

# Philippine Scouts Heritage Society



Preserving the history, heritage, and legacy of the Philippine Scouts for present and future generations



Winter/Spring 2007

## The Philippine Scouts

by **Chris Schaefer**

These were General MacArthur's soldiers—the guys who fought America's first battle of World War II. The Philippine Division. Probably the best trained and possibly the best prepared U.S. Army division at the outset of that war.

But they weren't farm boys from Kansas and California, or Italian-Americans from New Jersey as depicted in the black and white movies made during and after the war years. They were mostly Filipinos serving as enlisted soldiers in United States Army units commanded

by American officers. They were special men in special units, officially designated "Philippine Scouts." At the beginning of World War II, General Douglas MacArthur's U.S. Army Forces in the Far East, spearheaded by the Philippine Division, were mostly Filipinos.

The Philippine Division was composed of two infantry regiments of Philippine Scouts—a term applied both to the Filipino enlisted men and their American officers—and one infantry regiment of American soldiers, a total of about 10,000 men. Philippine Scouts also served in a horse cavalry regiment,

manned the coastal artillery and anti-aircraft batteries that defended Luzon Island, and staffed most of the support elements of the U.S. Army in the Philippines. Although the officers were generally Americans, there were a few Filipino officers in the Filipino regiments. In 1910 the U.S. began sending one outstanding Filipino soldier per year to West Point, and by 1941 some of these men had risen to the rank of senior officers.

Beginning on December 7, 1941 they were put to the test. On that day the Imperial Japanese Navy attacked the  
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## An Incident in Bataan

*Lt. Col. Frank O. Anders, the S-2 (intelligence) officer, for the 57th Infantry is now deceased. He distinguished himself during the defense of Bataan by frequently infiltrating behind Japanese lines collecting intelligence. For his courage, he received a Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster. Surviving combat and POW incarceration, he wrote "Bataan: An Incident" in 1946 while recovering from injuries that would lead to his retirement shortly thereafter. His family connection to the Philippines stretched over two generations, as Anders' father served in Manila during the Spanish American War, receiving a Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award for valor in combat. In 1961 father and son visited the Philippines together to retrace the paths each had taken in his own war. Because of its length, the Anders article was serialized over two issues—Fall 2006 and this issue. It also is being published in the current issue of the Bulletin of the American Historical Collection, Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines. Editor*

by **Lt. Col. Frank O. Anders**

*This is the final installment. It is continued from the Fall 2006 issue.*

On the morning of January 21, it became evident that the enemy had moved up a lot of new artillery batteries, 105mm. guns. Some of the new batteries were to the north near Samal, but many more were to the northwest, up on the high plateau under the fringe of

the mountains. Throughout the morning, these guns registered on their base point. Before the sun had reached the meridian, we knew that something was afoot. First one battery, then another would open up, bracket the church and then

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## Editor's Comments

Our twenty-third annual reunion brings us back to Tacoma twelve years after our last visit to that lovely city. Joe Calugas and his chapter have planned a gala event with plenty of good food, stimulating conversation and interesting panels. These panels will discuss the heroic defense of the Philippines, the post-war role of the "new" Philippine Scouts and the wonderful support under extremely trying conditions provided by combat nurses then and now. The keynote speaker will be Brigadier General Oscar Hilman (Ret.), a naturalized Filipino-American, who came to the U.S. after high school, enlisted and rose through the ranks to command the Washington National Guard's 81<sup>st</sup> Armored Brigade during its deployment in Iraq.

In the business portion of the reunion, the Second Vice-President, Assistant

Treasurer and Counselor positions are due for rotation. A slate of nominees will be posted on our website closer to the reunion.

There also are heroics aplenty in this edition of our newsletter. Our lead story, written by PRO Chris Schaefer, takes a fresh look at the Philippine Scouts and their heroic stand on Bataan, Corregidor and in the guerrilla resistance following surrender. Lt. Col. Frank Ander's epic recounting of "An Incident in Bataan" concludes in this issue. Also included is the first installment of Dr. Isabelo Torio's recounting of his war experiences as a young 26<sup>th</sup> Cavalry (PS) trooper and Dr. Alice Benitez' "Recollections of World War II in Pangasinan", when her family sheltered a young 26<sup>th</sup> Cavalry (PS) officer named Ed Ramsey as he began to organize a guerrilla army.

These four pieces complete our offerings from *The General's Corner*.

Also in this issue are two memorable poems honoring those fallen in battle. Although written during World War I, they both pay fitting tribute to those dying in the service of our country in any war. Furthermore, we include a list of 92 surviving Philippine Scouts. Additions and corrections to this list will be appreciated.

In the back of this newsletter is the registration form for the reunion. I hope as many of you as possible will be able to join this gathering of family and friends in honor of those warrior heroes, the Philippine Scouts.

Mike Houlahan, Editor

### Advertising Rates

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Our current circulation is slightly over 500 copies per issue. For advertising placement or additional information, please contact newsletter editor Mike Houlahan through our website or at:

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 Worthington, OH 43085

## Newsletter and Library

Our Philippine Scouts Heritage Society newsletter fund donations are over \$3,200 and library fund donations total around \$1,500. Thanks to the efforts of **National President John Patterson**, the PSHS now has 501(c)(3) status, which qualifies donations as tax free.

A two year newsletter subscription may be obtained by non-members for \$10.00 and overseas subscribers for \$14.00. Three year subscriptions offer a slight savings at \$14 domestic and \$18 overseas. Email subscriptions are available for \$4 or \$6 for two and three years respectively. Newsletter donation and subscription checks should be made out to the "PSHS" and mailed to the address listed below:

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## National President's Letter

I have recently been reminded yet again of how blessed we are to have the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society. I've become aware of the struggles other veterans' groups are having remaining viable and relevant. Original members are aging, memberships are declining, and attendance is lagging at the annual gatherings, which remain largely social. At the same time, more and more families of these veterans are seeking information about relatives who were killed or experienced the horrors of captivity under the Japanese.

When these questions are asked, I realize anew how fortunate we are to be part of the PSHS. The history of the Scouts is preserved, their heritage is shared with their families and others through articles and books often written by our members, as well as through our newsletter, website and the panel discussions that have become a tradition of our annual reunions.

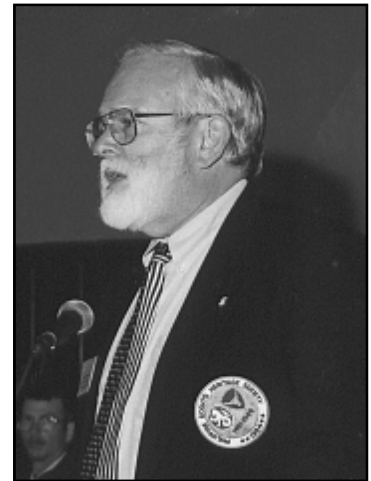
We look forward with anticipation to our annual reunion and business meet-

ing in Tacoma on May 18-19 and are grateful to Joe Calugas and his team for hosting this gathering. The Society's last reunion was a resounding success, featuring Joe's late father, Jose Calugas, Sr., one of three Scouts who received the Medal of Honor in World War II.

This year, Joe has lined up an outstanding speaker and organized panels around the experience of nurses on Bataan and Corregidor. There will also be a panel highlighting the New Scouts, a group that we need to know more about.

While our time in Tacoma will involve these historical and educational activities, we also will be conducting Society business such as the election of national officers, review of bylaws, etc. More importantly, we will take time to renew friendships, share experiences and recognize the significance of the Philippine Scouts.

The Philippine Scouts Heritage Society has accomplished a great deal over the years. Let's continue to preserve the



John A. Patterson, President  
Photo: David Rosen

history, heritage and legacy of these extraordinary warriors.

See you in Tacoma!

John Alexander Patterson, President  
Philippine Scouts Heritage Society

## First Vice-President's Letter

Let me wish everyone a Happy and Prosperous New Year! The Captain Jose C. Calugas, Sr. chapter will be the host of the 23<sup>rd</sup> National Reunion. The officers and members recently held a chapter meeting to discuss plans for the reunion.

I have been communicating with our National President John Patterson regarding the plans and activities for the two days that we will be together. The program will be similar to previous reunions. We will have panel discussions, a dinner and a dance, but most importantly gather together with old friends and comrades.

Before we finalize these plans, we will consult with the Society officers to get their ideas bearing in mind the purpose of the Society, which is to preserve the history and legacy of the Scouts.

