

## **International Veterans and Brides**

After dinner the other night, my friend Howard and I were talking about writing articles. Howard has written about restoring John Deere tractors and has had them published. So I asked him what I should write about this week. He gave me a story which led me to a couple others, so here goes. A high school friend of Howard's joined the Army, went to basic training and was eventually stationed in Germany. While there he met and fell in love with a German girl, asked her to marry him and return to the States with him. She quickly agreed and the two of them returned to northwestern Minnesota for the wedding in Fisher, MN. The local farm boy marrying a German girl. Her parents decided to come to the States for the wedding and went to the groom's dinner the night before the wedding at an American Legion post. The bride's father was asked if he was a Legion member and he said no. He was asked if he served in the military to which he said yes, during WWII. After they got him an application for the American Legion, he asked if it mattered that he served in the German Army! Of course, it did. To make the story even more interesting, the father's unit was attacked by the Allies and he was the only survivor.

A similar thing happened while I was a student at MSUM. A Norwegian international student, Frode was attending and showed up for a Vets Club meeting. He said that he was a Veteran and wanted to join the club. At the very next club meeting, the by-laws were changed to allow any honorably discharged service member from any county to join. Frode became an active member of the Vets Club for the rest of his career at MSUM.

While I was stationed in Japan with the Air Force, one of the Airmen met and fell in love with a Japanese girl and asked her to marry him. She worked for one of the local bars and if you had the Yen, she would take you home for a night of pleasure. When the Airman wrote to his mother about this, his mother had a nervous breakdown. The romance ended.

While on vacation, which was wonderful, I got an e-mail from a reader expressing appreciation for my column. That's always nice to receive. She grew up in northern Minnesota, not far from Newfolden. In a column I said that I grew up west of Newfolden and she wanted to know more. As we exchanged information, I learned that the secretary of their church was the granddaughter of Andrew Bakke, my grandfather's brother. It's really a small world, similar to meeting Spud in Arizona.