



From the Commander

The big news in this edition is we're sharing information about our April 2023 Reunion! You can now book your rooms at Embassy Suites by Hilton Sacramento, as well as send in your registration to CPOW (see page 4 for details). The program will be included in January's newsletter, and we'll have many interesting speakers and the opportunity to reconnect with, and commemorate, those that were interned in the Philippines.

We also have an announcement about a CPOW membership directory. If you're interested in participating in the upcoming directory, we explain how to do so. This will be a members-only, hard-copy booklet, and only those who provide their information for the directory will receive a copy.

We're honored to include a pre-publication book review by Angus Lorenzen of James Scott's newest book, "*Black Snow: Curtis LeMay, The Firebombing of Tokyo, and the Road to the Atomic Bomb*", which will be released September 6. The book will be of particular interest because of the dilemma described in a review by Hampton Sides (New York Times bestselling author of *Ghost Soldiers* and *On Desperate Ground*), "... fundamentally [Scott's book] addresses perhaps the most incendiary question to be found within the ethics (if there are any) of warfare: Should civilians be considered legitimate targets?"

In our January edition, we will include our next 'virtual museum tour', Jefferson Barracks POW-MIA Museum in St. Louis, Missouri (space permitting). In the meantime, below is a photo of the museum, the mission of which is to "honor the legacy of all prisoners of war and missing in action, keeping the promise that 'you are not forgotten'".

Take good care! Sally Meadows



My Brief Experience as a Subject for Japanese Propaganda During WWII

By Karen Kerns Lewis

In the May 2021 issue of CPOW'S *Beyond the Wire*, Angus Lorenzen writes about Dr. Fe del Mundo and her role in early 1942, during the beginning of the Japanese occupation of Manila, of helping to transfer children of the civilians interned in Santo Tomás to Holy Ghost Convent.

I was one those children. My imprisoned mother saw an opportunity to provide her only child with a much better life, diet, and education, so she signed me up. And so, after only a few months of being in "prison." I was on my way to Boarding School.

Unlike Santo Tomas with its primitive conditions, the convent offered piano lessons, school rooms with desks, bathrooms with showers, formidable nuns, scrambled eggs, tripe, and enrichment! But for me, it was unbearable. I just couldn't fit in with any group at Holy Ghost.

I missed the nightly reassurance of my mother's hug and the warmth of her body next to mine under the mosquito netting. I was still an only, lonely, not-yet-10-year-old child, miserable in my prison of privilege. I eagerly awaited my mother's first and only visit which the Japanese were allowing our parents. The day was surely a high point for the Japanese propaganda machine. Uniformed soldiers with cameras were everywhere on the Holy Ghost campus, snapping pictures of the well-fed, well-educated children and their proud and happy parents. Smiling face were everywhere.

One of the soldiers followed my mother and me around all day. We couldn't shake him, not even for me to change into the new red-and-white floral pinafore Mother had made for me out of black-market sun-porch upholstery material. Finally, I found the courage to put it on and Mother began to re-braid my mussed hair.

The soldier snapped his picture and disappeared. This was in the summer of 1942.

Eventually, I convinced my mother that I was sad and lonely, that I couldn't really eat the tripe or play the piano, and that I wasn't studying and had no friends. My Holy Ghost Convent ordeal soon ended, and I was on my way back from Boarding School to "prison" camp, reunited with my mother and making new friends! War? What war! I happily went on to fifth grade that fall with my new, well-met friends and learned all about Alaska! Happy smiles again!

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'Dispose of Them': Allied Forces Race to Rescue POWs After Massacre in the Philippines

By Michael S. Bell, PhD

(Originally Published in the News from The National WWII Museum, V-Mail Summer 2022)

In early January 1945, Filipino guerillas relayed to General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters a shocking report about a Japanese massacre of American prisoners of war (POWs) on Palawan, the westernmost island in the Philippine archipelago. The guerillas were safeguarding American POWs who escaped from a Japanese massacre at Camp 10-A near Puerto Princesa. MacArthur's G-2, Major General Charles A. Willoughby, dispatched aircraft to bring the survivors to Allied lines and safety.

