

Philippine Scouts Heritage Society



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



Summer/Fall 2003

Annual Meeting And Reunion Attracts Over 200

Again the hard work and dedication of the Golden Gate Bay Area Chapter members and spouses made the 19th Philippine Scouts Heritage Society annual meeting and reunion commemorating the 61st anniversaries of the fall of Bataan and Corregidor a memorable event. More than 200 of our members and friends gathered at the Radisson Villa Hotel in San Mateo to pay tribute to the brave resistance of the Scouts and enjoy the good fellowship of the event.

Prior to the formal start of the reunion, a group of PSHS members enjoyed a day-long excursion to the Napa Valley, the highlight of which

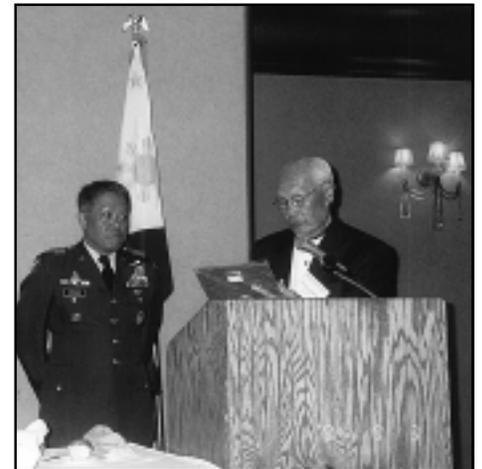
was a VIP tour of the Robert Mondavi Winery arranged by Society President Larry Pangan.

The Saturday afternoon business portion of the reunion featured presentations by National President Pangan and Golden Gate Bay Area Chapter President Delfin Pahed. In the PSHS election, all national leaders up for re-election were returned to office.

The meeting agreed to fund a plaque honoring the Philippine Scouts to be placed on the Admiral Nimitz Museum's Wall of Remembrance.

The Museum, also known as the National Museum of the Pacific War,

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Lieutenant General Edward Soriano, the highest ranking Filipino American in the U.S. military, was the keynote speaker.

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The Philippine Scouts In Bataan Their Finest Hour

by J. Michael Houlahan

The heroic role played by the Philippine Scouts (PS) in the defense of Bataan is one of the best kept secrets of World War II. In fact, the most decorated U.S. Army units in the early days of the war were composed of Filipinos.

While the commissioned officers of the Scouts included a number of native-born Americans, the noncommissioned officers and enlisted men were Pinoys. Well-trained and highly motivated, they played a dominant role in blunting the initial attacks of

over 43,000 fanatical Japanese, buoyed by an unbroken string of victories in China and South East Asia. This heroic stand began while opposing the Lingayen Gulf landings in mid-December 1941 and lasted beyond the surrender of the main body of Filipino and American forces on Bataan in early April 1942. Smaller groups of Scouts continued to resist the Japanese from Corregidor and the southern islands. Hundreds joined guerrilla groups following Lieutenant General Jonathan M. Wainwright's

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Editor's Comments

Over the last year the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society has raised its profile considerably. The single most important reason for this is our website at www.philippine-scouts.org established in July 2002. As I write this column, the site has received over 1,800 visitors and responded to more than 60 questions. You too can help with this process by checking the website "Exchanges" page, some of which is reproduced in this newsletter, and supplying any information you have on the questions posted there.

Considerable progress has been reported by **Cion Rael**, **Nora Warren**, **Evelyn Guiang**, **Remy Wilson**, **Ofelia Capuyan** and their committee working on soliciting financial and other support for the Philippine Scout Library and Archive. Several thousand dollars have been raised and a listing of Scout memorabilia available now or in the future has begun. There has been a show of interest in allocating space for the library in the Veterans Building in San Francisco.

Another worthwhile event which has raised our profile has been our recognition as a partner organization with the Library of Congress and the American Folklife Center in the Veterans History Project, which collects documents and records interviews with American veterans of

WWI, WWII, as well as the Korean, Vietnam and Persian Gulf Wars. **Cion Rael** is our liaison representative in this endeavor. She is assisted by several other second and third generation members of the PSHS. As part of this effort, the group is drawing up a potential interview list of surviving Scouts. **Sen. John Patterson's** recorded interview with **Brig. Gen. Royal Reynolds, Jr.** and **Col. Mel Rosen** are the first interviews of former Scouts offered to this project. You can help by providing the group with the names and contact information on surviving Scouts who might be available for interviewing. It would also be useful to know their Scout units and their dates of service.

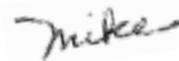
A huge vote of thanks goes to Reunion/Annual Meeting General Chairman and National President **Larry Pangan**, his **reunion committee**, GGBA Chapter President **Del Pahed** and Past National President **Joe Aquino**, each of whom played an important role in the success of this event. Particularly important were the sale of advertising which financed the printed program, and the sale of over 200 tickets to the dinner dance which was the closing event of the weekend. Most of this work was done by **second and third generation members** of the PSHS, who solicited donations of

food, decorations and prizes for the raffle tickets and generally provided the willing hands which put this major event together. Furthermore, the Sampaguita Dance Group, an excellent Filipino folk dance troupe from San Francisco State University, was arranged pro-bono by **Evelyn Guiang**, GGBA chapter member, whose godson performs with the group.

Fort Sam Houston Museum Director **John Manguso** has been unswerving in his support for the Society, preparing Scout exhibits for the Fort Lewis Military Museum and the Fort Lee POW/MIA recognition ceremony scheduled for this fall. (See information on accessing the new Fort Sam website elsewhere in this issue.)

Thanks also to webmaster **Christa Houlahan** whose many hours of work constructing and maintaining our website have done so much to raise the level of public awareness of the Philippine Scout legacy.

