

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR

# Treemont resident 'knows only too well about war'

Can you imagine what it would be like to live in a country at war? Hear the nightly air raids and dog-fights overhead. Picture your mother's face every morning awaiting news, or as she hears random gunshots knowing they may be aimed at one of your brothers or your father on his way home from work.

Because most of us were born in a country with no wars on our own turf since the 19th century, such scenes are almost unimaginable. But a fellow resident of Treemont knows only too well about war, having been raised in the Philippine Islands prior to and during World War II.

Gloria Alcancia is an attractive petite brunette whose pleasant demeanor gives no indication of what she has been through.

Born Gloria De la Llana in 1930 in the Philippines, she was one of six girls and three boys in her family. Their father was the journalist and author Pedro De la Llana. A reformer and strong supporter of the U.S., his outspoken comments and world view sometimes landed him in hot water. His writings, many of which are in the U.S. Library of Congress, reflect his love of freedom, and his aspirations for his native Philippines.

At the time of Gloria's birth, the Philippines were under the protection of the U.S. under the Treaty of Paris signed in 1899, following the Spanish-American War. In 1925, Gov. Gen. Leonard Wood appointed to the House of Representatives

a young newspaperman named Pedro De la Llana. In 1934 Filipinos were promised independence by 1946, and in 1935 the people approved a constitution. The transition was under way.

These intentions came to an abrupt halt Dec. 8, 1941, when the Japanese invaded the Philippines. After the battles of Bataan and Corregidor, Gen. Douglas MacArthur was forced to withdraw, with the promise of "I shall return!" MacArthur made good on that promise in 1945.

Meanwhile the islands suffered under Japanese rule. Retaliation were guerrilla raids, and underground newspapers, including "The Flash," edited by De la Llana. In 1944, Editor De la Llana was assassinated. He was 49.

Meanwhile Gloria was completing her education. Though profoundly saddened by the death of her father, she knew his life had gone far toward accomplishing his lifetime dream of independence for his beloved country.

In due time she married a young doctor named Maximino Alcancia, and they began their family. When their second child was quite young Dr. Max choose to further his medical education in Canada. Gloria joined him there as soon as she could, and their third child, Caesar, was born a Canadian citizen. On completion of the medical exchange program, the doctor moved his family to Cleveland, Ohio.

In 1970, Dr. Alcancia died



Gloria Alcancia

suddenly, leaving Gloria with children ages 16, 14, 8 and 3. The next few years took her over many ventures and covered many miles from upstate New York to Florida, from Falls Church, Va., to Queens, N.Y. She made trips to Hong Kong and Japan as a buyer for stores owned by her brothers and sisters. She earned a real estate license and became a broker.

She dabbled in insurance and investments, and remains an active partner in a company she started, which recycles used tires.

Gloria has two daughters, Lizabeth, her eldest child, and Juliette, the youngest. Lizabeth lives in Houston and Juliette lives in the New York area. Elder son Oscar works for Shell Oil and lives in Pearland. Younger son Caesar lives in Pennsylvania and is senior design engineer.

Her family has expanded to include four grandchildren and one great-grandchild. She is proud of all of them, and for good reason.

It has been a long, hard row that brought Gloria De la Llana Alcancia to the relative luxury of her quiet, peaceful and comfortable life at Treemont. Yet she, perhaps more than any of us, can fully appreciate what she has.