The last time the Chapter hosted the annual reunion was May 1995. The GGBAC chapter has been hosting most of the reunions and I am sure Cion needs a break.

La Quinta Inn and Suites in Tacoma will accommodate the reunion. La Quinta is located just off Interstate-5, with 155 rooms and offers easy access to downtown Tacoma. Guests can enjoy a full time restaurant, and cocktail lounge with complimentary appetizers and a free deluxe continental breakfast.

The special offer of the rooms for the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society's guests is \$99.00 plus tax. Guests have four weeks prior to arrival to make their reservation. Flyers containing this information will be distributed to the different chapters and individuals.

On behalf of the members and offic-



Jose "Joe" Calugas, Jr., 1st Vice President  
of the Tacoma Chapter we look forward to meeting you all on **May 18-19, 2007. Welcome to Tacoma!**

Jose "Joe" Calugas, Jr.  
National First Vice President  
President of Tacoma Chapter

## Website News

In January our Philippine Scouts Heritage Society **website** passed the 25,000 mark, increasing at the rate of more than 9,000 visits per year.

Our **message board**, which is visited by seventy or eighty viewers daily, now contains about 300 topics and shortly will exceed 1,000 comment postings. By the time you receive this, more than 1,600 will have signed up as message board members. You are invited to visit the PSHS website ([www.philippine-scouts.org](http://www.philippine-scouts.org)) and the message board (note

the link in the margin of our homepage) to share your own thoughts or questions and to supply answers to queries submitted by others.

We also will consider appropriate and **original short articles or vignettes** for posting on our website or including in our newsletter.

The website is useful for **research** purposes. Our site is the first entry that appears when someone researches the Philippine Scouts using either the *Google* or *Yahoo* search engines.

Our “**Exchanges**” page lists research projects and requests. The “**Resources**” page has links to more than twenty other websites containing useful information and to U.S. government sources of information on former Scouts and on benefits available to them.

Thank you for your support!

Christa Houlahan  
Webmaster

### *The Philippine Scouts From Page 1*

U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor, but Pearl Harbor was only one part of a much bigger Japanese operation. The Japanese had decided to capture the oil fields of Borneo in the Dutch East Indies, and they wanted to get everyone else out of the way. So on December 7, they hit and sank the U.S. Navy’s Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor, they bombed and destroyed the U.S. Army’s Far East Air Force at Clark Field in the Philippines, they attacked British Hong Kong, and they landed troops on the shores of British Malaya. The four attacks were all coordinated to begin at the same moment, but because of weather problems the U.S. Navy’s battleships were already sinking to the bottom of Pearl Harbor by the time Japanese bombers destroyed the U.S. Army’s B-17s on the ground at Clark Field. Over the next few months the Japanese Army marched through Southeast Asia, and by March 1942 the Japanese had completely overrun every country and island in the western Pacific—except the Philippines. The Japanese controlled almost 500 million people and four million square miles of land, more than double the area controlled by the Nazis in Europe.

That left the Philippines, and General MacArthur’s army, alone in the Pacific. On the Bataan Peninsula of Luzon Island, the Philippine Scouts, a few

U.S. Army National Guard units and ten divisions of poorly equipped, almost untrained Philippine Army soldiers still held out against the Japanese.

In some respects, the Philippines was one place that the United States’ overseas policies had “gotten it right.” The U.S. took over the Philippines in 1899, ending four hundred years of feudal Spanish governance. General Arthur MacArthur, Douglas MacArthur’s father, was the third U.S. military governor of the Philippines and he instituted programs of improvements that Filipinos still remember today. The U.S. Army built roads, increased farm production, and built schools all over the islands. Army instructors, later supplanted by civilian teachers brought from the States, taught Filipino children how to read, write and speak English. Soon, the Philippines was the most literate country in Asia. Today, the Philippines counts itself as the world’s second largest English-speaking country.

In 1901 the United States Army organized the Philippine Scouts to combat insurgents and bandit groups in the islands, and when the insurgency was over the Scouts became the U.S. Army’s front line troops in the Pacific. At the outset of World War II they bore the brunt of the Japanese attack on the Phil-

ippines, the first action of the war in which units of the United States Army faced the enemy on the ground. Survivors of the Battle of Bataan, to a man, describe the Philippine Scouts as the backbone of the American defense there. President Franklin Roosevelt awarded the U.S. Army’s first three Congressional Medals of Honor of World War II to Philippine Scouts: to Sergeant Jose Calugas for action at Culis, Bataan on January 6, 1942, to Lieutenant Alexander Nininger for action near Abucay, Bataan on January 12, and to Lieutenant Willibald Bianchi for action near Bagac, Bataan on February 3, 1942.

Shortly after he graduated from West Point, young Douglas MacArthur had served a tour of duty in the Philippines, and later he came back as a senior officer and general. Filipino admiration for his father, General Arthur MacArthur, was quickly extended to his son. In the midst of the Battle of Bataan President Roosevelt recalled General Douglas MacArthur and had him spirited out of the Philippines by PT boat and airplane. With the U.S. Navy at Pearl Harbor in shambles, and the Japanese Navy blockading the Philippines, there was no way for America to send food, medicine or reinforcements to the troops on Bataan. Japanese airplanes rained propaganda

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leaflets down on the Filipino soldiers, designed to drive a wedge between them and their American officers. But Douglas MacArthur had promised that he would return, and the soldiers maintained their faith that MacArthur would indeed be back. They held out for more than four months without adequate food or medicine, while malaria, dysentery and malnutrition ravaged their ranks, and Japanese attacks drove them further down the Bataan peninsula. But Filipinos throughout the islands kept up their faith that General MacArthur and the United States Army would be back to rescue them from the Japanese.

The Battle of Bataan ended on April 9, 1942, when General Edwin King surrendered rather than see any more of his starving, diseased men slaughtered by the advancing Japanese Army. At that point 70,000 men became Prisoners of War: about 16,000 Americans and 54,000 Filipinos. What followed was one of the worst atrocities in modern wartime history—the Bataan Death March. As the emaciated men were marched north up a highway to prison camp in the blistering heat, Japanese guards summarily shot or bayoneted any man who fell, attempted to escape, or stopped to quench his thirst at a roadside spigot or puddle. The Japanese guards killed between 7,000 and 10,000 men on the Death March—they kept no records and no one knows the exact number. If a man fell, it was certain death unless another could pick him up and support him. It was here that the legendary bond between the Filipino and American soldiers was cemented.

When they got to their prison camp, Camp O'Donnell, conditions were not much better. The Japanese divided the Filipino and American soldiers into two separate halves of the camp. Camp O'Donnell was a Philippine Army camp designed to accommodate about 10,000 men. The Japanese crammed all 60,000

survivors into the camp, with little running water, sparse food, no medical care, and only slit trenches along the sides of the camp for sanitation. The heat was intolerable, flies covered the prisoner's food, and malaria, dysentery, beriberi and a host of others diseases swept through the crowds of men. They began to die at the rate of four hundred per day. It got so bad by July, 1942, that the Japanese replaced the camp commander, moved the American prisoners to another camp, Cabanatuan, and decided to parole the Filipino prisoners.

From September through December 1942, the Japanese gradually paroled the Filipino soldiers to their families and to the mayors of their hometowns, who would be held personally responsible for each man's conduct. Men from Manila were paroled first, then men from the provinces. To be paroled, each man had to sign an affidavit that he would not participate in guerrilla activity, and he had to be well enough to walk. Anyone who was too sick to walk was simply held in camp until he either got well or died. By the time Camp O'Donnell closed in January 1943, after eight months of operation, 26,000 of the 50,000 Filipino Prisoners of War there had died.

The American prisoners fared no better. Conditions in Cabanatuan were marginally better than Camp O'Donnell, and the prisoner doctors were able to somewhat stem the disease and death rate. But as U.S. forces pulled closer to the Philippines in 1944, the Japanese decided to evacuate the American prisoners to Japan and Manchuria, to use them as slave laborers in Japanese factories and coal mines. Thousands of men were crammed into the dark holds of cargo ships so tightly that the men could not sit or lay down. Again, food and water were scarce, sanitary facilities were virtually non-existent, and the heat in the closed holds of

the ships was unbearable. Men suffocated to death standing up. In some cases, the guards would not even let the dead bodies be removed from the holds. The Japanese ships were unmarked and some of them were torpedoed by American submarines. More of the men died of malnutrition and exposure in the work camps. By the time Japan surrendered and the U.S. Army liberated the Bataan Prisoners of War, two-thirds of the American prisoners had died in Japanese custody.