Finally, congratulations to recently-elected Chairman of the Veterans War Memorial Commission in San Francisco, PSHS President Emeritus **Joe Aquino** and **Cion Rael**, President-elect of the GGBA Chapter.



Mike Houlahan
Public Relations Officer

Website News

It has been about a year since our Philippine Scouts Heritage Society website was launched and the response has been gratifying, with the number of visitors growing every month and totaling over 1,700.

Our site now includes two new features to promote further the exchange of information about the Scouts: a guest book where visitors

can "sign" their names, provide their contact information or leave comments, suggestions and ideas; and a message board where visitors can read and post their views on various discussions relating to the Scouts. You are invited to visit the website at www.philippine-scouts.org and share your own thoughts.

We continue to welcome queries

concerning former Scouts or answers to questions posted on the "Exchanges" page. We also will consider appropriate and original short articles or vignettes for posting on our website or including in our newsletter.

Thank you for your support!

Christa Houlahan
Webmaster

Reunion: from Front Page

has a large and impressive collection of over 1,000 artifacts as well as a series of dioramas on World War II in the Pacific. The museum also conducts dramatic living history programs, academic symposia and other special events. Located in Fredericksburg, Texas, it is the only museum in the nation devoted solely to the Pacific Theater of World War II.

During the committee reports, Cion Rael discussed progress made towards establishing a Philippine Scouts library/archive in San Francisco. In addition, our partnership with the Library of Congress in support of the Veterans History project was discussed. Society members will be interviewing veterans concerning their World War II experiences. The possibility of organizing a retracing of the Bataan Death March is under consideration, as is a visit to the Fort Sam Houston Museum, the official USG repository for Philippine Scout memorabilia.

Overseas participation in the reunion included Waldette Cueto, Director/Curator of the American Historical Collection housed in the Rizal Library at Ateneo De Manila

University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Philippines. (For details on the American Historical Collection see separate article.)

A major feature during the weekend was the display of Bob Capistrano's impressive Philippine Scout insignia collection. A portion of Bob's colorful collection can be viewed on our website at www.philippine-scouts.org.

At the end of the business meeting a candlelight memorial service was conducted by Jesus Okialda.

The reunion dinner dance that evening attracted the largest crowd ever, with more than 200 members, relatives and friends attending. The highlight of the evening was the keynote address of Lieutenant General Edward Soriano, Commanding General of the U.S. Army's I Corps and of Fort Lewis, Washington. As a three-star general, Soriano is the highest ranking Filipino American in the U.S. military. He also is the son of the late Major Fred Soriano, a former Philippine Scout.

The evening's other speakers included National President Larry Pangan; Col. (Ret) John Olson, National Historian; and Senator John

Patterson, First Vice President. Ben Capuyan, Jr. was Master of Ceremonies and Col. (Ret) Melvin H. Rosen introduced the keynote speaker.

A plaque was presented to Cion Rael for her hard work in typesetting the souvenir program, thereby saving the PSHS \$1,000 in printing costs. Appreciation awards also were presented to Cion Rael, Mildred Tango, Nilda Malvar, Evelyn Guiang and Remy Wilson for spearheading last November's very successful fund raising event for the PSHS library project. The group is planning a Philippine Scouts Foundation dinner dance "Hawaiian style", scheduled for October 11 and intended to raise additional funds for the library.

The evening also included a lively Filipino Folk dance performance by the eight-member Sampaguita Dance Group of San Francisco State University. After this formal dance presentation, the dinner dance continued until early the next morning.

The Twentieth National Meeting and Reunion will convene at the Radisson Villa Hotel, San Mateo from May 6-8, 2004.

National President's Message



appreciation for the support and cooperation of the officers and mem-

As the General Chairman of the 19th annual national meeting and reunion, I want to express one more time my sincere thanks and grateful

bers of the Golden Gate Bay Area Chapter. I am especially proud of the unstinting efforts put in by our second and third generation family members in whose able and dedicated hands the future of our Society rests.

Those of you who did not attend the reunion missed a memorable event. Lt. General Edward Soriano, Commander of I Corps and Fort Lewis, was our keynote speaker. This was particularly appropriate, as he not only is the highest ranking Filipino-American in the U.S. military, but also the son of Major Fred D. Soriano, for-

merly of the 57th Infantry Regiment (PS).

I look forward to working with all of you to continue to recruit new members and raise public awareness of the proud legacy of the Philippine Scouts, truly one of the legendary fighting forces in American military history.

My best to all,

Larry L. Pangan
National President

Bataan: from Front Page

surrender of his Philippine command one month after the fall of Bataan.

During the defense of Bataan, three Scouts earned Medals of Honor, America's highest award for combat valor. Sergeant Jose Calugas, Sr. became the first Filipino ever to earn a Medal of Honor. First Lieutenant Alexander Ramsey Nininger, an officer of the 57th Infantry (PS), became the first member of his West Point class to die in combat and the first Medal of Honor recipient during World War II. First Lieutenant Willibald C. Bianchi of the 45th Infantry (PS) was the final Scout to earn a Medal of Honor. Of the three, only Sergeant Calugas would survive the war. Many Distinguished Service Crosses, Silver Stars and Purple Hearts also were earned by Scouts.

Scout heroics included the last cavalry charge of the United States Army. A 26th Cavalry (PS) platoon commanded by Second Lieutenant Edwin Ramsey unexpectedly encountered the advance guard of a large Japanese infantry force at Morong on the Bataan Peninsula. Deciding his best hope was an immediate attack,

Ramsey launched a wild cavalry charge, scattering the dumfounded Japanese. A few weeks later the 26th Cavalry would be forced to eat their horses to stave off starvation. Ramsey escaped Bataan and gained fame leading a large guerrilla force against the Japanese.