On January 6, a PBY Catalina Flying Boat with a fighter escort linked up with the guerillas at Brooke Point, about 25 miles from the massacre site. It picked up six Americans and flew them 850 miles over Japanese-held territory to Morotai, an island south of the Philippines in the Dutch East Indies. Ultimately, five additional Americans also were safely recovered by Filipino guerilla forces.

The survival and return of those 11 men to Allied territory was a testament to their tenacity, to Filipino guerilla forces and their intelligence network, to coastwatchers with long-range radios, and the submarines, PT boats, and PBYs that transported them. Their survival also generated and demand for action.

On his first day on Morotai, Army Private First-Class Eugene Nielsen appeared before an Army Captain for his G-2 debriefing. From Nielsen's perspective, it amounted to an official interrogation. Army intelligence had not been aware of the full details of the incident of what happened at Palawan. Nielsen's testimony, in particular, spurred the headquarters to act.

Allied intelligence had cause for concerns about the fate of American POWs in the Philippines having intercepted and translated Japanese messages. Rather than allow the liberation of POWs, the War Ministry in Tokyo instructed in 1944: "Whether they are destroyed individually or in groups or however it is done, with mass bombing, poisonous smoke, poisons, drowning, decapitation, or what, dispose of them as the situation dictates." The guidance was "to annihilate them all, and not to leave any traces."

The author, Michael S. Bell, PhD, is the Executive Director of the Jenny Craig Institute for the Study of War and Democracy. Dr. Bell was formerly a Colonel in the U.S. Army, and once commanded the 8th Cavalry Regiment

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As the debriefings of the survivors went on in Morotai, the Luzon campaign was getting underway. On the morning of January 9, assault forces came ashore, and nearly 175,000 men landed within a few days. Commanders soon were sensitized to the seriousness of the threat to the POWs and internees still in Japanese hands as news of the Palawan massacre came out.

In less than a month, four daring raids freed over 7,000 POWs and internees in the vicinity of Manila.

On January 26, Major Robert Lapham, an American officer who had escaped from Bataan and became the leader of the Luzon Guerilla Army Force, warned that over 500 POWs at Cabanatuan were in danger of being executed, similar to what had happened at Palawan. In response, a raid by elements of Lieutenant Colonel Henry Mucci's 6th Ranger Battalion and the Alamo Scouts, supported by 400 of Lapham's guerillas, freed 522 POWs at Cabanatuan on January 30.

After the successful raid on Cabanatuan, MacArthur ordered additional rescue operations. On January 31, MacArthur told Major General C. Mudge, Commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division, "Go to Manila! Go around the Japs(sic), bounce off the Japs(sic), save your men, but get to Manila! Free the internees at Santo Tomas!" MacArthur also wanted the troopers to liberate the prisoners believed to be held at the Malacañang Palace and the legislative building.

The next day, as the liberated POWs from the Cabanatuan raid cleared the road, a flying column of two motorized cavalry squadrons from the 8th Cavalry Regiment supported by tanks and motorized artillery raced ahead. Under the command of Brigadier General Will C. Chase, the column penetrated over 100 miles into Japanese territory. At some points, vehicles in the flying column were moving at 50 miles per hour, as the 8th Cavalry raced to seize the internment camp.

On the evening of February 3, the flying column pushed into the northern suburbs of Manila. The Tank "Battling Basic" from the 44th Tank Battalion crashed through the gate of Santo Tomas University, an internment camp of 3,785 civilians, including 2,870 Americans. After brief resistance, the compound was liberated, although Japanese troops continued to hold 275 Americans as hostages for a couple of days. Meanwhile, F troop, 8th Cavalry with the aid of Filipino guerillas had raced through sniper fire to secure the presidential residence, Malacañang Palace, and prevent it from being torched.

