identify those I can remember

Left to Right: Third from left, John Reynolds — Next to him is Ron (I have forgotten his last name), my friend, and Industrial Property Officer

Next to him is Dick Caselle, our Architect on the Island

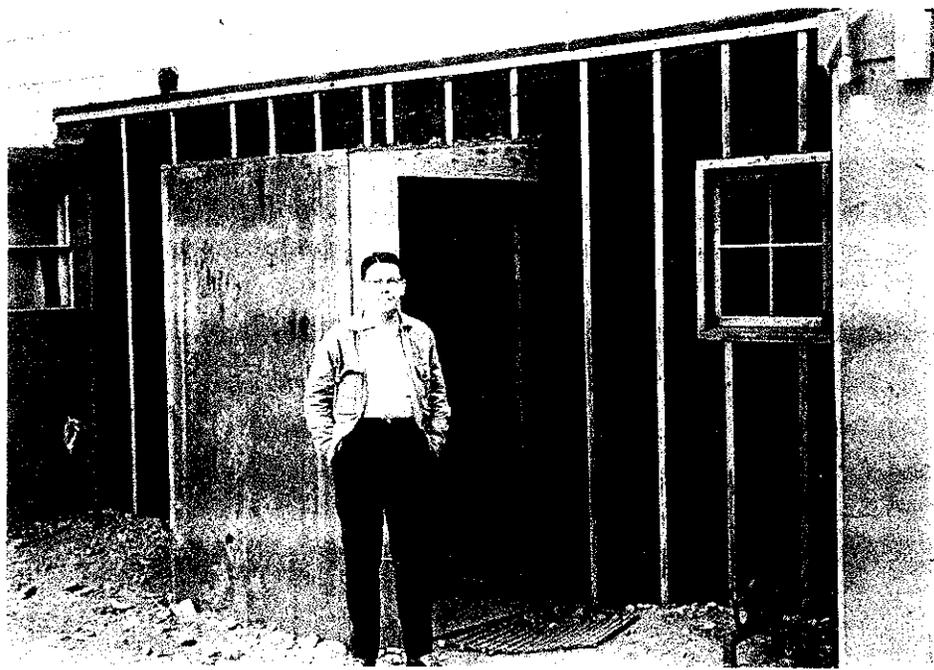
The next man I have forgotten his name — next to him is our Chief of Construction

Then is John Jacobsen, who later became Chief of Construction for the Alaska

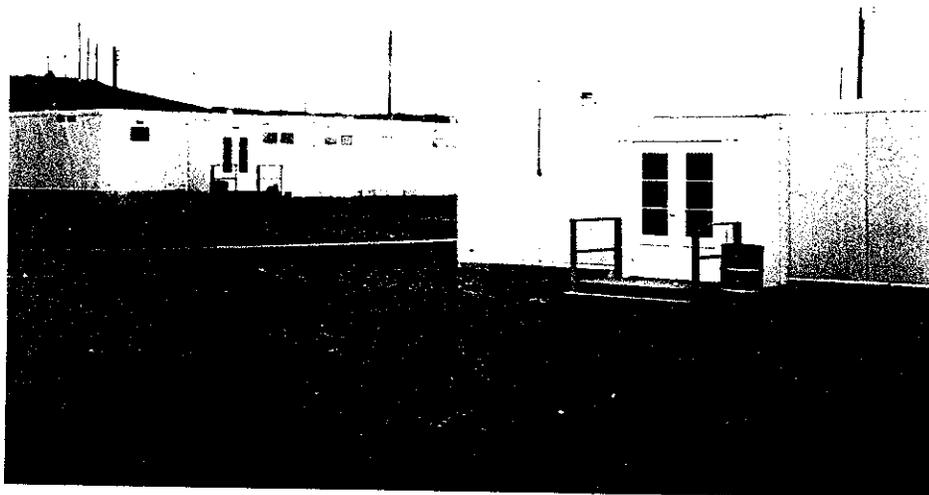
District, but was now our Deputy Resident Engineer