Scout Origins

Organized in 1901 and recruited from the indigenous population, the Philippine Scouts initially were used to suppress Muslim Moro rebels in the southern islands and garrison the Philippines when most U.S. troops were diverted to Europe during World War I. In gratitude, the U.S. Congress authorized induction of 6,000 Scouts into the regular U. S. Army.

A common misperception is that the Philippine Scouts are descended from the Macabebe Scouts, who gained notoriety by serving first the Spanish, then the Americans during the suppression of the Philippine independence movement. The Macabebe's are also resented for playing a key role in the capture by subterfuge of General Emilio Aguinaldo, leader of the

Filipino independence forces. The Philippine Scouts and the Macabebe Scouts were formed almost simultaneously, but separately.

In 1935, when the Commonwealth Government of the Philippines was established, the Scouts played a major role in training recruits and

furnished many of the most able Filipino officers in the newly-authorized Philippine Army.

Defensive Preparations

Unfortunately the Philippine Army was far from completely trained and deployed when the Japanese attacked in December 1941. Furthermore, much needed supplies and reinforcements were still months from delivery. One of the very few bright spots in this gloomy scenario was the well-trained Philippine Scouts, who had almost doubled in manpower in the year prior to the war, now numbering nearly 12,000 officers and men.

The 120,000 man Philippine Army consisted mainly of reservists whose mobilization took place over a three-month period up to the outbreak of hostilities. Mostly under-trained and poorly-equipped, their fighting ability was suspect. Many of the conscripts went into combat never having fired their weapon. Furthermore, many spoke no Tagalog, the language of most of their Filipino officers. The results were sadly predictable when these raw recruits were thrown into battle against better-trained and equipped Japanese. General MacArthur's prospects were further compromised by detailed intelligence on Fil-Am defenses supplied by spies hidden among the 30,000 Japanese living in the Philippines.

War Plan Orange

During the early days of the Japanese onslaught, most of the elite troops of the Philippine Division were held in reserve while the Philippine Army units were being mauled on the invasion beaches. On Christmas day, it became clear to MacArthur that allied beach defenses were unable to hold, and he fell back on War Plan Orange.

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Fierce Filipino Forces: The Japanese high command thought the Philippines could be captured in less than two months. The battle stretched to half a year because of the valiant defense of the Philippine Scouts.

Bataan: from Page 4

War Plan Orange required Fil-Am forces to retreat to Bataan and Corregidor, then withstand a lengthy siege. A six-month stockpile of food, ammunition and other necessities would tide over garrisons of 40,000 and 10,000 until the American Pacific Fleet could mount a rescue. (After the near total destruction of the U.S. Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, realists in Washington knew that the garrison might have to hold out as long as two or three years.) War Plan Orange planned for a garrison of 50,000. As the siege began, more than 90,000 Fil-Am troops and 26,000 civilians were trapped on Bataan and Corregidor.

General MacArthur viewed War Plan Orange as defeatist. Because of this he successfully pressured the War Department to approve Rainbow 5, a plan based on defending the beaches. Developed in partnership with the British, this plan theoretically would have allowed MacArthur to defend all of the Philippines and to blockade the South China Sea. Such an action would thwart Japanese plans to expand their empire to include the Malay Peninsula (now Singapore and Malaysia) and the Netherlands Indies (now Indonesia.) According to some historians, this sealed the fate of the Philippines, which Japan had planned to bypass in their conquest aimed at seizing South East Asian oil fields and rubber plantations. Unfortunately, there was neither the time nor the will for the massive buildup needed to implement Rainbow 5.

War Plan Orange had been compromised by MacArthur's forward placement of supplies in support of his misguided beach defense strategy. Most of these stockpiles were either destroyed by the retreating Fil-Am troops or captured by the Japanese, so the ammunition, food and medicine needed to withstand a lengthy siege of Bataan and Corregidor were not

available. Almost immediately the Fil-Am defenders were placed on half rations, which eventually were reduced even further. As a result, the surrendered troops were malnourished and ill, which contributed to the high mortality rate on the Bataan Death March and in the prison camps.

When MacArthur reverted to War Plan Orange, it fell to the 26th Cavalry (PS) to shore up Philippine Army units attempting to delay the Japanese long enough to allow the bulk of MacArthur's command to withdraw from Manila, now declared an "open city." This maneuver was made more difficult for two reasons. First, most of the Fil-Am troops were forced to travel by land, thereby requiring them to move north from Manila towards the invading Japanese closing in from the Lingayen Gulf landings, then swing west skirting the impenetrable Candaba Swamp to prepared defensive positions on Bataan Peninsula. Secondly, this maneuver had been part of the West Point curriculum for more than 30 years, including periods when Japanese officers had studied at the Military Academy, so the Japanese high command knew what to expect.

Despite these obstacles, in a series of courageous, hard-fought rear guard actions spearheaded by the 26th Cavalry, the Japanese were slowed sufficiently to allow the main body of MacArthur's troops to withdraw to



Armed with Courage: The well-trained Philippine Scouts courageously defended the Philippines when Japanese troops attacked in 1941. The Scouts' courage made up for the lack of supplies and reinforcements.

Bataan. The week's delay in the Japanese advance was adequate for the troops, but not nearly enough to relocate supplies from the exposed caches. Casualties during the 26th Cavalry's heroic series of rearguard actions reduced the unit by a quarter to under 650 Scouts.

Bataan

Shortly after the reversion to War Plan Orange, in late December 1941, major Scout elements of the Philippine Division were moved to the Abucay line, the first row of defensive positions on the Bataan Peninsula. By January 9, all Fil-Am units were successfully repositioned on Bataan. The withdrawal had been costly, with the Fil-Am forces fighting the delaying action reduced to 30,000 men from an initial strength of 43,000. However, most of this reduction in force was due to desertions by inexperienced Filipino reservists. The Japanese lost around 4,500 men, more than half due to illness.