Soldiers of the 37th Infantry Division, also racing toward Manila to the west of the 1st Cavalry, reached

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Fast Forward to 1945. After the liberation of Santo Tomas, and after our family's brief stay on Leyte, by March of that year we were sailing back to San Francisco on the transport SS Jean Lafitte, accompanied by many wounded and convalescing American soldiers, our liberators, who were also returning to the States from their Philippine battles.

My mom and all the recently liberated internees traveling with us from Leyte were so thrilled to be able to meet and befriend our returning liberators, and to enjoy their many war stories. Among them was an Army captain who was especially popular with the ladies, and willingly shared his war stories and memorabilia with all the repatriating moms.

One bright, sunny morning in the mid-Pacific, a dear friend of Mom's, who had been up on deck with the aforementioned captain admiring his collection of war photos, came racing down below to where Mom and I were still dressing. She was calling my mom's name at the top of her excited voice. "Tommy! Where are you! You've got to see this picture! It was taken off a dead Japanese!"

It was the very picture of me in my new pinafore – with Mother braiding my hair!

After we returned to California, my mother kept in touch with the captain for years, and I remember seeing a copy of that photo among her things when my husband, Craig, and I moved her to a Senior Care facility in 1986. But by the time she died in 1992, there was no photo to be found among her possessions.

In 2006, my son Mark Lewis traveled to Manila to research our family history in the Philippines. While going through the photo files at the American Historical Collection at Ateneo de Manila University, Mark found himself looking at the very photograph of my mother fussing over my hair!

So, the circle became complete finally, with that propaganda photo coming back into my possession after decades of being lost in the archives of history!



Karen Kerns Lewis and her mother, Thelma Kerns.

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Bilibid Prison on the evening of February 4. Breaking into the compound, the "Buckeyes" discovered that the Japanese guards had fled. They liberated 1,330 American and Allied POWs and civilian internees.

Finally, on February 23, a combined force secured the University of the Philippines campus at Los Baños that had been converted into a prison camp. Soon after his arrival on Luzon, Major General Joseph Swing, commanding general of the 11th Airborne Division, was told to prioritize liberating Los Baños. The camp was southeast of Manila behind Japanese lines.

The daring raid consisted of a parachute drop by B Company, 1st Battalion, 511th Parachute Infantry Regiment orchestrated with a ground attack on the camp by guerillas of the 45th Hunter's ROTC Regiment. Meanwhile, the remainder of the 1st Battalion conducted a move to the

camp in 54 LVT-4 Amphibious tractors. The Amtracs would transport the liberated to safety. The 11th Airborne Division rescued 2,147 in that raid.

A few days later, on February 28, the Eighth Army conducted an assault landing on Palawan. By March 2, they controlled most of the island. Many of the perpetrators of the December 14 massacre died in the fighting.

At Camp 10-A, soldiers of the 41st Infantry Division came across the personal effects of the POWs, and between March 15 and 23, the bodies in the trenches were exhumed. The remains of 123 men were recovered.

In 1952, those remains were disinterred and brought back to the United States. They are buried in the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery near St. Louis.

CPOW Reunion - 2023

April 14 to April 16, 2023

Embassy Suites by Hilton Sacramento Riverfront Promenade

Because of Covid, we missed out on having our reunion this year, so we are making up for it in 2023 with a reunion at our familiar hotel in Sacramento. The hotel is newly renovated for guest rooms and the atrium lobby, and features a managers cocktail social period in the late afternoon plus a cooked-to-order breakfast.

Details of the presentations and activities are still being developed, but it will be a good time for all. Now is the time to make your hotel reservation to be sure you have a room at the discount rate in our reservation block. There are three different ways to make a reservation.