Then is Colonel Barwick, our Resident Engineer — then Ken Ramsey

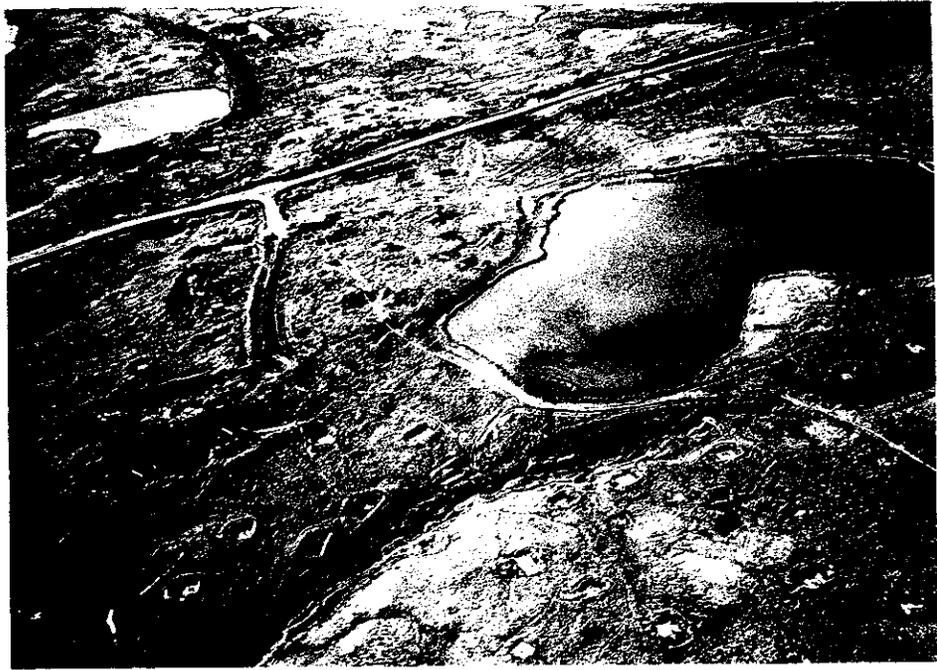
our Chief of Engineering — Your Author — and I have forgotten the last man's name



*Your Author in front of the temporary office building where we started Project Long Shot.*



*The new camp - Project Long Shot*



Amchitka Island, Alaska - The remains  
are the remains of World War II Quonset  
Huts where the troops were housed.



A 70 foot whale - Be glad you can't enjoy  
the odor as you look at the picture.



*First View of Anchitka Island, Alaska*



*East Point, Anchitka Island*



*Ground zero, Project Long Shot - Capped  
and sealed, after the shot.*



*Halliburton - Archibald 8/22*

## Chapter 7

### Another Alaska

The ceiling was some 200 feet or lower, a slow drizzle was falling, I was cold even while wearing a down-filled parka — much colder than the temperature indicated I should be. No trees had been seen since Adak. Only windswept tundra, rocks, and the scattered debris of World War II quonset huts which had exploded during high winds were visible. Everything looked dead, the tundra was green to brown, the rocks, mountains and sky all appeared the same blue-purple tint, as if it never had seen the sun. Bleak, dismal, dreary, foreboding — you supply your own adjectives, I'm sure they will fit. I was one-fourth of the way around the world from Oklahoma, riding down a wet road with a Lt. Colonel and two other men in an International Scout while they were telling me they hoped we could make the seven miles to camp without having another flat tire. They had had one coming to pick us up, and were having one or two every trip they made to the Amchitka Airport.

Then I saw the camp. Six or seven 10 x 20 foot weathered green plywood huts, clustered on either side of the road we were traveling on, at least 250 miles from any other civilization, and with my arrival, there were seven of us Corps of Engineer employees on the island. An old World War II building was still standing in the center of the camp, which was to be our office. A few of the huts were for quarters, one a combination latrine/shower/barber shop was near the office building, and another for a mess hall/kitchen complete with picnic tables for eating on. I set up home in the hut just across the street from the office. What a place to start

a \$30 million project and complete it in time to clear the island before winter weather would prohibit or at least delay our leaving.