After some initial probing by both

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Bataan: from Page 5

sides, the battle for Bataan began in earnest when the Japanese launched a major assault on January 11. Fortunately, the Japanese high command assumed that MacArthur's troops were in a state of near collapse and that their 50-day timetable for seizing the Philippines was on schedule. As a result, they ordered General Homma, commander of the Japanese invasion force, to release his 48th Division and the 5th Air Group for use in the upcoming Java campaign. These two seasoned units were Homma's best fighting assets. Largely made up of Formosans, the 48th had been a particularly nasty foe with a reputation for abusing prisoners and civilians. "Mopping up" on Bataan was now assigned to the Japanese 16th Division, which did not have a good combat record, and the newly arrived 65th Brigade. The 6,500 soldiers of the 65th Brigade were mostly conscripts intended for garrison duty, not a first rate fighting force.

Heroic Stand

Due mainly to the heroics of Scouts units, Fil-Am forces were able to hold the Abucay line just over two weeks,

then retreated to their main defensive position, the Orion-Bagac Line, about half way down the peninsula. Here they fought the Japanese to a standstill, repulsing several attempted amphibious end runs and some temporary Japanese penetrations of the main defensive line. In late February the Japanese pulled back. They had absorbed 7,000 combat casualties and had between 10,000 and 12,000 troops incapacitated by disease. During his post-war trial for war crimes, General Homma testified that, by the end of February, his army had ceased to be an effective fighting force and that a Fil-Am counteroffensive would have overrun his forces and retaken Manila.

However, depleted by combat casualties, starvation and disease, MacArthur's forces did not attempt a breakout. The pause in heavy combat was a prelude to the end for the Fil-Am defensive effort. Re-supplied with fresh troops, Homma launched a Good Friday offensive on April 3, which broke through the final Fil-Am defenses forcing an unconditional surrender of all the units on Bataan on April 9. Corregidor was to suffer the same fate on May 5.

The aftermath of the surrender was horrific. Of the 75,000 Fil-Am soldiers captured on Bataan, only 63,000 arrived alive at Camp O'Donnell following the Bataan Death March. Some of the 12,000 who were unaccounted for, escaped. However, many thousands died on the way, succumbing to thirst, starvation, disease and Japanese brutality. In camp O'Donnell itself, approximately 26,000 Filipinos and 1,565 Americans died. Included among the Filipino victims were 2,600 Scouts. Between combat, the Bataan Death March and prison camp, approximately half the 12,000 Scouts did not survive the war. The fifty-day conquest of the Philippines predicted by the Japanese high command had taken six months. The valiant stand of the Philippine Scouts had bought enough time to save Australia and New Zealand from invasion. These two countries would then become the staging point from which General Douglas MacArthur would launch his island-hopping campaign leading to his wading ashore on a Leyte invasion beach in mid-October 1944, thereby making good on his famous "I shall return" promise. The Japanese unconditional surrender on August 15, 1945 ended World War II. The United States quickly moved to fulfill its pre-war promise, granting independence to the Philippines on July 4, 1946. These two events marked the beginning of the end for the Philippine Scouts. Many of the veteran Scouts became naturalized Americans and transferred to non-Scout units. By early 1950 only a few hundred unabsorbed pre-war Scouts remained. A proud tradition of loyalty and combat heroism in the service of the United States had ended, made obsolete by the demise of the colonial relationship and the achievement of full independence for the Philippines.

*J. Michael Houlahan is a retired Foreign Service Officer, who served as Cultural Affairs Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Manila from 1989 to 1992. This article is republished with permission from the October 2002 issue of **Filipinas** magazine.*



Many of the Philippine Scouts joined guerrilla units to harass the Japanese following the Fil-Am surrender.

Books About The Philippine Scouts

Below is a list of books written by and about the Philippine Scouts or events in which they participated. These can be purchased directly from either the author or the Society. Check our website for other books on the Scouts and WWII in the Philippines.

The Philippine Scouts

edited by Col. John E. Olson.

This large volume published by the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society may be purchased for \$28, including postage, by sending a check or money order made out to the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society to:

Larry L. Pangan
2233 Fox Glen Drive
Fairfield, CA 94533

Anywhere-Anytime

by Col. John E. Olson.

This history of the 57th Infantry (PS) contains maps, rosters and photos. You may purchase it for \$17 including postage.

O'Donnell, Andersonville of the Pacific

by Col. John E. Olson.

This book provides detailed documentation of the Japanese POW camp in which thousands of Filipinos, including over 2,600 Philippine Scouts, and hundreds of Americans died of disease, malnutrition and savage abuse in less than six months. The author was personnel officer of the American POWs at Camp

O'Donnell. The cost of \$14 includes postage.

The Guerrilla and the Hostage

by Col. John E. Olson.

This is a novel about two brothers—a Philippine Scout Officer and an Air Force pilot—who served on Bataan and their adventures during and after the collapse of the Fil-Am defenses. The cost is \$17 and includes postage.

To order any or all of these informative books, please send a check or money order made out to the author:

John E. Olson
The Towers, #510 Parklane
San Antonio, TX 78209

An Open Letter To The Membership

June 19, 2003

Dear Fellow PSHS Members:

Congratulations to President-elect Cion Rael and the other members of her team taking office today in our largest and most active chapter. Your election is a milestone in the inevitable and important passing of responsibility from one generation to the next in the Philippine Scout family.

As second and third generation activists you have begun to leave your mark through the Library Project initiative and the Veterans History Project partnership with the Library of Congress. By accepting leadership positions, you remind us all of the important roles played by the successor generations of Scout relatives and friends in preserving and advancing the aims of our Society.