1. At our reservation website: <https://www.hilton.com/en/book/reservation/rooms/?ctyhocn=SACESES&arrivalDate=2023-04-13&departureDate=2023-04-16&groupCode=CESPOW&room1NumAdults=1&cid=OM%2CWW%2CHILTONLINK%2CEN%2CDirectLink>
2. Visit www.sacramento.embassysuites.com and make a reservation using the group/convention code: POW
3. Call (916) 326-5000 and let the Front Desk Agent know you would like to make a reservation under the CPOW Civilian Prisoners of War discount rate.

Please note that **all reservations must be made before March 23, 2023**, and will only be available until the CPOW block of reserved rooms is sold out.

Registration for the reunion is **\$45 for members** and **\$55 for non-members**. Not sure of your current membership status? Contact Cindie Leonard at cindieleonard@gmail.com or 208-890-5694.

Banquet reservations for Sunday are **\$46 for all attendees**.

For each attendee you are registering, please include: 1) Name, 2) Member or non-Member, and 3) attending Reunion only, Banquet only, or both Reunion and Banquet.

A check for reservations made out to 'Civilian ex-POWs' should be sent to CPOW Treasurer:

Cindie Leonard, 1675 S. Lake Crest Way, Eagle, ID 83616.

CPOW Membership Directory

By popular demand, we are creating a membership directory! If you would like to participate, please fill-out this form (for more space, feel free to use your own paper) and mail to:

Cindie Leonard, 1675 S. Lake Crest Way, Eagle, ID 83616

or send the information by email to: cindieleonard@gmail.com

The directory is open to interneers, relatives, and friends. Only those who participate will receive a directory.

Name:

Mailing Address:

Email:

Phone Number:

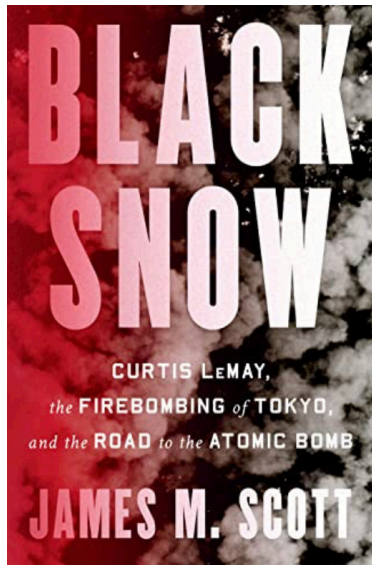
For Ex-POWS: Camp (s)

Feel free to share whatever information you like (e.g. family, work history, etc.), but especially tell us about your connection to the camp(s) and how you or your family got there.

Book Review by Angus Lorenzen

BLACK SNOW: Curtis LeMay, The Firebombing of Tokyo, and the Road to the Atomic Bomb

By James M. Scott | W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2022



Dating back to prehistoric times, fire has been both a boon and a hazard to mankind and has frequently been used as a weapon of war. During WWI, poison gas was the offensive weapon of choice for mass killing of the enemy, but in WWII after the Geneva Convention, mass use of fire became the weapon of choice, and the delivery system was the bomber.

From before the start of WWII, American planners concluded ground forces would be largely unnecessary, a concept found totally unrealistic. In Europe the British Allies and the German Axis had been slugging it out for 3 years before Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor brought the United States into the war. Both sides in Europe had learned what it takes to harm their enemies and both sides had settled on night air raids on areas as being most effective. When the U.S. joined the war, they brought with them their B-17 Flying Fortresses and their superior philosophy that high altitude daylight bombing would destroy the enemy's war-making capability with a less serious impact on the civilian populations surrounding strategic targets. It was an expensive philosophy as the U.S. lost more airmen in Europe than the Marines lost in the Pacific, but the Air Force leadership was dedicated to their more-humanitarian concept of bombing.

Commanding general of the Air Force, Hap Arnold, was able to sell the concept of a bigger, better bomber and in 1940 contracted with Boeing to design and build the B-29 Superfortress. It was horrendously expensive, costing \$3 billion, or 50% more than the entire Manhattan Project cost developing the A-bomb. The war was virtually over in Europe when the B-29s started coming off the production lines at the end of 1944 and they were dedicated to Asia with a primary goal of bombing Japan. Some of these bombers were assigned to fields in India, but it was highly inefficient to stage them to China along with their necessary logistics for raids on Southern Japan. But landings in the Marianas gave the super bomber the ability

to reach Tokyo and other key cities critical to Japan's war-making ability.