Back in the Philippines, a strong guerrilla movement developed to oppose Japanese oppression. Many Philippine Scout officers and enlisted men who had escaped from the Japanese, and others who chose to ignore their parole terms, joined these clandestine groups to do what they could to hasten the return of U.S. forces. Contrary to the impression many of us get from our history textbooks, help was not on the way. General MacArthur's forces, such as they were, were engaged around the Solomon Islands and New Guinea to protect Australia from Japanese attack. It was not until 1944 that MacArthur in the south and Admiral Nimitz to the east commenced their two-pronged advance into the Pacific. But during the interim years, the Philippine guerrillas put together a close network to gather intelligence data on Japanese troop movements and shipping, and transmit it to MacArthur's headquarters using radios smuggled in by submarine. It has been said that their information was so complete, that when MacArthur finally did make it back to the Philippines he knew what every Japanese lieutenant ate for breakfast and where he had his hair cut.

As MacArthur's forces, supported by the guerrillas, rolled into the Philippine Islands, men began to come out of hiding. The Philippine Scouts, some who were members of the guerrilla forces,

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some who were not, stepped forward and rejoined the U.S. Army. Other Filipino guerrillas joined them and the Army set up new Philippine Scout units. The "New Scouts" actively participated in combat action against the Japanese Army in north Luzon, and served as military police to restore order and help locate pockets of escaped Japanese in the south. As planning for the invasion of Japan progressed, the Philippine Scouts were included in the invasion forces and begin training for what was expected to be the bloodiest struggle of World War II.

After the surrender of Japan in August 1945, the United States made good on its previous commitments, and granted the Republic of the Philippines full independence on July 4, 1946. At that point the Philippine Scouts held a unique status in U.S. military history: they were soldiers in the regular U.S. Army, combat veterans at that, but now they were citizens of a foreign country. To solve the dilemma, the United States offered the Philippine Scouts full U.S.

citizenship. Most of the surviving Scouts accepted, and the Army transferred them to other units to finish their military careers. In 1946, President Truman disbanded the Philippine Scouts as an official element of the United States Army, and all of their unit colors were retired. Today, the Philippine Scout veterans who are still with us are scattered around the United States, with the highest concentration on the West Coast.

On April 5, 1989, Rhode Island State Senator John Patterson, along with former Philippine Scout officers John Olson, Lloyd Mills and Roy Reynolds, founded the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society. The Society's mission is to help preserve the history and legacy of these outstanding soldiers. It was a move that was long overdue, since there are so few of us who are aware of who they are or what they did. The Society has chapters in the San Francisco Bay area, Tacoma, El Paso, and Los Angeles, and holds a reunion on or around Memorial Day each year.

Today the sons, daughters and grandchildren of the Scouts are taking over the Society, as only a few of the men are left. More than half of them died in the merciless hands of their country's enemy. Advanced age has further depleted their ranks. At the closing dinner of their annual reunion only ten or fifteen line up across the dance floor now, with graying hair and an occasional cane or wheelchair momentarily pushed aside. In the darkened room with its sparkling lights, flashbulbs and background music, they receive the applause of their families and admirers. I have had the privilege of attending two of those dinners now, and I am always struck by how straight these men stand.

*Chris Schaefer is a historian who lives in Houston, Texas. He is the author of "Bataan Diary," a book about World War II in the Philippines. For more information, see [www.philippine-scouts.org](http://www.philippine-scouts.org). This article was first printed in the August 2006 issue of **Filipino Times** magazine and is reprinted with permission.*

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cease firing. Our own artillery stood by in impotent rage, unable to open up on these definitely located targets. Ten or twelve slow observation planes—"washing machines," they were called—were hovering overhead all day long, with a constant string of dive bombers from the north to plaster any of our batteries that their observers spotted. Nor did they wait for definite targets, but bombed and strafed all woods, mango groves and bamboo clumps large enough to conceal a gun. The service company bivouac, where all food was prepared before being trucked forward to be carried into the lines by hand, was bombed out of position three times. It was in such a mango grove near the cadre training barracks at Balanga that Maj. George Fisher, Regimental Supply Officer, one of the best-loved officers of the 57th Infantry,

and several Scouts of Service Company were killed. Hourly we prayed that Corregidor would release just one or two of these few remaining P-40s to hit those planes, chase them away if only for an hour or two so that our artillery might fire.

Through the afternoon the Jap registration continued—until four o'clock. Then one long battery opened, planted a salvo over, a salvo short and then a third salvo. We knew that that salvo meant business.

There is that eternity of waiting between the gun flashes and the report, a second eternity until you hear the whistle of the shells. Those shells had a different sound. We knew they were coming close to home. They screamed in—

one, two, three and then a pause. One demolished the little garden court; the other two dug great craters in the garden in the rear. And then the fourth came, hitting in through the court and exploding against the solid masonry between the arched windows along the passage-way from church to *convento*.

The ground jumped up; the tiling of the church floor heaved and buckled. The whole church was filled with smoke and dust. Capt. Francis was walking down the corridor toward the church when the salvo was fired and had thrown himself to the floor at the base of the wall between the windows. The explosion tore out a great section of masonry but failed to penetrate. Several blocks of stone were jarred out of the inside of

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the wall and falling, came close to smashing him; but he was unscarred, suffering only minor shock.

Seconds later we took stock of ourselves and resumed what we had been doing before the shells hit. The church still stood; the little statuette "Christ the Shepherd" was still on its fragile pedestal; the troops, the Scouts, resumed their work. Runners were coming and going, field phones jangling, a draftsman plotting on an operations map, and out in the garden the grinding whirr of the generator of some radio. Night closed in and with it the usual increases in the sounds of battle—small arms, machine guns and an occasional mortar; but the artillery was silent.

After all the shelling that Abucay had taken, our opinion of the enemy artillery was not too high. Their area firing was good, but in spot target firing they were very poor. For that reason, our artillery suffered very little in counter battery fire, whereas we knocked out a large number of enemy batteries by the great accuracy of our own trained crews. Now we had found an enemy battery whose accuracy we could respect. Its firing had a new cadence distinct from the batteries with which we were familiar, and we were thankful it was silent after its exploratory salvos on the church. We dreaded to hear that cadence again.

There was desultory shelling the next morning, the morning of January 22. Then at about eleven o'clock they opened up for an hour with heavy concentrations on the city square in front of the church, churning up the stone rubble that had once been the municipal hall and the business buildings that had lined the square on three sides. Three or four trucks and buses for the Philippine Army were burning along the road in front of the church.

At about three o'clock the shelling recommenced, not unduly heavy, and con-

centrating again on the city square, the highway bridge across the river and the length of the highway itself. There was an unusual amount of traffic that afternoon. We couldn't stop it, for although we didn't allow our own vehicles to move by daylight except for an occasional single car, we couldn't control the constant stream of supply trucks of the Philippine Army division on our right, which due to the lack of road nets were forced to pass through the bottleneck at Abucay. So Abucay took another shelling. After a half hour or so the guns ceased. It was quiet—not quiet either, there was silence, an ominous, foreboding silence. Even the small arms fire from Mabatang died. As suddenly, the enemy planes were gone, and but for the desolation, the dusty smoke-laden haze that filled the air, there might have been no war, no death, and no hatred.

At four o'clock a single observation plane appeared out of the north, circled the town, flew to the south, returned and took up a course flying around and around the town. A few moments later the enemy batteries opened again—six of them—and we knew their cadence. They had registered and bracketed the church the day before. And one of those batteries was the one that had fired the extra salvo that had hit here.

Deliberately each battery in turn opened. The range was short, shells falling 100 to 500 feet to the north and west of the church.

Again they fired. This time the shells came over, falling on the riverbank and in the streets to the south.

The third series of salvos began. Shells from the first five batteries came close, hitting into the *convento*, the gardens, the cemetery, the paved front terrace. One salvo blew great craters in the highway approach to the ancient stone bridge, knocking over its heavy parapets.

Then the sixth battery fired—that cadence we had been introduced to the night before. Men dived for the walls, hugging the tile floor—every man except the telephone operators and the switchboard men. They stood by their posts. Outside in the garden court, a radio operator crouched in the shelter of the recess of one of the huge arched windows of the church, his walkie-talkie on his back, talking to an artillery observation post forward, and listening. Again, we waited that eternity for the shells to reach us.