You've accepted the responsibility of building on the solid foundation

established by past leadership at the chapter and national levels.

It is the fervent hope of all of the undersigned that the Golden Gate Bay Area Chapter will rally around your leadership and work harmoniously together towards the common goal of honoring the proud military heritage of the more than 12,000 Philippine Scouts who fought on Bataan and Corregidor.

Their military heroics are legendary. Their suffering on the Bataan Death March, at Camp O'Donnell and other POW compounds, their ordeal in the Japanese Hell Ships and slave labor camps must not be forgotten. Roughly half of these courageous men did not survive the war. Paying tribute to their bravery, integrity and sacrifice is what unites us and gives us purpose.

We stand behind you and behind President Larry Pangan as the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society proudly moves ahead in this new century.

Sincerely,

Brig. Gen. Royal Reynolds, Jr.,
President Emeritus and former Scout

Sen. John Patterson, First Vice President and family member of Medal of Honor (MOH) recipient 2nd Lt. Alexander R. Nininger, Jr.

Capt. Menandro Parazo, Second Vice President and former Scout

Col. Melvin H. Rosen, Special Advisor and former Scout

Col. John E. Olson, Historian and former Scout

Mike Houlahan, Public Relations Officer

Jose Calugas, Jr., family member of MOH recipient Sgt. Jose Calugas, Sr.

Sue Marti, family member of MOH recipient 1st Lt. Willibald C. Bianchi

Scout Information Exchange

The Scout Information Exchange is intended to improve communication within the Society and between our members and others interested in the historical heritage of the Philippine Scouts. It functions as an information exchange, reporting on new articles, books and films on the Scouts, aiding historical researchers and soliciting additional information on individual Scouts and Scout units. Please contact us at info@philippine-scouts.org if you can supply information about any of the questions posted or if you have queries of your own.

We also are interested in photos and information on the military experiences of former Philippine Scouts, which will be added to our library archives. Short articles on the exploits of individual Scouts or Scout units may be printed in our newsletter or on our website. Material may be submitted by e-mail or through the postal service to Mike Houlahan, our Public Relations Officer and Newsletter Editor whose address appears on the final page of this newsletter.

Michael V "Buddy" Campbell

A Native American from Wolf Point, Montana, Buddy Campbell served with the 26th Cavalry Unit. He survived the Bataan Death March. On November 6, 1942 he was one of the 750 men that were loaded into the hold of a "Hell Ship". Fewer than half survived the twenty day trip to Yokohama. Buddy worked as a slave laborer for three and a half years, building dry docks, working in graphite mines, and loading ships and trains. He died in 1996. His nephew is looking for more information about his uncle and would appreciate hearing from anyone who remembers Buddy.

Gregorio Masangkay

The Masangkay family is trying to find information about their great grandfather Gregorio Masangkay or

Masangkay, who was a Philippine Scout and retired before WWII. He was re-activated at the start of the war and fought in Bataan or Corregidor. He died in Capas and his remains were never recovered.

Alfonso Vanderlipe

The relatives of former Philippine Scout Alfonso Vanderlipe are requesting information on him. He served in the Scouts during or just after WWII, including a tour on Okinawa. He passed away on May 7, 2003.

Pvt. Mariano Varron

The family requests information on their grandfather, Pvt. Mariano Varron, US Army, SA # 06739908, who served with the 92nd Coast Artillery Regiment CAC (PS). They also are interested in photos of his unit.

64th Military Police (PS)

SFC John M. Arceneaux of the 64th Military Police Company at Ft. Hood, Texas is researching his unit's history, which includes a tour in the Philippines. He is looking for any information on the 64th Military Police

Company (PS) from 1947-1949. He is especially interested in an incident at Lambe Barracks during that period.

26th Cavalry Regimental Colors

Malcolm Decker would appreciate information on the location of the Regimental Colors of the 26th Cavalry which survived WWII in the hands of the 155th Provisional Guerrilla Regiment USAFFE. The flag dropped out of sight after it was presented to General Oscar W. Griswold, Commander of the U.S. XIV Corps, Sixth Army in a formal ceremony at Concepcion, Tarlac, Luzon during the 1945 liberation of the Philippines.

Fort Sam Houston Museum

Further information is available on the Philippine Scouts at the Fort Sam Houston Museum website www.cs.amedd.army.mil/rIBC. The portion of this site devoted to the Scouts is available by clicking on "Did You Know?" The Museum, located on a U.S. Army base in San Antonio, Texas, is the official USG repository for Philippine Scout memorabilia.

While the PSHS is pleased to assist where possible in obtaining information on former and deceased Philippine Scouts, our archives are not extensive. More complete information often can be acquired through the Department of Veterans Affairs.

To obtain a request form, please call your County Veterans Service Office or the national VA at **(800) 827-1000** and ask for VA Form 180 (Request Pertaining to Military Records). This form is also available on the VA website www.va.gov.

You also may be able to get a copy of your relative's military records by writing to:

**National Personnel Records Center
9700 Page Road
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100**

Other information of possible interest includes:

Fact sheet for VA Benefits for Filipino Soldiers

<http://www.va.gov/pressrel/filipvet.htm>

Veterans Benefits and Services for New Philippine Scouts

<http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/foreign/scouts.htm>

Chapter News

Golden Gate-Bay Area Chapter:

The largest of our six chapters with over 300 members, the GGBA is led by Chapter President Del Pahed. The chapter organized the very successful Nineteenth National Reunion and sold over 200 tickets to the closing event, a dinner dance highlighted by the keynote address delivered by Lieutenant General Edward Soriano. Besides regular monthly chapter meetings, the GGBA held a Foundation Day ceremony in mid-April and has organized fund raising events chaired by Cion Rael in support of the PSHS Library Fund. Cion also acts as liaison with the Library of Congress and the American Folklore Center in support of the Veterans History Project, which records and preserves interviews with war veterans. The PSHS was recently designated an official partner of these two organizations in conducting these interviews. The chapter played an active role in the April 12 POW recognition ceremony at the Veterans Building in San Francisco. Chairman of this event was Joe Aquino, President Emeritus of the PSHS. On June 28 a swearing in ceremony for newly-elected officers will be held and Cion Rael will become Chapter President.