Major General Curtis LeMay commanded the 20th Bomber Command in India and China while Brigadier General Haywood Hansell commanded the 21st Bomber Command in the Marianas. Both had been key to the bomber offensive in Europe and were part of the command that was dedicated to daylight precision bombing. But Hansell soon found that his high-altitude raids on Tokyo and other Japanese cities were ineffective, and the changes he made still did not affect Japan's war-making ability. On January 7, 1945, General Norstad, Hap Arnold's deputy, visited Hansell and told him he was out and LeMay would replace him.

LeMay's initial success was no better than Hansell's. The weather over Japan was just too variable to allow accurate high-altitude bombing. The British had turned to firebombing of Germany and reported much better results. Americans were reluctant to use it because it had such a detrimental effect on civilians, yet the Air Force command started to think it may be necessary and a new fire accelerant was developed - called Napalm.

LeMay continued to try high altitude precision bombing into March, but it just wasn't working. He privately decided to try a low-level fire-bombing raid. He didn't inform Washington, but when Norstad came out, he confided his plan. Norstad approved, and on March 9 they launched over 300 bombers for a low altitude night fire bombing mission against Tokyo and its concentrated wood and paper structures that were the home and work shops that fed the war industry. They would be flying at an average altitude of 5,000 -feet and many of the bomber crews thought that it was a suicide mission.

The first waves of bombers were over the target and the first bombs released shortly after midnight. The fires started in the wood and paper homes and a moderate wind caused it to spread as successive waves of bombers extended the perimeter of the fire. The fire expanded and spread across an immense area, later estimated to be 15.8 square miles and to have killed over 100,000 people, leaving a million people homeless. Seeing the destruction of Tokyo, LeMay continued to send huge missions to firebomb other Japanese cities. LeMay's success led him to believe that continuing his raids would eventually lead to Japan's capitulation, but in Washington, the Joint Chiefs decided on invasion of Japan with landings on Kyushu on November 1, 1945, and 5 months later, near Tokyo. LeMay was convinced that his tactics would end the war

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without the need for invasion, and on June 22, the Emperor told the Supreme War Leadership Council to find a diplomatic way out of the fight.

Meanwhile the preparation to drop the A-bombs was underway. On August 6, Little Boy was dropped on Hiroshima and on August 9, the Fat Man was dropped on Nagasaki. On August 15, Emperor Hirohito's announced that Japan would not continue to fight, he had found his diplomatic way to surrender without losing face. The war was over and LeMay's bombing campaign was a major factor with the A-bombs being the final nails in Japan's coffin. LeMay's firebombing destroyed 178 Square miles of 66 cities and killed 330,000 people, leaving a total of over 2.8 million people homeless in Tokyo alone. But it also destroyed over 600 factories manufacturing war goods intended to continue the war.

James Scott tells the story in a fluid, easy to read manner, with numerous quotes to illustrate how individuals felt about what was happening. We don't realize that he has led us through the most intensely destructive period of the war. Today, many people, particularly those unaffected by WWII, might have a different attitude about what America's military did, but one must remember that at that time, and still fresh in the American memory, was the Japanese perfidy of the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, the Rape of Nanking, the Bataan Death March, the Manila

Massacre, the murder of POWS at Puerto Princesa and so many other murders and monstrosities. Many of us who had suffered under the Japanese were happy to see the retribution that the firebombing brought home to the Japanese people, followed soon afterwards with the atomic bombing that ended the war. Only people who had suffered through the war could appreciate the euphoria that the end brought. Scott has led us through those last months and helped us better understand what an incredible undertaking they were.



Boeing B-29 Bomber

Photo from Wikipedia