



POWs gather for Lunch at Bunny's: USS Bataan Captain Vassilakes and Crewmembers Greet the Men in Suffolk

Pictured front: (L-R) Jim Collier, Marvin Roslansky, Earl Szwabo, Erwin Johnson, Philip Coon, Back Row (L-R) Harold Bergbower, Jim Martin, William Eldridge, Robert Heer, Ralph Griffith, Randall Edwards and host William Blair (not pictured is Nick Hionedes who attended convention)

"I can't tell you how good it feels to have this place packed again with these amazing heroes." William (Bill) Blair told the Virginian-Pilot.

William Blair, a construction company owner from Suffolk, has financed "Breakfast at Bunny's" for many years picking up the tab for WWII Pows from the Philippines and other veterans. At first he did so in secret, until his identity was revealed.

Mr. Blair has supported the ADBC for many years and was excited to hear that the

POWs would be coming to his area. As Mr. Blair and the ADBC Memorial Society made contact, he informed them he would once again cover the tab for these honored veterans at Bunny's.

Caroline Burkhart, descendant said, "On May 24th our POWs arrived at the restaurant to be greeted by a row of flags and veterans stationed at attention."

"Also in attendance were the captain of the USS Bataan, Captain Vassilakes, chaplains, and other personnel from the namesake ship that is stationed at the naval base in Norfolk." (continued on page 3)

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Deceased - continued

time at Spreckles Sugar Factory. Manuel then joined the 40th Tank Company of the 40th Infantry Division National Guard. His unit was activated and they trained at Fort Lewis, Washington. From there, they deployed to the Philippines. He survived the Bataan Death March, and went on to prison camp at O'Donnell and Cabanatuan. He kept a diary, and although the Japanese confiscated the first two, Nevarez was able to hide a final chapter of his handwritten account. After discharge he met Erma Navarro and they had four children. He worked as a mechanical engineer for Sea & Ski Corporation in the late 1950s. The company moved to Reno, Nevada and he settled in Sparks Nevada. He also worked for the Blood Services of Reno on weekends allowing his family to go on memorable vacations. He belonged to the Elks Lodge No. 597 for 47 years, and volunteered time to the Boy Scouts of America, the Sparks Little League, and to the Girl Scouts. He traveled after retiring visiting the Philippines, San Juan, Puerto Rico, New York, Florida, and Washington. He leaves behind his beloved wife of 63 years Erma Nevarez, of Sparks, NV; son Roberto Nevarez, of Roswell, NM; daughters Elizabeth (Nevarez) Wolfe, of Jerome, ID, Yvonne (Nevarez) Smith and Noreen (Nevarez) Hill, both of Sparks, NV. His last surviving sisters, Rosaline Romandia, of San Jose, CA, Frances Miller Myers, of Roseville, CA and Lovie Adamis, of Rocklin, CA. He also leaves behind his 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren that were very dear and close to his heart. Per his wishes there will be no immediate service and a memorial service will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers the family requests that a donation be made in his name to Veterans Guest House, 880 Locust Street, Reno, NV 89502.

Edwin Ramsey

Edwin Ramsey, 95, died March 7, 2013 in Westwood, California. Born May 9, 1917, in Illinois, Lt. Col. Ramsey, grew up in Kansas and graduated from Oklahoma Military Academy and went



on to the University of Oklahoma. He volunteered for the 26th Cavalry of the Philippine Scouts, after the Philippine invasion by the Japanese. He was ordered to the coastal village of Morong. With bodies laying almost prone across the horses', Lt. Col. Ramsey led the last mounted U.S Cavalry charge with pistols firing in to the air. As the food supply dwindled the horses had to be shot to feed the men. Ramsey mourned the loss of his horse while he recovered in the hospital. Returning to the war in a truck, he was soon cut off from his unit. He managed to escape and then rounded up a resistance guerrilla group of around 40,000 men. In the jungle, he had a Filipino doctor remove his appendix without anesthesia. They gathered intelligence and published a newspaper to dispel Japanese propaganda. In June 1945, MacArthur pinned the Distinguished Cross on Ramsey. Ramsey also received a Silver Star and Purple Heart. After the war he obtained a law degree from the University of Oklahoma. He worked for Hughes Aircraft in Japan and then later led his own companies in Taiwan and then the Philippines. After retirement, Ramsey moved to Los Angeles in 1979 and in 1991 started a new career as a public speaker after co-authoring a book with Stephen Rivele entitled Lieutenant Ramsey's War. He went to Congress to help the Filipino people get their wartime benefits. Lt. Ramsey married Madeleine Willoquet, and they had four children. They divorced in the late 1970s, and he married Raquel Ramirez. He is survived by his second wife, Raquel Ramirez; four children from his first marriage, Edwin Jr., Douglas, Michele and Janine; four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery on June 28, 2013.

