



From the Commander

Liberation Reunion

The BACEPOW reunion held this year in Fremont was an incredible success, attended by about 300 people as described in the accompanying article on this page. Our many thanks go to Sascha Jansen who organized it, and to Margie Wagstaffe, MaryJane Laznibat, John and Joan Montessa, Sally Connelly, and John Ream who all pitched in to make things run smoothly, and to Karen and Mark Lewis for organizing the Descendents Forum.

Attendees were so enthusiastic that they acclaimed the idea of having another reunion next year, and Sascha went right to work to start setting it up. It will again be held at the Fremont Marriott, on the weekend of February 13 -16, 2009.

Some of the highlights of the reunion included a letter to BACEPOW from Arnold Schwarzenegger, which is shown in this newsletter. Cecily Mattocks Marshall, author of *Happy Life Blues* about life in the Philippines before and during the war, described how to self publish your book. Dr. Audrey Maurer discussed her research on women in prison camps and how they fared. Kinue Tokudome discussed her efforts to inform Japanese about the American POW experience through her US-Japan Dialogue on POWs, which is discussed in another article in this newsletter. Sascha Jansen told about the making of the Ken Burns documentary, *The War*. There was a forum where liberators of the Santo Tomas, Bilibid, and Los Baños camps discussed those events. Finally, Members of the Mukden POW Remembrance Society (MPOWRS) and a delegation from Shenyang, China showed a model of Mukden POW camp, where nearly 1,500 American POWs were held, and which the Chinese government and the city of Shenyang are turning into an historical museum.

Many of the attendees at the reunion were from Southern California, and they were enthusiastic about having their own luncheon get-together. If that interest still exists, please e-mail me at bacepow@earthlink.net or write to 15 Diamonte Lane, Rancho Palos Verdes 90275. If we get enough people interested, we'll pick a central location in the Southland and have our own mini-reunion.

Angus Lorenzen, Commander

Over 300 people converged on The Marriott Hotel in Fremont, California, which was the site of the BACEPOW Reunion February 1-4, 2008, celebrating the 63rd anniversary of liberation. They came from Wales, Canada, China and all points within the United States. With souvenirs, manuscripts, old historical pictures, books, videos and CDs, the old gang from the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere arrived in droves. Civilian and military POWs, Bataan Marchers, Liberators and Veterans alike joined together in the San Francisco Bay Area for the Sixty-Third Anniversary Liberation Reunion. A special envoy from the Mukden POW Camp Museum in China attended with elaborate displays of their new museum projects being built.

Exceptional and varied speakers presented their topics all through the day on Saturday. Wonderful breakfast buffets were included each morning and specialty buffet dinners were offered in the evenings. A delighted throng gathered together Saturday evening for an enjoyable cocktail party and reception, which culminated the programmed activities for the day.

One of the main goals of BACEPOW for this particular reunion was to energize internee descendents to carry on our unique history. A Descendents' Forum and cocktail party was surprisingly well attended and hosted by Karen Kerns Lewis and her son Mark Lewis. Taking an active part in BACEPOW was one of the topics of discussion involved in the descendents' Saturday itinerary. It was the beginning of a strong interest shown by the descendents for the future of BACEPOW.

New interest in becoming part of the BACEPOW organization was shown by a nearly 100 percent increase in membership, which was amazing in so short a time frame.

A BACEPOW newsletter, *Beyond the Wire*, made its debut at the reunion inviting any allied civilian who was a prisoner during WWII to join our organization and help keep our history alive.

The big Liberation Banquet Lunch on Sunday was a gala event. Our new BACEPOW Chapter Commander, Angus Lorenzen, presided as master of ceremonies while attendees sipped cocktails, sampled Filipino appetizers and cuisine for lunch. A live band from the musical group Family Affair played, as some of the guests sang and danced to both Filipino and American music. The many wonderful memorabilia displays in the foyer added to the grand affair.

Adding to the festivities many of the attendees wore Barongs and Ternos, colorful pineapple fiber native dress, and had a wonderful chance to visit with so many people they hadn't seen in years. It was a nostalgic affair with everyone wanting another reunion next year. Many thanks are due to the BACEPOW Board of Directors and volunteers for their help in arranging this successful gathering.

