

Through  
THE  
Looking  
Glass

The NEW BERN  
MIRROR

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Survivors of the Bataan-Corregidor death march, a particularly brutal chapter of World War II, are currently holding their annual reunion at Fontana Village in western North Carolina.

One of the marchers who didn't live to make any of the reunions was New Bern's Pete Cook, a kid we taught in Sunday school. Wounded and weak, he died on the Bataan peninsula, strip of rugged, heavily forested land 35 miles long and from 12 to 20 miles wide.

Pete participated in the stout but hopeless defense of this Philippine island during a siege of three months. When 200,000 Japanese finally accomplished the inevitable, the invaders forced several thousand Americans and Filipinos to march more than 70 miles to prison camps.

Hundreds of ailing and wounded men died of thirst and starvation along the way, and Pete was in the lot. More fortunate was Robert Conderman, another New Bern youngster who frequented Albert "Crabby" Crabtree's Union Point Club. Death for him was quick and merciful. He was mowed down trying to reach his plane, in the initial air attack on Wake Island.

Preservation of what we call the American way of life has never come cheaply. All of us need to periodically remind ourselves of this grim fact by visiting the lawn of the Craven county courthouse, and reading the names on the memorial staff standing there.

Few mortals, living or dead, are forgotten quicker than our home town military heroes. Who, for example, meeting Teddy Shapou on the street recalls that he was our most decorated service man of World War II?

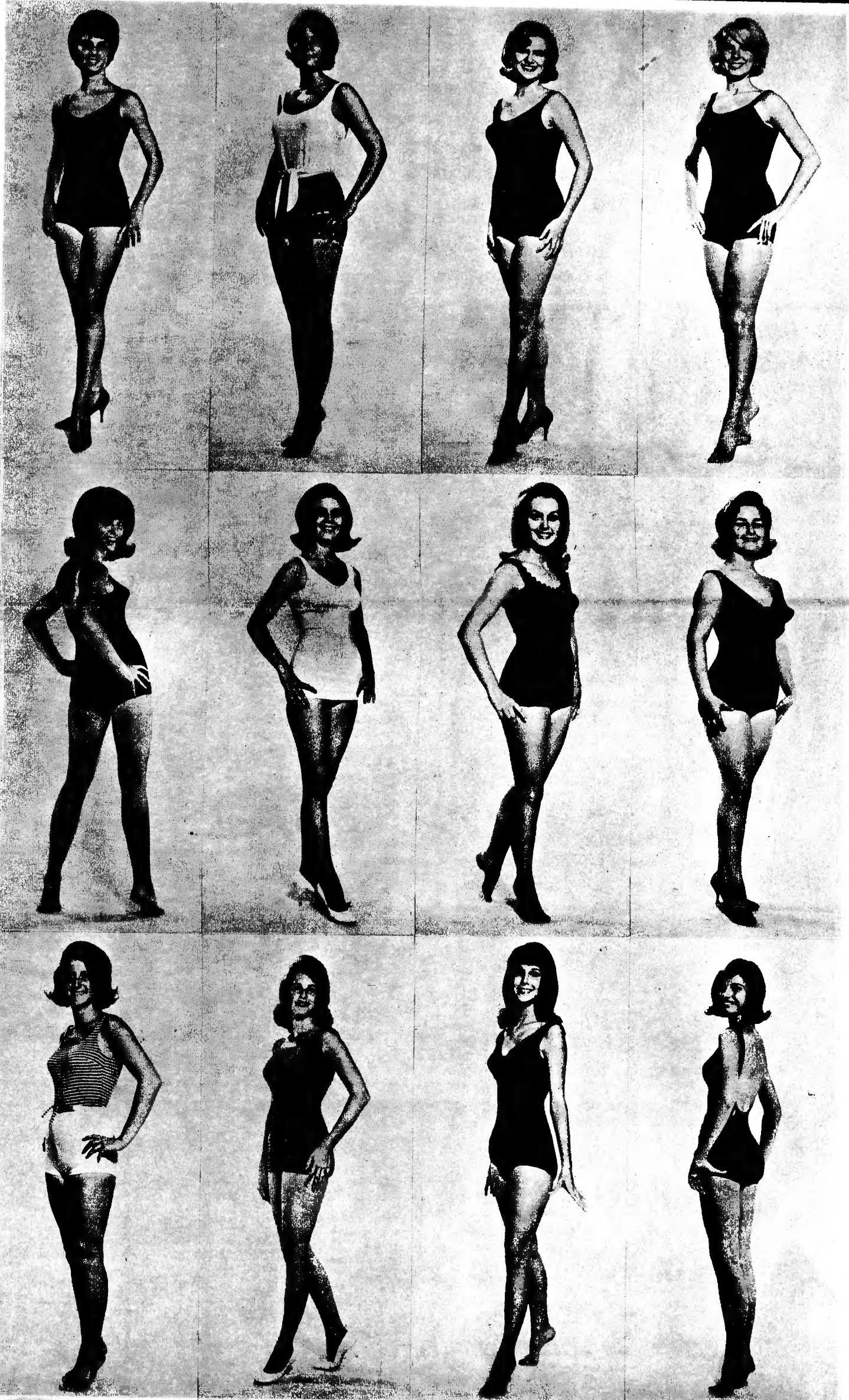
His bravery as a combat pilot with Chenault's famed Flying Tigers earned him safety in the States, but he chose to serve his country further as a test pilot, and sustained critical injuries so lasting that he still requires daily medication. His medals was stored in a bureau drawer, and he never brags about them.

When we speak of Pete Cook and Robert Conderman, who didn't come back, and Teddy Shapou, who did, we voice our gratitude to every New Bernian and every other American who has defended our heritage on land and sea and in the air.

Admittedly, most of us do think of our war heroes on Memorial Day, Armed Forces Day and the Fourth of July, if only for a fleeting instant. However, we live in a busy and decidedly disturbing world, so for the balance of the year our thoughts are largely de-

What did Pete Cook and Robert Conderman, and all New Bernians who made the supreme sacrifice die for? If they were alive they probably couldn't fashion their words into a flowery analysis, and wouldn't want to. But make no mistake about it, they knew.

They died for your right to vote in a free election, to criticize officials of our city, county, state and nation for their acts as public servants in a position of trust and solemn re-



WHO WILL IT BE—One of the 12 girls above is destined to wear Miss New Bern's crown Saturday night at the New Bern High School Auditorium. Pictured left to right are Diane Provo, Cheryl Cobb, Marjorie Cara-

won, Yvonne Cahoon, Phyllis Coates, Linda Peterson, Brenda Greene, Susan Hill, Patricia Soufas, Marie Gerlack, Linda Benners, and Nancy McDaniel.—Photos by Billy Benners.

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