Herman Edward Smith

Herman Edward Smith "Smitty", 92, died on December 22, 2012, at home, with his family at his side. He was born on April 18th, 1920, in Brookhaven, Mississippi to William and Florence Smith. He grew up and attended school in Wesson, Mississippi. In January 1940, he joined the US Marine Corps, and graduated from boot camp in San Diego, California. In May 1941, he joined Company F, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines, and

was sent to Shanghai China on the ship "Henderson". They were known as the "Old Shanghai Marines". When WWII began he was sent to defend the Philippines, and was captured on Corregidor May 5th, 1941, by the Japanese. He was a POW for 3 years and 8 months. He was forced to perform slave labor in Manila and the lead mines in Japan. He was a survivor of the "Hell ship, Nissyo Maru." For his service he received the Bronze Star, Philippine Defense Medal, and several other medals and ribbons. He is a member of the Frio Canyon Baptist Church. He became a Life member of the ADBC and American Ex-POW"; "Life member of the American Legion Post 489; also of the "Disabled American Veteran." He was a member of Ironworkers Local #66 where he worked for 27 years. Shortly after retiring, he and Betty moved to the family ranch in Leakey, TX. Herman was preceded in death by his parents, one sister, and four brothers. He is survived by Betty, his wife of 64 years; daughter, Linda Bourland and son-in-law, Will Bourland of Leakey, TX; two grandchildren, Amanda Gonzalez and husband Bert, Nicole Wooten and husband Jayme all of Leakey, TX; five great-grandchildren, Miranda Richter, Cody Wooten, Austin Gonzalez, Cassidy Wooten, Ainsley Gonzalez all of Leakey, TX; sister-in-law, Ann Shulze of Leakey, TX; special nephew, Steve Smith of Wesson, Mississippi; special nieces, Carol Ann Kolb and Evelyn Manning both of Leakey, and Lois King of Irving, TX.; and many more nieces; nephews, and cousins throughout Mississippi. Funeral services were held Friday, December 28, 2012, at the Frio Canyon Baptist Church in Leakey, Texas, with Pastor Mark Spaniel and Pastor Dan Wynn officiating. Interment followed in the Leakey Floral Cemetery with Military Honors by the U. S. Marines Corp and the Hill Country Honor Guard - VVA - Chapter 863.

Known Deaths

Lee Bennett

The Last Cavalry Charge

sent in by Chris Shafer

Philippine Islands, January 1942. In the mid-day heat on the West Coast of Bataan Peninsula, twenty-six Filipino horsemen picked their way along a narrow dirt road toward the coastal village of Morong. As the trees and brush subsided near the edge of town, their American commander, First Lieutenant Edwin Price Ramsey, ordered his men to “draw pistols” and form “as foragers”—a straight-across line of cavalymen with weapons at the ready. Ramsey’s senses were aroused by the lack of villagers to greet his men, and a few perceptible movements deep within the village.

Shots rang out! One of Ramsey’s soldiers snapped back in his saddle and clung desperately to his horse, severely wounded. Ramsey raised his pistol and yelled “Charge!”

The Filipinos spurred their horses forward and rode into the village firing from their saddles. As the galloping horses rounded corners of buildings near the town church the cavalymen confronted the advance guard of a Japanese infantry regiment that was about to occupy the town.

The startled Japanese, surprised and unprepared for this sudden onslaught of whooping, firing, mounted cavalymen, broke and ran.

Ramsey’s men pursued the Japanese to the Batalan River. As the Japanese soldiers scrambled into the water and hid along the riverbank, Japanese reinforcements poured out of the jungle across the river. The Filipinos jumped off their horses and formed a defense line along the riverbank. They held the Japanese back for five hours until their own reinforcements arrived to take over.

Barely a month after the Japanese attacked the Philippines, Lieutenant Edwin Ramsey and his men, all members of the U.S. 26th Cavalry, Philippine Scouts, had successfully conducted the last horse-mounted cavalry charge in United States military history.



However, the fight on Bataan ultimately proved to be hopeless as the Japanese Army and Navy surrounded and starved out the 80,000 Filipino and American defenders there. By April 1942 the men were emaciated and racked with malaria. On April 9, under pressure from an all-out Japanese assault, the commanding general of Bataan forces surrendered to the Japanese in order to save the lives of his sick and starving soldiers.