The shells were on their way, and again we knew—knew with that intuitive certainty that all men have, all men who have been bombed, all men who have lived through a barrage—we knew that those shells were meant for us. In those seconds no man moved, no man could have moved; but minds were active with such startling clarity and rapidity—the highlights of a lifetime—and trivial thoughts ridiculous in retrospect.

In a large wooden strongbox was packed the last of our precious coffee and the last jar of peanut butter. Somewhere in the nave of the church the mess boy was crouching on the floor, in his pocket the key to the box. And the box itself was sitting in the recess of one of the great side windows where a shell might blow it to bits. A great problem; an awful shame that the coffee and peanut butter hadn't been removed. It would have been far safer had they been clutched in my hands... or if I could lie on them, protecting those precious articles with my body.

In that eternity I thought of the bell tower, the huge 2,400-pound bronze bell that hung from the rafters 80 feet above the ground, and the smaller bells that hung in their arched recesses in the stone wall—all cast long before our Revolu-

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tionary War. There was a rickety wooden platform, reached only by a series of small, rickety ladders, mounting from one platform to the next. On that top platform were air observers and artillery observers. I thought of what would happen to those men should the tower be struck and the great bell come hurtling down. A thick concrete slab roofed the ground floor room of the tower, wherein stood a small altar and the carved baptismal font. In that small room were the combat team commander, his executive officer, the S-3 section with its phones and their operations maps. I wondered if when the bell came down it would cave through the concrete slab and crush those men.

And then it was done. A flash—a deafening roar—the world bursting apart. A great gaping hole appeared now, high in the corner of the sanctuary to the right of the high altar; the roof above was ripped back; a large section of the wall was falling.

And then the guns again—the same battery, the same cadence, and the same certainty. There was no question *IF*, but only where—what—and who.

That was the last salvo for the morning; and again, but one shell of the four hit truly home; but that shell struck the roof exactly in the center, penetrated, passing through the high wooden inner ceiling, and exploding directly over the central aisle, directly over the pedestal with its statuette “Christ the Shepherd.” There was a black moment of silence and dread. Then with a tearing, splintering crash the whole section of wooden ceiling the width of the nave collapsed into the body of the church and the whole scene was obscured with smoke and dust. Silence again, to be broken presently by cries and groans of the wounded. The shock lasted but a moment, and then there was work to be done.

No destruction could have been more complete. What had been row on row of long pews were great piles of splintered kindling wood, unrecognizable. The great front altar was torn apart—a shambles. The side altars had collapsed; religious vessels were strewn about.

The great arched windows were open to the outside, guarded only by heavy iron grille work secured in the solid masonry. Yet the force of the concussion was so great that these grilles were torn from their anchorage. The massive wooden doors in the front and side entrances were blown from their hinges. Along the sides of the nave bits of glass, shattered frames, scraps of cloth, and mutilated wooden figures were all that remained of the glass-enclosed Stations of the Cross. The huge stone basin, squat on its broad base—the holy water font, protected as it was, set far back under the balcony—was toppled and broken to fragments.

In the midst of the ruin, five Scouts lay dead. The telephone operator sat slumped over his switchboard amid a tangle of wires. The radio operator with the SCR 196 crouching in the court window had slumped against the iron grille, the set smashed, the antenna bent and riddled with splinters of wood and rubble. A clerk and two runners lay still in the message center. Some of the living were wandering about stupidly. Many were bloody from wounds, their clothing in rags, torn from their bodies. Then aid men were searching the debris for the wounded. Other men salvaged equipment; wire men repaired wire circuits; a new switchboard; a new operator. Soon the telephone would ring again; runners would scurry in and out. The nerve center of the Combat Team would live again. But at the moment it was chaos.

Yet there on the wall, above the place where the altar had been, hung the life-

sized Crucifix gazing down on the scene. And in the midst of that chaos—in the midst of the debris, with death lying about and the screams of the wounded rending the air—in the very middle of the church where the force of the exploding shell was the greatest, where the splintered ceiling collapsed all about it—there on its fragile, unstable pedestal, stood “Christ the Shepherd” leaning on His crook, a sad smile on His lips, sorrow in His eyes, an arm outstretched. “Come unto Me and I shall give you rest.”

There is little more to tell. It was done so quickly—just a few moments actually—an incident out of Bataan. Some might shrug their shoulders and say, “What of it? Only a quirk of chance.” Others, “A minor miracle.” I don’t know. But the awe we felt is never to be forgotten.

The war moved on. The lines moved back. The fighting continued for a while and then it was done. The world knows the story, or as much as it need know. Those lofty heights looked down and watched the end of that struggle. They saw the land and a free people enslaved by a savage, sadistic horde to whom the Samurai sword was the symbol of good rather than the sign of the cross and the rights of free men.

They were black days, black years that the Zambales witnessed in watchful silence—but a brief period in the centuries of struggle they had watched. Through the agony of waiting, through turns of hope and despair, through sickness and starvation, the men who had struggled against this newest invader of the land and of the Zambales could cling to the hope and promise of “Christ the Shepherd,” standing serene amid the desolation and destruction of the church at Abucay.



## THE GENERAL'S CORNER

**The General's Corner** is dedicated to the memory of **Brigadier General Royal Reynolds, Jr.** During the early days of World War II, General Reynolds commanded the First Battalion of the 57th Infantry Regiment (PS). He led his unit in the defense of Bataan and then, instead of surrendering, spent the remainder of the war as a guerrilla. As the first President of the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society, he was one of the Society's founders and a longtime staunch supporter.



*Brigadier General Royal Reynolds, Jr.*

**The Generals Corner** publishes historical accounts of World War II in the Philippines. This issue contains four such articles: the lead piece on our front page is an article on the Philippine Scout by **PSHS Public Relations Officer Chris Schaefer**, followed by the concluding chapter of a two-part series by **Lt. Col. Frank Anders**, 57<sup>th</sup> Infantry (PS), Philippine Scout concerning an incident at the Abucay Church. The lead article on this page is the first of a two-part series recounting **Dr. Isabelo Torio's** story of survival as a young **26<sup>th</sup> Cavalry (PS)** trooper during combat, the Bataan Death March and prison camp. The second article details **Dr. Alice Benitez'** recollections of her family's experience sheltering **Lt. Col. Ed Ramsey**, **26<sup>th</sup> Cavalry (PS)** during his early days organizing guerrilla resistance to the Japanese.

### *Of Things Remembered*

By Isabelo S. Torio, M. D.

What I would share with you today is a segment of the roadmap of my life that happened to me more than half a century ago, buried in the depth of my memory...to share my experiences during the Second World War that took place in the Battle and Campaign in:

- (1) Northern Luzon in 1941
- (2) Bataan Peninsula in 1942
- (3) Luzon Liberation in 1945

I had just enrolled in college when I was called to report to the Philippine Army Drafting Center in Lingayen, Pangasinan. I did not like what I saw, so I went to Fort Stotsenberg, Pampanga. With the help of my brother, Tech. Sgt. Victoriano Torio, I was able to enlist in the HQ Troop, 26<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, Philippine Scouts, U.S. Army on July 18, 1940. I was assigned to the Message Center, Communications Section. My main duty was to encode and decode messages sent and received by the Command post.

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### *Recollection of WWII in Pangasinan*

By Alice Benitez

It was early in the morning of December 8<sup>th</sup> 1941 when I woke up to my parents listening intently to the news over our Philco radio. I was only 10 then, but felt from their worried expressions something was terribly wrong. My father, who was a Judge in Dagupan City, Pangasinan, decided not to go to work that day and so did my mother, then Councilor of our City of San Carlos, Pangasinan, and a nurse as well. My concern and curiosity grew deeper when they told me to stay home away from school.

That was indeed a very unsettling day. I learned the United States President Franklin Delano Roosevelt declared war against Japan, which meant we were now directly involved in World War II. The Philippines was a Commonwealth of the United States. The Benitez household industriously prepared for the imminent invasion of the Japanese army. I remember my mother

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## **I. BATTLE AND CAMPAIGN IN NORTHERN LUZON, 1941**

### **Dec. 7, 1941: Hawaii, Day of Infamy**

We called it as a sneak attack of the Pearl Harbor, Hawaii by the Japanese Imperial Air Force leading to the subsequent declaration of war against Japan and Germany by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. The Japanese had inflicted tremendous casualties in Pearl Harbor. It sank a good number of battleships, including Battleship Arizona, which is now a memorial icon.