Capt. Jose Calugas, Sr. Chapter:

This newly-reactivated chapter, headquartered in Tacoma, Washington,

now has 24 members. The highlight of chapter activities was the Philippine Scout exhibit at the Fort Lewis Military Museum during Asian Pacific Islander week. The exhibit was the initiative of Joe Calugas, Jr., with the help of the Fort Lewis Military Museum curator Alan Archambault and Fort Sam Houston Museum curator John Manguso. Some of the memorabilia for the exhibit will go on permanent display there. Chapter members also participated in Memorial Day activities at Fort Lewis.

Monterey County Chapter: A six-member delegation led by Chapter President Greg Ramos attended the national reunion.

Lt. Alexander R. Nininger Chapter: Nothing was reported by this Santa Monica, California chapter.

LTC Lloyd E. Mills Chapter: Chapter President Alex Andres reports that members attended this year's Memorial Day ceremony and last year's Fourth of July flag raising in Palos Verdes, California.

Gen. John J. Pershing Chapter: The El Paso-based chapter, led by 2nd Vice President Menandro Parazo, represented the PSHS at an impressive series of events over the past year.

The highlight of these events was the ceremony in Las Cruces, New Mexico, honoring those who took part in the Bataan Death March. Chapter President Parazo was one of 38 survivors honored by preserving their footprints in concrete in front of the huge bronze Bataan Monument. The unveiling of the Bataan Monument, which took place in May of last year, also was attended by members of the chapter. Guest speakers for that major event included Philippine Ambassador to the United States Albert Del Rosario and Sen. Pete Dominici.

Other chapter appearances include the Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor national convention held at San Antonio, Texas; a state convention of the New Mexico Bataan survivors; the July 4th Independence Day celebration held at Fort Bliss; an awards dinner honoring members of the organizing committee of the Bataan Memorial Death March; the POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony at Ft. Bliss; the annual memorial ceremonies commemorating the 61st Anniversary of the Fall of Bataan held at Ft. Bliss; and the 61st anniversary remembrance in Las Cruces, New Mexico of the Bataan Death March.

Capt. Parazo's extensive public speaking schedule is detailed in the "Member Activities" portion of this newsletter.

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. Here are some recent examples of members' efforts to accomplish this goal.

On POW Recognition Day National President **Larry Pangan** was interviewed by ABS/CBN television for the

Manila-based network's national feed aimed at the Filipino-American market. President Pangan has been actively forging relations with the wider Filipino American community, representing the PSHS on at least fifteen different occasions at meetings of various Filipino American organizations in California.

National 1st Vice President **John**

Patterson also has been active, representing the Society at service clubs and as liaison with the West Point museum housing a book and memorabilia collection honoring his uncle, Philippine Scout Medal of Honor recipient Lt. Alexander Ramsey Nininger, Jr.

Patterson, a former Rhode Island

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State Senator, has succeeded in having a bill reintroduced in the Rhode Island Senate and House modeled after successful California legislation allowing legal action seeking compensation for unpaid wages and injuries caused by Japanese firms using POWs as slave labor.

In great demand on the speaking circuit, National Second Vice President **Menandro Parazo** was a guest speaker at the National Historical Society's annual conference held at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. He also spoke on WWII and his POW experience at a U.S. Special Forces Association luncheon, an American Former Prisoners of War El Paso chapter dinner, two high schools, an El Paso Texas historical marker dedication and the Fort Bliss Asian Pacific American Heritage observance. Capt. Parazo was interviewed on El Paso television and by the El Paso Times contrasting his experiences as a WWII POW with the POW situation in Iraq.

Joe Calugas and **John Manguso** collaborated on a Philippine Scouts exhibit shown at the Fort Lewis Military Museum in Tacoma, Washington. Manguso, Director/Curator of the Fort Sam Houston Museum, also is

putting together a Scout exhibit for an upcoming event at Fort Lee, Virginia.

One of our more active speakers has been **Col. Mel Rosen**, who has spoken on his Bataan Death March, POW camp and Hell Ship experiences at a wide variety of venues, including Georgetown University, George Washington University, George Mason University, Montgomery College (MD), three service clubs and three civic associations. He also will be the featured speaker at the Fort Lee, Virginia POW/MIA event this fall.

Also busy on the speaking circuit and representing the PSHS at various events is National Historian **Col. John Olson**. Most recently he attended Memorial Day ceremonies at the Admiral Nimitz Museum and helped negotiate the placement of commemorative plaques for the Scouts and for three Scout Medal of Honor recipients on the Wall of Remembrance at the museum. These plaques and two identical plaques will be dedicated in September. In addition, he has devoted extensive time to organizing the Fort Sam Houston Museum archives on the Philippine Scouts and collecting information on the history of the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society.

A six-person GGBA Chapter

delegation visited the Philippines in February, calling on the American Historical Collection curator **Waldette Cueto** and donating some books to the collection. The group, consisting of **Tessie Vasquez, Remy Wilson, Nilda Malvar, Evelyn Guiang, Cion Rael** and **Mildred Tango**, also toured Corregidor and were approached about the possibility of donating Scout memorabilia or artifacts from the 91st and 92nd Coast Artillery Regiments (PS) to the Corregidor Museum.