MABUHAY! Sascha Jean Jansen

Japan Dialogue

The BACEPOW reunion schedule included Kinue Tokudome as a speaker to discuss a dialogue between the Japanese and American POWs. My first reaction was to think, "What could the Japanese possibly have to say about our treatment as prisoners?" But when she began to speak and explained her mission to raise the Japanese people's consciousness about the treatment of prisoners during World War II, I was immediately intrigued. At the end of her speech, I along with everyone in the room applauded her enthusiastically. Here is her explanation of what she is doing, and it is well worth visiting her website at <http://www.us-japandialogueonpows.org>.

Angus Lorenzen

I started this website in November of 2004 in the hope that it would promote understanding and dialogue among and between the people of Japan and the United States on the history of American POWs of the Japanese during WWII.

Being educated by the post-war Japanese schools, I did not learn much about my country's history during WWII. Most of my knowledge on Japan during those war years came from books I read while studying at universities in the United States in the 80s. Even then, I did not know the details of POWs' suf-

ferings at the hands of the Japanese. It was only in 1999, when former American POWs began to sue Japanese companies for wartime slave labor that I began to learn the extent of brutality that American POWs of the Japanese were subjected to.

Former POWs lost their cases in 2004. The US Court found that the California law that they based their lawsuits on was unconstitutional because POWs' claims against Japan had been waived by the Peace Treaty of 1951.

At that time, I thought that the least I could do was to help former POWs reach out to Japanese people so that they could share with today's Japanese population, especially young people, their wartime experience and their reflection on them. Thus, my bilingual website, *US-Japan Dialogue on POWs*, was launched. I had a Japanese friend, Mrs. Yuka Ibuki, a retired high school English teacher who was also interested in the POW history. She became my representative in Tokyo.

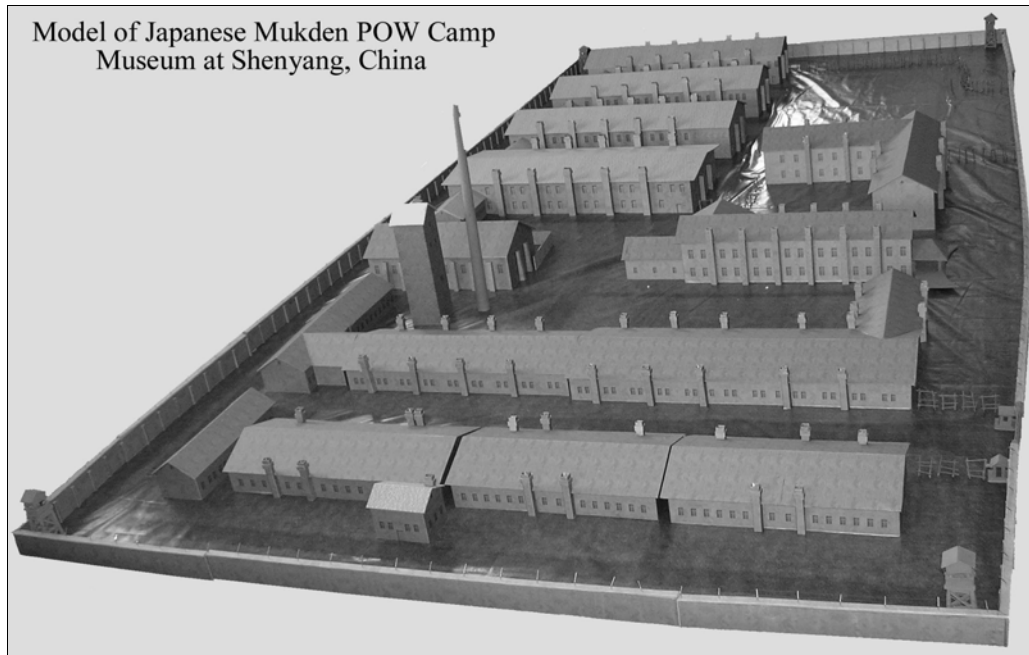
Our website now has many individual POW stories and a couple of civilian POW stories, including that of Sascha (Weinzheimer) Jansen. It has been accessed more than 100,000 times in the past three years.

I hope to add more stories on the experiences of civilian POWs in the future. I would appreciate the support from members of BACEPOW.

Kinue Tokudome

Founder/Executive Director, US-Japan Dialogue on POWs, Inc.

Mukden Allied POW Camp Memorial Museum



Model of Japanese Mukden POW Camp
Museum at Shenyang, China

BACEPOW was honored to host a delegation from the Mukden POW Remembrance Society at this year's reunion. Members came from around the U.S. and from China and displayed a model of the Memorial Museum being built at Shenyang (formerly Mukden), China.