When I returned to Oklahoma after the earthquake TDY period, I settled back into a normal routine, as well as I could. You can't just turn off the experiences I had had in Alaska, without a period of adjustment. Everyone wanted to know all about the things I had seen and experienced on the trip. I was very pleased to show my movies, and talk about it when occasion permitted. I still enjoy reminiscing about it. People I was not even acquainted with called to ask questions about this biggest state of the union.

Then one day while at work at the Fort Gibson/Tenkiller Area Office, I received a call from our Tulsa District Personnel Office. The Alaska District had requested my transfer back to Alaska to serve as Administrative Officer of Project Long Shot. (This name was not specified in their request). This was a Top Secret Project (at that time), to test the remote Aleutian Island of Amchitka for a possible underground test site for "large" nuclear weapons. The site was so secret — before it was publicly announced — that no communication could contain both the words "Amchitka" and "Project Long Shot" in the same document. Anyone de-planing on the island required a security clearance. The purpose of this test was to set off a "little" atomic bomb this time — underground — to see if the island would take the stress of some very "big" nuclear blasts. There was also a study conducted simultaneously for its effects on eagles and sea otters, as well as some unusual plants in the tundra. This was in the same time frame the Soviets had set off a nuclear blast estimated to be in the 100 megaton range. This size proved to not be as efficient as smaller weapons in the one to four megaton range. Due to the amount of area the blast covers, and selectivity of targets, nothing was gained by the larger bombs.

I decided I would take the one-year contract the Alaska District offered me (along with a promotion), and see some more of Alaska. Within a couple of days, I was asked how quickly I could travel, and within a week I was on my way — again. Same route, only this time by jet and just touching down at Denver, Portland, Seattle, and then Anchorage. I was becoming a

pro at flying by this time. No problem.

This time I traveled alone, and was met at the Anchorage airport by John Reynolds. He was one of the former employees of the Tulsa District who went to Alaska on TDY after the earthquake (one of the 12 who arrived with me on my first trip). To this point I didn't know him too well, but we became very good friends on Amchitka during my two tours of duty there. He was the son of a prominent Tulsa Oklahoma physician, and had worked at the Keystone Dam and Reservoir before transferring to Alaska.

He had obtained a room for me in the BOQ (the correct one this time), helped me to get settled in, and said he and I were both scheduled to fly to Amchitka (1500 miles — half the distance between Anchorage and Tokyo) in two days. He also advised me my good friend Marty Davoren had transferred to the Alaska District, and was now the "Chief" of a Branch in the Supply Division.

I'm sure there is no need to tell you that after a 16 hour day, I rested very soundly that night.

Up at 6:30, picked up by 7:00, breakfast at the Cafeteria in the Corps of Engineers building, (ho hum) then on to Personnel for processing. They advised me that my travel orders were cut to travel to Amchitka the next day. Besides all the personnel papers and security forms (I was required to have a top secret clearance for this job, although to this day, I still don't know why), I also had to have an Alaska Drivers license before leaving Anchorage. This left very little time to renew old acquaintances before I left. That would have to come later.

Early next morning we left for Amchitka.

Other than occasional charter flights and military planes, the Reeves Aleutian Airline was the only transportation available for the Aleutian Island Chain. At that time they were flying DC-6's and DC-3's, but later attained some Electra turboprops. The Aleutian Island Chain as

well as all Alaska, is noted for some very hazardous flying conditions. While constantly flying in these conditions, the Reeves Aleutian Airline had accumulated a very good safety record. I had to keep reminding myself of this, while being caught several times in very undesirable circumstances. I'm pleased to say, not one of their airplanes ever crashed while I was on board.