Retired **Brig. General Michael Peters** attended the reunion and joined the PSHS as a life member. He is the son of the late **Captain Joseph Peters** of the 12th Medical Regiment (PS).

Since the first of the year, Newsletter Editor **Mike Houlahan** has published four articles and two book reviews on World War II in the Philippines. Condensed versions of the reviews are printed elsewhere in this issue. One of the articles, "Reflections on Patriotism and Collaboration: The Philippines in WWII" was based on interviews with the book authors, former Philippine Scout officers **Bob Lapham** and **Ed Ramsey**. The piece was published in the January-March 2003 issue of the *Bulletin of the American Historical Collection*.

The American Historical Collection

Established in 1950, the American Historical Collection consists of some 13,000 books, 16,000 photographs, and other materials concerning the American colonial experience in the Philippines and the post-colonial relationship of the two countries. With the possible exception of the Library of Congress, it is the largest and most complete collection in the world. The collection resides in the Rizal Library at Ateneo de Manila University in Loyola Heights, Quezon City in the

Philippines. The collection is open to the public weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday mornings. A small fee is charged for access and reproduction of photos and documents.

To contact the collection staff:
 phone: (63-2) 426-6001, ext. 5817
 fax: (63-2) 426-5691
 email: amhistco@admu.edu.ph
<http://rizal.lib.admu.edu.ph/ahc>

The *Bulletin of the American Historical Collection* is a non-profit

quarterly dedicated to recording the historical record of Filipino-American relations during the colonial period and beyond. It frequently contains articles on WWII in the Philippines. Individual copies (\$8.75) or subscriptions (\$35) are available through:
 Book Bin Pacifica
 2285 S.W. Third Street
 Corvallis, OR 97333
 phone: (541) 752-0045
 email: pacifica@bookbin.com

Book Reviews

The following are shortened versions of book reviews that were printed in the Jan.-March issue of the Bulletin of the American History Collection, published by Ateneo de Manila. These reviews were abbreviated by the newsletter editor.

Lieutenant Ramsey's War: From Horse Soldier to Guerrilla Commander

By Edwin Price Ramsey and Stephen J. Rivele. Washington-London: Brassey's. 1996. \$17.95 paperback.

Written by cavalry officer-turned guerrilla leader Ed Ramsey with the help of author and screenwriter Stephen Rivele, this is a riveting tale of danger and daring do during World War II in the Philippines. Ramsey, an American platoon leader in the elite 26th Cavalry Regiment of the Philippine Scouts, led the last mounted charge of a U.S. cavalry unit in combat. Later he and his comrades were forced to eat their horses to stave off starvation. Following the surrender of the Filipino-American forces on Bataan, Ramsey slipped away, eluding capture and eventually joining a guerrilla network organized by several higher ranking American officers.

As the Japanese occupation of the Philippines wore on, the higher ranking officers were killed in combat or captured, tortured and executed by the Japanese. Ramsey found himself commanding the second largest guerrilla army in Luzon, the most important of the Philippine islands.

During his more than three years as a guerrilla leader, Ramsey had a number of close calls both with the Japanese and with the Hukbalahap. The Huks, a communist-led guerrilla force, and the American-led guerrilla groups spent as much time fighting

each other as they did the Japanese.

Ramsey also suffered from jaundice, malnutrition and dysentery, and then nearly died of acute appendicitis. Crude field surgery, performed with only a bottle of rum as anesthetic, saved his life.

Ed Ramsey was one of the few American guerrilla leaders in Luzon to survive more than three years of Japanese occupation. He and several other American guerrilla survivors—including Bob Lapham, whose book is reviewed below—were personally awarded the Distinguished Service Cross by General MacArthur after the liberation of the Philippines.

The book is an excellent read and is under consideration for adaptation as a movie script.

Lapham's Raiders: Guerrillas in the Philippines 1942-1945

By Robert Lapham and Bernard Norling. The University Press of Kentucky. 1996. \$29.95.

Bob Lapham, assisted by Bernard Norling, professor emeritus of history at the University of Notre Dame, has written not only a very readable book on his experiences as a guerrilla leader, but also a book of considerable use to scholars. As an assist to the more serious student of World War II in the Philippines, this 292 page hardcover book contains an index, a bibliography and 31 pages of endnotes.

Lt. Bob Lapham was a junior officer in the 45th Infantry (Philippine Scouts). The Philippine Scouts were an elite force made up of mostly American officers and entirely Filipino non-commissioned officers and enlisted men. Organized at the turn of the century to assist in the pacification of Mindanao as the United States solidified its colonial hold on the Philippine

archipelago, the Scouts had been a part of the regular U.S. army since shortly after World War I.

As it became obvious that the defense of Bataan and Corregidor were doomed, a small group of American officers, including Bob Lapham, was told to escape from Bataan and conduct guerrilla operations. Successfully working his way through Japanese lines, Lapham organized a guerrilla army, eventually bringing 13,000 men under his command and controlling a large part of three provinces in the central plain of Luzon, just north and west of the area controlled by Ramsey's guerrillas. Lapham, too, was forced to fight both the Japanese and the Huks. At the end of the war, he was credited by many with running the most efficient of the several large guerrilla forces on Luzon.

One of the attractions of this book is its broader scope. It discusses the history of the Philippines, the conduct of the war in the Pacific theater and the impact of the Japanese occupation both during the war and afterwards. It outlines the flawed defense of the Philippines, in part due to overconfidence in the superiority of American equipment and fighting ability compared to the Japanese. It also highlights errors in the defensive strategy employed by General Douglas MacArthur, as well as the inadequacy of training and equipment for Philippine army officers and men, and the lack of adequate support from Washington as it became obvious war was inevitable. The book's comments on collaboration and post-war Filipino politics are particularly insightful. As a result, this is a far more thoughtful study on guerrilla warfare and the sociology of wartime occupation than is at all usual in this genre.