### **December 8, 1941: In the Philippines**

At midday, the Japanese Air Force attacked Clark Air Field and Fort Stotsenberg. The American Air Force in Clark Air Base was caught flat-footed. Practically, all the planes on the ground were destroyed. Some Japanese planes were also shot down. The stables of the horses of the 26th Cavalry were hit, causing some casualties to the horses and personnel.

### **December 12, 1941: The Charge of the 26th Cavalry Regiment**

Four days later on December 12, 1941, General Wainwright ordered the 26th Cavalry Regiment to Northern Luzon, in Damortis, La Union to face the Japanese Imperial Forces which were poised to land. Imagine almost a thousand Cavalrymen on their march to charge the Japanese forces who were poised to make landing in Northern Luzon. On our way to Damortis, La Union, we were constantly bombed and strafed by Japanese planes. Being in the Communications Section, I was riding in one of those scout command cars. Along the road, I saw a lot of Cavalry men died with their boots on, with their horses beside them. In 10 days on Dec. 23rd, the main forces of the 26th Cavalry were deployed in Damortis area overlooking

the eastern side of Lingayen Gulf. The invading Japanese forces were seen landing around the train station in Damortis. At this point in time, the battle with the invading Japanese forces began.

#### **—Of things I remembered:**

Before or after the bombing of Clark Air Field, one reconnaissance scout car unit was sent to Aparri, Cagayan under the command of Capt. Joseph Barker. I heard later that Capt. Barker became a guerilla leader and was captured and executed by the Japanese. Another communication unit was also sent to Dingalan Bay, Tayabas, now called Quezon province. I could not recall who commanded this unit. The third Scout Car unit was assigned to Gen. Wainwright's Headquarter. The radio operator assigned to the General Headquarters was my friend, Pvt. Joshua Bunda. My communications section was assigned to HQ Troop 26th Cavalry under the command of Col. Clinton Pierce.

**December 19, 1941:** Troop C under the command of Capt. Praeger, was detached from the regiment and was sent to Bontoc area to prevent the Japanese from seizing the City of Baguio. The advancing Japanese forces subsequently cut off this unit.

**December 23, 1941:** Battle of Damortis, La Union

Upon arriving in the vicinity of Damortis, north of the town of Rosario, overlooking Lingayen Gulf and its coastline, we saw the Japanese Armada scattered in the gulf. We saw Japanese forces landing their tanks, trucks and other war equipment. Immediately upon arriving at Damortis area, we were deployed, and shortly thereafter, we were locked in combat with the invading Japanese, aided by their planes strafing and bombing us. Several Japanese planes were shot

down. Some units were on closed combat with the invading Japanese forces. The battle lasted the whole day with the 26th Cavalry inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy. This was the last Cavalry Charge of a Regimental size under the command of Colonel Clinton Pierce against the invading Japanese forces. Toward the evening, we retreated towards the town of Rosario and vicinity. On the following days, the 26th Cavalry had fought the advancing Japanese forces toward the towns of Pozzorubio, Binalonan and Urdaneta area in Central Luzon. The 26th Cavalry, together with 71<sup>st</sup> Division, had engaged fierce battle to check the advancing Japanese forces. Casualties on both sides were tremendous. After these battles, there were only about 500 men left in the 26th Cavalry regiment. The regiment was then placed on reserve.

In one of the skirmishes in central Luzon, I got separated from my Scout car unit that I had to grab one of the horses whose rider was killed in the battle to look for my unit. In the process of searching for my unit, I found myself in the center of the command post of General Wainwright in Bamban, Tarlac. Here, I looked for Pvt. Joshua Bunda, the radio operator assigned to General Wainwright HQ. When I found him, he introduced me to the Commanding Officer of the Communications Dept., Col. Stansell. I told the Colonel that I belonged to the Communications Section of the 26th Cavalry (PS) and that I was separated from my unit during the battle with the enemy in Central Luzon. I showed him my Cipher Device. The Colonel was surprised to see me with a top-secret device. He was very pleased, as he needed somebody to work in the HQ Message Center.

After asking me questions about my encounter with the Japanese forces in the

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North, he put me to work right away. Since then, I became a regular member of his team.

**II. BATAAN CAMPAIGN, 1942**

**Retreat to Bataan: War Plan 3**

It was during these last few days of December 1941 when General Wainwright ordered the 26th Cavalry to delay the advancing Northern Japanese forces to give time for the USAFFE Forces from the Northern and Southern Luzon to withdraw to Bataan Peninsula.

**Raging and fierce battle around Calumpit Bridge and Abucay - Samat areas:**

We were in the process of moving to Bagac, Bataan where we set up our HQ south of the town of Bagac, Bataan along route 19 in the western part of Bataan Peninsula. We were incessantly and constantly attacked by enemy bombers and bombarded by enemy artillery. Many times the Japanese forces tried to penetrate our defenses on the Abucay-Bagac line only to be repulsed. At one time, the enemy forces composed of Japanese amphibious forces tried to make landings south of Bagac area called the Points, which were located south of our (HQ) in Bagac area and north of Mariveles. Again, the 26th Cavalry was called to battle these Japanese waterborne forces that made their landing behind us. These Japanese forces were subsequently wiped out. Some were captured and were brought to the HQ as Prisoners of War. It was at this time that I met some scouts from the 26th Cavalry, who took part in the battle of the points and informed me that my brother, T/Sgt. Victoriano Torio took part in that campaign and was at their camp. I invited my friend Pvt. Bunda to see my brother. Unfortunately, my brother was not there as they went to attack the infiltrating Japanese forces. So we went back to the trail leading to our HQ.

While we were waiting for a vehicle to hitch a ride, a truck delivering bread to different units passed by and suddenly its back door opened and two loaves of bread fell down. We ran to retrieve the bread from the ground. We thought it was really a miracle as the truck had a closed panel from all sides and no windows at all. I was so amazed to see the bread fell on the ground. I could not really understand how the door opened and closed after the bread fell. I thank God for being the greatest provider. A few minutes later, an open truck came along and gave us a ride. We jumped on the open truck and we were horrified with what we saw. There were six dead soldiers brought by a priest to be buried. God bless them.

In the first week of April 1942, the Japanese forces started their massive assault on us by constantly shelling their artillery guns with increasing intensity. By the end of the week, their planes began bombing us. In the midst of constant bombing and artillery shelling, we were ordered to destroy our sensitive equipments, radios, cipher devices and others. Top secret and restricted documents were burned. The situation became so critical that a great number of soldiers retreated from the front line.

Finally, on April 9, 1942 the General Headquarters was ordered to surrender. That was the end of the Bataan Campaign. All units were disbanded. We became prisoners of war. The only way open for us was a trail toward Mariveles. After several days of walking, my friend Joe Bunda reached the town of Mariveles where we joined other prisoners. This date is what we now commemorate as the Fall of Bataan.

**THE BATAAN DEATH MARCH**

In Mariveles, the Japanese soldiers herded us, along with other war prisoners who were already in the town, like

cattle. We were ordered to march down the road toward San Fernando. Guarded by very mean Japanese soldiers, under the scorching summer heat, we were made to march without food or water. During this torturous walk, we were all suffering from hunger, fatigue, extreme thirst and dehydration. A lot of soldiers succumbed to heat stroke and died. Still hundreds of us continued the dreadful walk. For our survival, we drank contaminated water from ponds along the road; sometimes those ponds had bloated bodies floating on them. The starving prisoners on the march ate leaves of bushes and trees by the roadside along the route. Delirious soldiers walking aimlessly had given up the will to live. Some of the prisoners became insane, tried to create trouble and fought the Japanese guards who would either bayonet or shoot them. These made the Japanese guards more strict and cruel so that they began to kill prisoners for no reason or just for fun. As we continued the walk, I witnessed and felt a tremendous amount of suffering by all of us. A lot of us got sick and would just collapse.

