



(Gazette photos by Jeff Leeth)

Clark Jr. sits with some of the mementos of the Philippines he brought home with him after spending a year and a half on the country during and just after World War II.

Hallsville man saw Philippines' first president take office

By JOHN JOHNSTON
Gazette staff writer

HALLSVILLE — Hugh Clark Jr. stood watching as the American flag was lowered and the Philippine flag was raised in Manila on July 4, 1946, signifying the Philippines' newly granted independence.

It was history in the making, but the 23-year-old Army bandsman, who had spent about a year and a half in the war-torn country, had other things on his mind. Such as coming home.

Over the years, Clark, now 66, has come to appreciate the significance of the event. "It's not often you get to see the birth of a nation," he said.

The turmoil surrounding last week's election in the Philippines rekindled some memories of the retired DuPont worker, who lives on Ohio 180.

Clark, whose stint in the Army began in August 1944, was a mechanic and parts man for a trucking outfit that hauled supplies. He spent time on the Philippine islands of Leyte and Mindoro. He was on Mindoro when the war ended.

Clark then was assigned to the 86th Infantry Division in Manila on the main island of Luzon. A member of the Adelphi Community Band since 1938, Clark became interested in the 86th Division Band he saw marching on the parade grounds. Before long, he had a uniform and a trombone.

"On the third day of July in 1946

our band was assigned to play at the reception for (Gen. Douglas) MacArthur," Clark said. Clark pointed to snapshots of himself marching through Manila in white helmet and khakis.

The United States granted the Philippines its independence the next day and Manuel Roxas was inaugurated president of the new democracy. Clark has saved a copy of the July 8, 1946, edition of *Pacific Newsweek* with Roxas on the cover.

Clark said some half million people lined the inauguration parade route. The mood was one of jubilation, he said.

Still, the fledgling democracy had serious problems, Clark said. The war had ravaged Manila, he said, pointing out post cards he's saved showing battered buildings. Looting was common, he said.

Five weeks after the Republic of the Philippines was born, Clark left for home.

Clark dug out some of his Philippine mementos this past week after seeing the country in the news. Amid charges of vote fraud, it is still unclear whether President Ferdinand Marcos or challenger Corazon Aquino won the election.

"I feel bad about the violence," said Clark. "I always had a lot of respect for the Filipino."

"I had Filipino friends. Which side of this controversy they're on I have no way of knowing.

"They deserve better."

'A Good Friend You Can Depend On

Names: Mr. & Mrs. Hugh Clark Jr.

Address: 7081 Ohio 180, Hallsville

Occupation: Farmer, Retired from DuPont

How Long A Gazette Subscriber: More than 40 years each

Why Do You Read The Gazette: **Mrs. Clark:** I would miss it if I didn't have it.

Mr. Clark: I like to cut articles out of it and post them at the Colerain Township Fire Department. I'm more interested in the local news.

What's Your Favorite Part of The Paper: **Mrs. Clark:** The Editorials, Obituaries and Weddings.

Mr. Clark: Local News, Editorials and Obituaries (If I turn there and don't see my name, I know I'm OK).

What's Your Favorite Comic: **Mr. Clark:** Funky Winkerbean because of the band director. I'm active in the Adelphi Community Band.

Where Would You Like To See Improvements In The Gazette: **Mrs. Clark:** I would like to see more court news, things the public should be aware of.

Mr. Clark: I'd like to see more farm markets and smaller columns of type. I do like the way the classified ads are organized into categories.

Mr. and Mrs. Clark have depended for 40 years on the Chillicothe Gazette to bring them the news and information about Ross County, the state, the nation, the world and their neighborhood. For 186 years, we've depended on people like Mr. and Mrs. Clark to let us know what they think about the newspaper and how we can better serve them.