PSHS Members Invited To Dedication Ceremony

Twin plaques honoring the Philippine Scouts and the three Scout Medal of Honor recipients will be dedicated on Friday, September 26 at 2:00 p.m. at the Admiral Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas and on Saturday, September 27 at 10:00 a.m. at the Fort Sam Houston Museum in San Antonio, Texas. Tours of both museums have been arranged following the ceremonies.* On Friday night an informal dinner gathering will be held at a San Antonio restaurant for anyone wishing to participate.

The Admiral Nimitz Museum, also known as the National Museum of the Pacific War, will mount the two plaques side by side on their Wall of Remembrance. The ceremony will include a color guard, a bugler, and several short speeches. Details of the Fort Sam Houston Museum presentation are being finalized.

All PSHS members and friends are invited to attend this mini-reunion and dedication. Those joining the celebration will headquarter in San Antonio. Fredericksburg is about an

hour's drive away. Although the planning for this event is just beginning, a group is being organized from the Golden Gate Bay Area Chapter and individuals or small groups have indicated they plan to come from Rhode Island, Ohio, Iowa and Washington. It's hoped other chapters will be able to participate. If you intend to join us for these two important events, please inform PRO Mike Houlahan.

* There is a charge for the Nimitz tour of \$5 per person for groups under 20 and \$3 for larger groups.

Plaques Will Honor Philippine Scouts

The two plaques mentioned above that will be dedicated on September 26 and 27 will recognize the Philippine Scouts as a group, as well as the three individual Scouts who received the Medal of Honor. The text will read as follows:

THE PHILIPPINE SCOUTS

In grateful memory of the more than 12,000 gallant officers and men of the U.S. Army's Philippine Scouts, half of whom died in combat or during the Bataan Death March or in Japanese prison camps. Scouts were awarded 3 Congressional Medals of Honor, 34 Distinguished Service Crosses, 134 Silver Stars and 31 Bronze Stars for combat bravery from December 1941 to May 1942.

Philippine Scouts Heritage Society 7/4/2003

Philippine Scout Medal of Honor Recipients Bataan, Philippines—World War II

First Lieutenant Willibald C. Bianchi
Sergeant Jose Calugas, Sr.
Second Lieutenant Alexander Ramsey Nininger, Jr.

“All the men in every nameless fight
Since man first strove with man to prove his worth
Shall greet the tired Scouts as is their right—
No finer soldiers ever walked the earth.”

(Stanza from poem by 1st Lt. Henry Lee, PS)
Dedicated July 4, 2003

Donations & Advertising To Fund Newsletter

The Philippine Scouts Heritage Society Executive Committee would greatly appreciate donations to help underwrite our Society's newsletter, which is printed at a loss. The newsletter fund already has received generous donations of \$100 apiece from Sen. John Patterson and Col. Mel Rosen. An annual subscription to the newsletter may be obtained by non-members for \$4.00. Donation and subscription checks should be made out to the "Philippine Scouts Heritage Society" and mailed to:

J. M. Houlahan
Editor, PSHS Newsletter
6774 Lakeside Circle West
Worthington, OH 43085

Beginning with the next issue, we will sell a limited amount of advertising space in the newsletter. The rates will be as follows:

Full page: \$100
Half page: \$50
Quarter page: \$30
Business card: \$15

Circulation figures available upon request. For advertising placement or additional information, please contact newsletter editor Mike Houlahan through our website or at the address listed on the final page of the newsletter.

Post Everlasting

It is with a great deal of sadness that we report the passing of the following members, all but one of whom are former Philippine Scouts:

Tim Aquino, San Jose, is survived by his wife Catalina and children.

Rodrigo Bolfango, 92nd Coast Artillery, fought on Corregidor and is survived by his wife, Bettylee, and children.

Henry J. Farr, was in the U.S. Army, but not as a Scout. He was captured on Corregidor and spent several years as a POW in Japan. He is survived by his wife Aiko, living in University Place, Washington, as well as by one son and three daughters, two from an earlier marriage.

Lt. Oscar Hernandez fought with the 45th Infantry (PS), survived the Bataan Death March and also fought

in the Korean War. His wife, Cristina of San Bruno, California, and four daughters survive him.

Major Rosendo Sorilla served in the 45th Infantry (PS) and survived the Bataan Death March. His wife, Marcela, is in San Diego, California.

Cecil Velesquaz was a Bataan Death March survivor. His wife, Martina, lives in Oakley, California.

Information On Former Scout Requested

The son of Amado Politano(aka. Adam Polite) would like information on his father's military service during WWII, probably with the 14th Engineer Battalion (PS). This unit spent six months prior to the war constructing defenses on Bataan, then fought as combat engineers and infantrymen until the surrender of Bataan five months after the Japanese invasion.

The father, a survivor of the Bataan Death March, immigrated to the U.S. following the war. Initially he worked digging graves for Korean KIA's at the national cemetery in San Francisco, then spent 17 years in the Corp of engineers.

If you have any information relating to Amado Politano, please contact Mike Houlahan, our Public Relations

Officer and Newsletter Editor whose address appears on the final page of this newsletter.

You may also contact the Philippine Scouts Heritage Society anytime at info@philippine-scouts.org if you have other information you believe may be helpful or interesting, or if you have questions of your own.

We hope to hear from you!

Philippine Scouts Heritage Society



J. Michael Houlahan
Public Relations Officer
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**If you would like to contact us
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**You can access past issues of
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**Please contact us if you
have questions or would
like to become involved
with the Philippine Scouts
Heritage Society!**