A lot of soldiers would just pass out and die by the roadside. We could smell very intense odor of decayed and decomposing human bodies along the route. We could see dead bodies of white and black soldiers but could not distinguish between the colors as everybody was discolored by the exposure to extreme summer heat. I felt so oppressed but could not do anything. **This human torture was a challenge not only to our physical and emotional strength but mostly, to our dignity and respect.**

One day as I tried to help a prisoner who was very sick and delirious, a Japanese guard butted me on the right side of my head, by my right ear. As I began to pass out, I looked at my friend Joe Bunda, who also looked at me with a gesture of "Good Bye". That was the last time I saw him. I fell down uncon-

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scious by the roadside. I did not know how long I was unconscious. When I regained my consciousness and opened my eyes, I saw another Japanese soldier coming towards me. In my very weakened condition, I thought that he would finish me off. With the last ounce of my strength, I managed to join the group and continued to walk. With the help of other prisoners, I was able to reach the next stop.

**THREE-MINUTE WALK BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH**

At the next stop, we were confined in a stockade enclosed by sharp barbed wires. Not far from the stockade was a civilian camp. About 25 meters from the gate of the stockade, there was an old artesian well with flowing water. The following morning, I approached the guard on duty by the gate and made a sign that I would like to wash myself in the well. The guard permitted me. As soon as I reached the well, I shed off my

uniform and started to wash myself. At the same time, I was observing what was happening on the gate. As a group of prisoners were ordered to march out of the gate, the guard went to guard them. This gave me an opportunity to escape. I got up and walked calmly toward the civilian camp as I submitted my fate in the hands of GOD. At that very tense moment, I was expecting that the Japanese guards would shoot me. I also noticed the anxious faces of the civilians expecting my inevitable death as an escaping prisoner of war. The moment I reached the camp, the civilians hid me quickly and provided me with civilian clothes, offered food, water and other necessities. At that very moment, I had mixed emotions about my freedom from the hands of the cruel Japanese guards. At that moment, I could still feel the hardships of my fellow soldiers who were still in the march. I felt very furious about the inhuman treatment towards us. I felt the total assault to human dignity and respect. I felt so weak

and very angry at the thought of my friends and my fellow soldiers who were unable to escape.

Words are not enough for me to express here what we, the Filipinos and American Ex-Prisoners of War, had undergone during that infamous Bataan Death March. It was **“THE ULTIMATE TEST OF HUMAN ENDURANCE, THE SUPREME SACRIFICE AND HUMAN SUFFERING. THAT EVERY SINGLE DROP OF TEARS, EVERY SINGLE DROP OF BLOOD WE SHED AND EVERY SINGLE WEARY STEP THAT WE TOOK DURING THAT DEATH MARCH WAS A BIG JUMP TOWARD THE VICTORY OF THE FREE WORLD, SO THAT WE MAY LIVE IN PEACE AND FREEDOM”**. **I thank the Lord Almighty for my life.**

*(To be completed in our next issue. Editor)*

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buying numerous boxes of canned goods. She also had pigs and chickens butchered from our farm, cooked “adobo” and had it all canned. She ordered enormous cans of kerosene and coconut oil in the event we had to evacuate to the rural area where there was no electricity. The amount of goods my mother stocked overwhelmed me. It was only after the war that I had realized that without my mother’s foresight, we would have ran out of the basic needs during the 3 wartime years. It also served well for some of our relatives who came to our farm where we evacuated from the city.

The farm, approximately 8 kilometers from our residence in the town of San Carlos, was refuge to four Filipino soldiers, one of them a relative, who es-

caped from the Capas death march. They arrived wary in their uniforms, which they had to bury to hide any evidence of being part of the Philippine army. The soldiers, wearing loaned civilian clothing, stayed with us for a few months. They continued on their journey to the Ilocos region when it was safe for them to travel back to their homes.

Things settled down a little not too long after the Philippine and American armies surrendered in Bataan. Our family went back to our home in San Carlos. I returned to school as a grade 6 pupil at a school close to our house. Every morning, before classes began, the routine was to participate in the flag ceremonies. Prior to the war, we sang both the Philippine and American national anthems. However, during the

Japanese occupation, the latter was replaced with the Japanese national anthem. My loyalties were clearly to the Commonwealth, and even as a young 11 year old, I felt confused and awkward singing the Japanese anthem. Out of fear, however, I got away with mumbling the words, which were quite foreign to me.

One day towards the middle of 1943, my parents asked me to clear my bedroom to accommodate a very important guest. I knew we had a guest room so I must have protested wondering why I had to give up my own room. My parents explained that the guest had to stay at the rear-end of the house, which meant my room. My intense curiosity led them to tell me that our ‘guest’ was an Amer-

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ican officer named Lt. Edwin P. Ramsey, who was hiding from the Japanese. This was to be our small family secret as, I do recall, making me promise not to tell anyone about our 'guest'. The fact was that I was actually more thrilled than scared to have an American stay in my room!

Lt. Ramsey was all but 26 years old then. He was lean (very thin, as a matter of fact), tall and handsome, I thought. He was every inch a Gentleman Officer! He greeted me casually and retreated to my room where he stayed during the few months (or so it seemed), living in our home.

My mother or I brought Lt. Ramsey's meals to him in the bedroom. His favorite desert was "leche flan" made from goat's milk and eggs, both organic, from our farm. My childhood close friend and relative, Aurora Soriano-Cudal, every now and then, would help me serve coffee and food to our guest. It was a rare opportunity for us to see Americans, which explains our excitement.

Our American guest, Lt. Ramsey, now a retired Colonel, was the Head of the resistance movement organizing the east central Luzon area, covering the provinces of Pangasinan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Bulacan, Bataan, Zambales, Rizal and Manila. His unit is aptly called the East Central Luzon Guerilla Area (better known as ECLGA). While he was staying in San Carlos, I recall him meeting regularly with two other Americans at the nipa hut at the back of our home. The two American officers were Capt. Charles Putnam and Lt. Darwin. Capt Putnam was appointed the Commanding Officer for the Pangasinan-Tarlac Military District (PTMD), ECLGA, and my father, Judge Juan A. Benitez as Deputy to the Commanding Officer. My father's American comrades referred to him as "Johnny".

The nipa hut at the back of our house was used as a meeting place and to induct recruits for the underground movement, after sundown. I eventually called Lt. Ramsey's routine "he walks by night". Other members recruited by my father and my cousin, Lt. Col. Tomas Soriano, included Speaker Eugenio Perez, Dr. Francisco Untalan, who was then the Mayor of our town, and so many others who lived in nearby towns and villages.

Because of the nighttime meetings, I remember Lt. Ramsey resting and sleeping during the day. I remember him peeping through the curtained window when the Japanese army trucks would drive by our street. One day, a runner came to the house to warn us about some Japanese soldiers dropping by a store two houses away from ours. Lt. Ramsey was escorted hastily to the backyard nipa hut.

The Japanese, after a few months, learned of Lt. Ramsey's presence in the area of San Carlos. He was quickly transported back to Bayambang, Pangasinan then transported to Manila in a boxcar of a train loaded with nipa shingles (made of palm leaves). There were two bodyguards prepared to shoot in case the Japanese soldiers discovered him inside the boxcar. Seated next to the train engineer was another guerilla officer, Claro Camacho, who brought a large bag (bayong) of Japanese money. The money was given to the engineer to ferry his passengers to safety.

Back in San Carlos, right after Lt. Ramsey left, my parents got me to stay in different friends' houses for my safety. A few months later, someone had squealed on the underground activities of the guerillas, and in particular, my father and mother's involvement. The three of us left to hide in a neighboring town, Malasiqui, at a relative's house moving from one house to another to

evade capture. One close encounter was when the Japanese raided a house where we had just left, and luckily did not see my father's pen with his name engraved on it.

We were all set to leave for Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija, in an oxen-drawn cart, when a runner came to inform us that three of my father's relatives were taken by the Japanese soldiers as hostages: an elderly uncle, a lady cousin and a niece. Without any hesitation, my father decided to surrender to the Japanese. He believed his relatives should not be made to suffer for his cause. The hostages were then released. To our relief and surprise, my father was not detained. There was, however, a particular Japanese soldier who visited our house daily pretending to befriend the Benitez household. It was our belief that his objective was to extract information from anyone in our household about Lt. Ramsey's whereabouts.

My father's so-called freedom did not last long. He was eventually arrested and taken to the Japanese headquarters known as "Kem Pe Tai". For a whole month, we did not hear from him. My mother and I would take a small boat (banca), and go behind the headquarters hoping to get a glimpse of my father. We would then visit the Cathedral to pray, walked on our knees from the church door to the altar, for his safe return. This was our daily routine.

One day, someone came to inform us that my father was confined for high blood pressure at the Pangasinan Provincial Hospital in Dagupan City. The hospital director, Dr. Romulo, brother of General Carlos P. Romulo, who was my father's friend, told the Japanese his hospitalization was required. With God's grace, the Japanese did not come back for him. He lived to Chair the Philippine Veterans Board in 1950.