But Lieutenant Ramsey’s war was not over. Rather than surrender, Edwin Ramsey took off into the jungle, moved north onto Luzon island with a few other escaped American officers, and began to recruit Filipino guerrillas into an organization called the East Central Luzon Guerrilla Area. The Japanese launched numerous operations to capture and kill the guerrilla leaders, and Lieutenant Edwin Ramsey ultimately became commander of 40,000 guerrilla fighters as he was the last of those U.S. officers still alive—with the Japanese offering a large reward for his body, dead or alive.

In 1945, when General Douglas MacArthur returned to the Philippine Islands, Ramsey’s guerrilla forces were a significant factor and MacArthur personally awarded Edwin Ramsey the Distinguished Service Cross for his extraordinary leadership, the Silver Star for his heroism under fire, and the Purple Heart for his combat wounds. The exploits of Ramsey and his men have been recounted in two books and the documentary movie *Forgotten Soldiers*.

After World War II, Edwin Ramsey bore no grudges against the Japanese who had pursued and tried to kill him in the jungles of Luzon. He launched an outstanding career as an international businessman in Japan itself, then in Taiwan, and later as a private businessman in the Philippine Islands. He died in Los Angeles in March 2013 at age 95. On June 28, 2013, his body was laid to rest in Arlington National Cemetery, Washington D.C., with full military honors, including a beautiful riderless black horse to commemorate the hero who led the United States Army’s last cavalry charge.

(more on page 19)

Letter to Eleanor cont. from previous page

sipped on the canteen while we talked a little while, wondering just what part of the ocean our ship was in then. We talked of our families. Norm wished he had more insurance -- a wish that was uppermost in the minds of every man among us. We wondered what our chances would be, if any, should an American sub spot us --

The next morning, Eleanor, Norm was gone. He had slept away. It was a terrible shock to me, Eleanor, even after seeing so many cheerful men go to sleep and not wake up. Please believe this. None of us were tortured with hunger or thirst. We knew we needed more food and more water, but there was no intolerable yearning. A man slowly weakened. He slept more. Finally, he didn't wake up. That is the truth, Eleanor, so please don't think that Norm's death was an agonizing torture. He slept away -- the quietest passing that could be desired -- in the midst of friends.

Norm died at sea, Jan. 15, 1945, according to my note. I wrote down the date on a piece of paper from a cigarette package, discarded by a Japanese, and later in Japan transferred it to a memo book I wheedled out of a guard. He was buried at sea, after one of our chaplains held a brief service in the hold. Many men were dying then and the daily rate later climbed to about fifty.

Norm's possessions were pitifully few. A shirt, pair of trousers, a canteen, the bottom half of a mess kit, and his chop-sticks. That was all, I kept Norm's chopsticks for you, and everything else went to men who had nothing. He was bare-footed. I had been until a couple of days before when an officer loaned me his shoes because I was on my feet all the time. The next day, that officer was killed when we were bombed at Takao.

The whole trip was a nightmare to me, Eleanor, probably more so than other men because I was faced with such much frustration in trying to get what we needed from the Japs. How I survived, I don't know, but the day we got ashore at Moji, I weighed just 85 lbs. I attribute it in some way to my never having had a chance to wonder about my own condition. When I was awake, I was way-laying Japs and pleading with them for food and water.

I know I can't offer you comfort, Eleanor, but I do want to tell you about this. We knew our chances of survival were slim, and we talked about many things. On one point, we were all in complete agreement. All of us wanted our widows to marry again and regain happiness. And we promised that any survivors would make that wish known. I think it would comfort Norm. If there is anything I can do for you, please let me know.

Carl

The Last Cavalry Charge (cont. from page seventeen)



For additional information, photographs, or black and white photographs, contact:
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Credits:
Edwin Ramsey funeral at Arlington National Cemetery (credit required):

Photo by ©Paolo Cascio Photography 2013 (www.paolocascio.com)
The Last Cavalry Charge: Painting by John Solie, Riderless horse(-credit required): Photo by ©Paolo Cascio Photography 2013 (www.paolocascio.com).
Lt. Col. Ed Ramsey composite: Philip Garcia, Philippine Scouts Heritage Society.
Ed Ramsey portrait shot: from Forgotten Soldiers, Platinum Multimedia LLC.



Corrections in The Quan Summer Issue



In the Summer issue Judith Heisinger's daughter to the left was misidentified. The people in the picture are Lora Cummins, Judith Heisinger, and Jennifer Heisinger Flint.

The on-line version has been corrected. My apologies for the error.

Jane Kraina, editor