In 2005 the governments of Shenyang and Liaoning Province started work on the museum. Local residents living in the two remaining original barracks buildings were relocated to better housing. One of the Barracks has been refurbished on the second level to recreate the bunk areas of the POWs. The first floor is an open area awaiting displays. The second building has been expanded and serves as an exhibit hall for copies

of documents from the U.S. National Archives and of interviews with local residents who remember the camp. A third building is being constructed and will house additional displays, artifacts, and a research center dedicated to the history of the camp and POWs.

Most of the over 200 military and civilian camps in Asia have disappeared. Mukden is a typical Japanese POW camp. The cruel treatment and lack of sanitation, medication, and food led to a 37.3% mortality rate of the 200,000 prisoners held throughout all of those camps. Mukden is a chance to tell the story of all the POWs held in Asia.

For more information, visit the Mukden POW Remembrance Society website at www.MukdenPOWs.org.



GOVERNOR ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

February 1, 2008

Bay Area Civilian Ex-Prisoners of War

On behalf of all Californians, I am honored to send my greetings to all who have gathered for the Manila Liberation Reunion and to commemorate the sixty-third anniversary of the liberations in the Philippines.

As you come together to remember the sacrifices and great adversity you and your loved ones had to endure, I salute you for your bravery in the face of terrible hardships. Of the thousands of American men, women and children who were interned or taken prisoner in the Philippines during World War II, some lost their lives, and all of them suffered.

The trials endured by civilian internees and prisoners of war often go unrecognized, which is why I am inspired by your organization's tremendous efforts. I thank each of you in attendance today, along with your organization, for helping keep alive the memories and sacrifices of these brave Americans.

I wish you a meaningful observance and all the best for the future.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger

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In Memorium

William McNeil Crawford died in the company of his family on March 19, 2008. He was born in 1936 in Bukidnon, Philippines, and was interned with his family at Santo Tomas. While at the University of California, he met Kate Abernethy and they married in 1959. Bill was a devoted father to his four children and grandfather to seven grandchildren.

He was California Director of the Western Military History Association, a member of BACEPOW and was a dedicated volunteer who shared his talents with a number of other organizations.

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Annual Dues Structure

| | |
|---|------|
| Voting Member* | \$15 |
| Former POWs and descendents not affiliated with AXPOW | \$17 |
| Friends of BACEPOW | \$17 |

*Voting members are those who are paid-up members of AX-POW, the national organization for Ex-POWs. This may include military or civilian ex-POWs, spouses, and descendents.

Mail membership application and first year dues to:

Frank Stagner
2694 Fairfield Commons
Chico, California 95928-8410

Mark Your Calendar

The Bay Area Civilian Ex-POWs (BACEPOW) is hosting its next luncheon meeting with speaker Angus Lorenzen, BACEPOW Commander and author of "A Lovely Little War". Though he escaped from China in 1941, and then was interned in Manila for more than 3 years, he will be discussing what happened to members of his family who remained in Japanese-occupied China. This intriguing story involves imprisonment, repatriation, guerilla action, and OSS operations.

The luncheon is open to anyone who wishes to attend, and will be held at 11:30 on June 28 at Arrivederci Restaurant in Redwood City. The address is 487 Freeport Court, Redwood City 94063. Please send your reservations to Margie Wagstaffe, 1035 Valparaiso Avenue, Menlo Park, CA 94025. For more information, call her at (650) 324-3086. A flyer will be sent with more details as we organize the program. Please plan to join us for this eventful afternoon. The program with a full lunch and choice from 3 entrees is \$27.

The next BACEPOW reunion will be held from February 13 – 16, 2009. It will again be held at the Marriott Fremont Silicon Valley in California. We promise an even more enthralling program with speakers addressing subjects that all who are interested in the Japanese POW experience will appreciate. Pictures and displays will be provided, and books about the wartime experience will be available. And we'll again be able to meet and share experiences with old friends.



Co-conspirators at the Reunion are Frank Stagner, Membership Chairman, (standing) and Sascha Jansen, Senior Vice Commander of BACEPOW and organizer of the 2008 reunion, both of whom resided at Santo Tomas Internment Camp. With them is David Brown, husband of Reverend Sally England Brown, another former Santo Tomas resident who gave the blessing at the reunion's banquet.

Editorial Policy

Beyond the Wire encourages submissions for publication including stories about the POW experience, reviews of pertinent books, photos, memorabilia and memorials to fellow ex-POWs. Please submit your material to:

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