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We learned later that the other two American comrades of Col. Ramsey were also captured. Capt. Putnam and Lt. Darwin, sadly, were executed in western Pangasinan.

After the war, our family would occasionally see Col. Edwin P. Ramsey who often came to Manila. In 1964, he and his family came to our house in San Carlos where a grand reunion of officers and members of the Pangasinan-Tarlac Military District (PTMD, ECLGA) was held

in his honor. He asked to visit the nipa hut at our backyard where he inducted recruits and conducted meetings.

In 1982, I had the pleasure of meeting Col. Ramsey's lovely wife, Dr. Raquel Ramirez. The three of us had dinner at the Manila Garden Hotel in Makati, where they stayed. Unfortunately, we had lost contact for over 20 years. I immigrated to Canada in 1987 and after a long search, we finally had a very touching and memorable reunion in May, 2006 at the

Philippine Scouts Heritage Society event in San Francisco, California.

Today, at 75, I am honored and delighted my friendship with Col. Ramsey has endured for 65 years. My family will always remember the young American, now at 89, a legendary hero, who made a supreme sacrifice for the freedom that we now enjoy.

*Alice Benitez is a physician now living in Vancouver, British Columbia. Editor*

## ***In Flanders Fields***

***By Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD  
(1872-1918) Canadian Army***

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie  
    In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
    In Flanders fields.

## ***We shall keep the faith***

***By Moina Michael***

Oh! You who sleep in Flanders' Fields  
Sleep sweet - to rise anew;  
We caught the torch you threw,  
And holding high we kept  
The faith with those who died.

We cherish, too, the Poppy red  
That grows on fields where valor led.  
It seems to signal to the skies  
That blood of heroes never dies.  
But lends a lustre to the red  
On the flower that blooms above the dead  
    In Flanders' fields.

And now the torch and Poppy red  
Wear in honour of our dead.  
Fear not that ye have died for naught:  
We've learned the lesson that ye taught  
    In Flanders' fields.

*In 1918, Ms. Moina Michael, an American teacher, introduced the poppy as a symbol of remembrance for those who fell in combat. Editor*

## Member Activities

An important objective of this newsletter is the encouragement of our members to raise public awareness of the proud patriotic legacy of the Philippine Scouts. Examples of member's efforts to accomplish this over the last six months follow:

**Immediate Past National President Fred Foz** and **Mrs. Filma Foz** are both planning to attend our May reunion. The following are excerpts from his email:

"Our annual PSHS reunion in Tacoma, Washington will give us the opportunity to strengthen our resolve to preserve the legacy of the Phil. Scouts. Tacoma is most appropriate to celebrate our reunion being the home of our hero **Joe Calugas Sr.** who was awarded the highest honor. It will give us the opportunity to meet old friends since we left Fort McKinley 65 years ago.

"We remember the motto of our founder **BGen. Royal Reynolds, Jr.**, 'We learn from our experience so that we can apply those lessons learned.' He led a battalion of PS in combat during the Bataan Campaign. He always mentioned his love of the Philippine Scouts whenever he attended our reunions....

"Gen. MacArthur said of the fallen: 'I do not know the dignity of their birth but we know the dignity of their death.'

"I will be looking forward to seeing you all in Tacoma...."

**National Vice President and Tacoma Chapter President Joe Calugas'** and wife **Goody** have put in a great deal of effort, as have various members of their Chapter, into organizing our May 18-19 reunion at the *La Quinta Inn & Suites* in Tacoma.

**National PRO Chris Schaefer** published an article about the Philippine Scouts for the *South Bay Times* (a community magazine in San Diego, Calif.), which is republished elsewhere in this issue and a piece entitled "Japanese Anti-Guerrilla Countermeasures in the Philippines" in the *Bulletin of the American Historical Collection*. **Chris** and **Col. John E. Olson** will be speaking to the Texas A&M Association of Former Students in San Antonio, Texas, in mid-

February. Their topic will be WWII in the Philippines, based around Chris's book. The subjects covered will be Bataan, the Death March, Camp O'Donnell, the Hell Ships and liberation. They expect 80 to 100 attendees. The objective will be to educate their audience about the war in the Philippines, the Philippine Scouts, and the plight of the Filipino and American POWs

**Chris** also has place articles in the *Miami Herald* and *Stamford Advocate* on the reuniting of the Major Karol Anthony Bauer family through our website more than sixty years after his death in a Japanese Hell Ship. Major Bauer was 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry (PS).

**Col. Mel Rosen, Counselor**, spoke in October at a Kingston, New York conference on WWII and again in November at the D-Day Museum in New Orleans. Both talks were on his Bataan, Death March and Hell Ship experiences.

**Col. John Olson, Historian** continues to devote extensive time to organizing the Philippine Scout archives at the Fort Sam Houston Museum and supplying information on Scout-related questions coming to our website.

**Malcolm Decker** currently is working on his second book, Not Authorized to Save American Lives: The Story of Fassoth's Camps.

In November **Lt. Col. Ed Ramsey**, accompanied by wife **Raquel**, was guest of honor at the Filipino WWII Veterans Reunion & the Pangasinan Association of San Diego County annual Veterans Ball, which was expanded to include numerous politicians and a cross section of the Fil-Am community. **Congressman Bob Filner**, now the Chairman of the Congressional Affairs Committee,

presented **Ed** with a "Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition" for his "outstanding and invaluable service to the community."

In early January **Cong. Filner** invited **Ed** to appear in mid-February before the Congressional Committee on Veterans Affairs to testify concerning the pending Equity Bill on behalf of the Filipino Veterans.

In September the **Ed and Raqui** attended the U.S. Cavalry Association reunion in Fort Knox, Kentucky.

**Sgt. Gary Hurd** continues his efforts to organize troops in the Philippines and the U.S. in honor of the 26th Cavalry (PS).

The U.S. Military Academy's Association of Graduates presented the first annual **Alexander R. Nininger Award for Valor at Arms** in a September ceremony. This award furthers the ideals of West Point by presenting to the Corps of Cadets an exemplar of heroic action in battle. The Award is named in recognition of the heroic actions of **Second Lieutenant Alexander R. Nininger**, USMA Class of 1941, who was the first American awarded a Medal of Honor in WWII. **Lt. Nininger**, an officer in the 57<sup>th</sup> Infantry (PS), is an uncle of **National President John Patterson**.)

The recipient of the award was **Major Ryan L. Worthan '97** as a result of conspicuous valor shown under fire in Afghanistan for which he received a Silver Star.

**Mike Houlahan's** review of **Col. John Olson's** novel The Guerrilla and the Hostage was published in the Bulletin of the American Historical Collection. (This novel also was reviewed in our last newsletter.)

## Chapter News

**Capt. Jose Calugas, Sr. Chapter: (Tacoma)** Joe and Goody Calugas are hard at work organizing our next reunion, which will be held in Tacoma for the first time since 1995. Tentative plans are for two panel discussions, one on combat nurses on Bataan and the other on recollections of former Philippine Scouts, as well as a veterans' benefits workshop. It is expected that Col. John Olson and CWO-4 Aniceto Bagley will discuss the history of the "New" (post-war) Philippine Scouts at the reunion.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> National Annual Reunion will be hosted by the Tacoma Chapter on May 18-19, 2007 at the La Quinta Inn & Suites in Tacoma.

Last September the Tacoma Chapter held its 16th Anniversary Dinner and

Dance at the Elks Lodge #174. Part of the program was to honor the late **Pvt. Melencio Figueroa, 26th Cavalry (PS)**, who died in Bataan. He finally received his Bronze Star and Purple Heart Medals. Family members attending came from California, Chicago and Washington, DC.

**Gen. John J. Pershing Chapter: (El Paso)** No chapter activities involving any members other than **Chapter President Menandro Parazo** were reported. **Menandro** himself has been very active as reported on the *Member Activities* page.

**Golden Gate-Bay Area Chapter:** **Chapter President Cion Rael** reports that, since May 2003, the Chapter has raised \$814.00 from the sale of PSHS

books. All these funds go to the National. Also **Ofelia Capuyan**, a daughter of our late President **Larry Pangan**, has agreed to take over as Chapter Treasurer and administrator of the Library Fund. There have been no chapter activities since the last newsletter.

**Monterey County Chapter:** No activities reported.

**Lt. Alexander R. Nininger Chapter:** Inactive.

**LTC Lloyd E. Mills Chapter:** Inactive.

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## Surviving Philippine Scouts (92)

### 26<sup>th</sup> Cavalry (PS)—13

Salvador Abad, San Francisco, CA  
 Eulalio Arzaga, Killeen, TX  
 Sgt. Baccani, ["B" Troop], Junction City, KS  
 Damaso Basco, Pittsburg, CA  
 Bill Cabillon Lakewood, WA  
 MSgt. James Downey, Jr., Newport News, VA  
 Capt. Felipe Fernandez, Seaside, CA  
 SFC Dan Figuracion, Lakewood, WA  
 Lt. Felipe Francisco, [HQ Troop], Monterey, CA  
 Col. Thomas S. Jones, Safety Harbor, FL  
 Capt. Menandro Parazo, El Paso, TX  
 Lt. Col. Edwin P. Ramsey, Los Angeles, CA  
 Dr. Isabelo S. Torio, San Diego, CA.

### 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry (PS)—11

Captain Paul Balanga, San Francisco, CA  
 Sgt Norberto Ballesteros [3<sup>rd</sup> Bn.], Aeia, HI  
 Edward Bautista, ["A" Co.],  
 Floriano Castaneda, [Intelligence Section],  
 Kaneohe, HI  
 Major Fred Foz, Pearl City, HI  
 Nick Lozada, [3<sup>rd</sup> Bn.], Vallejo, CA  
 Feliz Magalong, ["H" Co.], Aurora, CO  
 Pablo Mesina, Daly City, CA  
 Antonio Nimis, Seaside, CA  
 Pacifico Valdevarona, ["H" Co.] Alameda, CA  
 Hermenio Vargas, Lakewood, WA

### 57<sup>th</sup> Infantry (PS) Veterans—15

John Benson, ["A" Co.], San Francisco, CA  
 Justiniano B. Benton, "A" Co., Malabon City,  
 Philippines  
 Mariano Cauilan, [Service Co.] Pleasant Hill, CA  
 William Penalosa Cazar, ["F" Co.], Ormoc  
 City, Philippines  
 Primitivo Alcala Cuenca, [HQ Co.], Vallejo, CA  
 Sgt. Maj. Vic dela Cruz, Marina, CA  
 Romy Entac, ["G" Co.], Machine Gun Platoon,  
 Lennox, CA  
 Capt. Nick Golla, ["E" Co.], Seattle, WA  
 Domindor Guevara, [Anti-Tank Co.],  
 Morton Grove, IL  
 Cpl. Agustin O. Lacao, ["I" Co.], Seattle, WA  
 Col. John E. Olson, San Antonio, TX  
 Major Urbano Quijance, ["B" Co., SD w/ S-3,  
 Regtl. Hqtrs], Seattle, WA  
 MSgt. Alfredo Quijano, San Antonio, TX  
 Sgt. Joe Taton, Sr., [HQ Co.], Seattle, WA  
 Col. Frederick Yeager, Wilmington, NC

### 12<sup>th</sup> Medical (PS)—5

Ben Austria, San Antonio, TX  
 SFC Mariano A. Berona, Kent, WA  
 Gil Gutierrez, Waipahu, HI  
 Ricardo Maravillas, ["C" Co.] Fairfield, CA  
 Rodolfo Viray, Lakewood, WA.

### 12<sup>th</sup> Signal Co. (PS)—5

SFC Elliot Desoto, Seaside, CA  
 Victor Magallanes, Ewa Beach, HI  
 Guillermo (Gil) Perla,  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Marcial Sabado, Seaside, CA  
 David Tejada, Daly City, CA

### 12<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster Reg. (PS)—1

Florintino Paunil, Gaithersburg, MD

### 14<sup>th</sup> Engineers Bn. (PS)—7

Lawrence Castro, Pittsburg, CA  
 Sgt. Mario Cid, San Francisco  
 Geoffray Dumaguait, San Francisco, CA  
 PFC Escolastico G. Galarosa, ["A" Co.],  
 Seattle, WA  
 MSgt. Rosendo Luna, ["C" Co.], Seattle, WA  
 Jess Velasco, San Francisco, CA  
 Vincente Villarta

### 191st MP Co. (PS)—1

Cpl. Alejandro Llanto, Seattle, WA

### 23<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery Reg. (PS)—2

Anthony De Castro, [Battery "A"], Vallejo, CA  
 SFC Manuel Gavino, [Battery "A"],  
 Pittsburg, CA

### 86<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (PS)—1

Zosimo Guiang, San Francisco, CA

### 88<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery (PS)—3

Eduardo Abinsay, Pittsburg, CA  
 Brig. Gen. Paul D. Philips, [1<sup>st</sup> Bn.],  
 Denver, CO  
 Col. Mel Rosen, [2<sup>nd</sup> Bn.], Falls Church, VA

### 91<sup>st</sup> Coast Artillery Reg. (PS)—5

SP5 Gavino Cabanilla, [Btry. "C"]  
 SSgt. Juan Guzman, Seaside, CA  
 Frankie Ramirez, [Battery "A"], Killeen, TX  
 Msgr. Lauro Villagrancia, Lakewood, WA  
 LTG John M. Wright, Jr, Riverside, CA

### 92nd Coast Artillery Reg. (PS)—5

SFC Eduardo Abinsay, Pittsburg, CA  
 Lt. Jose Aquino, [Battery "G"], South San  
 Francisco, CA  
 Simplicio Babao, Jr., [Battery "D"], Davao  
 City, Philippines  
 CSMJ Ricardo Devilla, Lakewood, WA  
 Ambrosio Quevedo, Monterey, CA

### 63<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Master Co. (PS)—1 "New Scout" unit

Pvt. Tiwe Abrigo, Rancho Cordova, CA

### 76<sup>th</sup> Ordnance Ammunition Co. (PS)—1 "New Scout" unit

CWO4 Aniceto Bagley, Huntsville, AL

### 81<sup>st</sup> Harbor Craft Co., Transportation Corps (PS)—1 "New Scout" unit

Dr. Dionisio Torcuator Tonel, Elk Grove, CA

### Unidentified Units—14

Desiderio Abreo, Pittsburg, CA  
 PFC Tiwe Abrigo, Rancho Cordova, CA,  
 Infantry (**New Scout**)  
 Nick Casabuena, Sacramento, CA  
 MSgt. Rafael G. Escanilla, Sacramento, CA  
 Joe Estero, (**New Scout**), Makati, Philippines  
 Manuel Gavino, Pittsburg, CA  
 Hendriclaro Macavinta, (**New Scout**), Makati,  
 Philippines  
 Zosimo Macavinta, (**New Scout**), Makati,  
 Philippines  
 Simplicio Ochoa, FA, Los Angeles, CA  
 Leonardo Pena, Pittsburg, CA  
 Jaime Quevedo, Rancho Cordova, CA  
 Alfredo Quijano  
 Joe Rueles, Pittsburg, CA  
 Emilio T. Terencio, (**New Scout**), Makati,  
 Philippines  
 Benjamin Tubig, San Antonio, TX

*We would welcome additions and corrections  
 to this list of surviving Philippine Scouts.*

*Editor*

# Philippine Scouts Heritage Society

*(Preserving the History & Legacy of the Philippine Scouts)*

**Capt. Jose C. Calugas, Sr. Chapter**

2907 Narrows Place

Tacoma, WA 98407

## ***23rd National Annual Reunion – May 18 - May 19, 2007***

Dear Sir/Madam:

The Philippine Scouts Heritage Society will have their 23rd Annual National Reunion and membership meeting on May 18 through May 19, 2007, at the La Quinta Inn & Suites, 1425 East 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Tacoma, WA 98421.

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**Philippine Scouts Heritage Society**

23rd National Annual Reunion

**May 18 - 19, 2007**

**Tacoma, Washington**

**REGISTRATION FORM**

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- NOTES:**
1. Upon receipt of your payment, your registration will be confirmed.
  2. **R.S.V.P. and payment must be received NO LATER THAN April 20, 2007**
  3. Groups / Party of 5 or 10, please list the names on the reverse side of the paper so we may arrange your sitting accordingly.

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# Philippine Scouts Heritage Society



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*The Museum is the official repository  
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Christa M. Houlahan  
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***Please contact us if you have questions or would like to become  
involved with the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society!***