



## American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Memorial Society

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June 22, 2018

Mr. Donovan Andrew Lazarus (US Army, Retired)  
Commander, Chief Operating Officer  
AmVets Hawaii  
4725 Bougainville Drive, 323  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96818  
Email: [donovan@amvets-hawaii.org](mailto:donovan@amvets-hawaii.org)

Dear Mr. Lazarus:

We wish to invite you to the dedication of a memorial stone on Wednesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. The stone commemorates the 400 servicemen and mariners who died in January 1945 aboard two unmarked Japanese hellships docked in Kaohsiung Harbor, Taiwan. The 400 are now buried as “Unknowns” in 20 graves in the Cemetery. A formal invitation is attached.

The men aboard these two ships were the survivors of the sinking of the hellship *Oryoku Maru* when U.S. planes bombed it near Subic Bay. By the time the remaining ship *Brazil Maru* arrived in Japan less than 600 of the original 1,600 POWs were alive. Of these, barely 400 survived the war.

The 400 men were among thousands of prisoners of war (POWs) taken by the Japanese in the Philippines in 1942. The POWs included, in addition to Americans, soldiers and mariners from Australia, Canada, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Norway, and what is now the Czech Republic. In violation of international law, the Japanese used the POWs as slave laborers in Japan and other territories under Japanese control.

The POWs were transported in the holds of unmarked ships whose conditions were so abysmal that they were known as “hellships.” The 400 servicemen recognized by the memorial stone were among the last shipment of prisoners from the Philippines. By the time they reached a stopover in Takao Harbor (today’s Kaohsiung Harbor), Formosa, the POWs were in the hellships *Enouru Maru* and the *Brazil Maru*. On January 9, 1945, planes from the carrier USS *Hornet* bombed the *Enouru Maru*. The bombing killed approximately 300 POWs; another 100, aboard both hellships, died of starvation and disease.

These 400 were buried in a mass grave near the harbor. In 1946, a U.S. military recovery team retrieved the remains and sent them to Hawaii for interment. The memorial stone reminds us of the sacrifice made by the 400 men and other POWs, while establishing that they have returned home to American soil.

The dedication ceremony will take place at 1:00PM in the chapel at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, 2177 Puowaina Drive, Honolulu, Hawaii [<https://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/maps/nmcp899.pdf>].

The service will be followed by a reception at the The Officers Club at Marine Corps Base Hawaii at Kaneohe Bay, 502 Reed Road, Kailua.

Please contact Ms. Nancy Kragh at [nkragh@hotmail.com](mailto:nkragh@hotmail.com) or (206) 484-4719 if you can participate, send an alternate, or offer a memorial tribute for the ceremony program.

Ms. Kragh's father, Maj Clarence H. White, a physician with the Army's 31st Infantry Medical Corps, is believed to be among the dead at the Cemetery.

The American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Memorial Society (ADBC-MS) represents surviving POWs of Japan, their families, and descendants, as well as scholars, researchers, and archivists. Our goal is to preserve the history of the American POW experience in the Pacific and to teach of the POWs' sacrifice, courage, determination, and faith. The ADBC-MS is a nonprofit organization and donations are tax-exempt under U.S. law.

We hope you can join us in August. Thank you for remembering our World War II veterans.

Most respectfully,



Ms. Jan Thompson, President  
American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor Memorial Society  
Daughter of PhM2c Robert E. Thompson USN, USS *Canopus* (AS-9)  
Bilibid, *Oryoku Maru*, *Enoura Maru*, *Brazil Maru*, Fukuoka 3B & Mukden, POW# 2011  
<http://dg-adbc.org/>

# Honolulu Star-Bulletin

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Evening Bulletin, Est. 1893, No. 12594  
HAWAIIAN STAR, Vol. LXXI, No. 16294

★★★

AIRPLANE DELIVERY ON ISLANDS OTHER THAN OAHU 7¢ PRICE ON OAHU 5¢

## POW 'Hell Ship' Trials Ordered

TOKYO, Feb. 27. (INS) — Eight Japanese were ordered today to stand trial for the deaths of 1,330 American and Allied prisoners of war aboard three "hell ships."

The victims perished during a six-weeks journey from Manila to Formosa. They were herded aboard the prison ships at the Philippine capital less than a month before Gen. Douglas MacArthur's liberating legions invaded Luzon.

Alva C. Carpenter, chief of the legal section of Allied headquarters in Tokyo, announced that the eight accused Japanese will be placed on trial March 6 in Yokohama.

Carpenter said he had talked to

survivors of the death voyages, had read diaries written by victims and witnesses and had scanned thousands of words of recorded testimony.

"No place in the records of history," he said, "can one find anything so gruesome and horrible."

The headquarters legal expert said that 619 POWs, mostly Americans, were removed from Bilibid in Manila December 13, 1944, and were "packed in the holds of the horror ship Oryoku Maru."

He said the wretched victims were not given food or water and had no room to lie down. Survi-

vors testified that many of them suffocated, died from other causes or went mad.

The prisoners began fainting a few minutes after they were pushed into the unventilated jam-packed holds. American medical corpsmen were beaten for requesting food, water and medicines and 46 died the first night out from Manila.

Carpenter added: "The need for water was so acute the men were beginning to drink waste sewage from open drains" by the second night.

A United States plane bombed the unmarked Oryoku Maru and

killed 166 prisoners. Those who survived and regained the Luzon shore were herded into the holds of the Enoura Maru and the Enoura Maru. Fifteen of the sickest, however, were beheaded one by one over an open, common grave.

A total of 906 survivors reached Formosa aboard both vessels. Then all prisoners aboard the Enoura were transferred to the Brazil for shipment to Japan—a journey on which the daily death rate climbed to 43.

Four hundred and fifty men were still alive when the Brazil reached Japan, but many of these died shortly afterward.

PLEASE JOIN THE AMERICAN DEFENDERS OF  
BATAAN AND CORREGIDOR MEMORIAL SOCIETY  
AT THE DEDICATION OF

## Enoura Maru Memorial Stone

Wednesday, August 15<sup>th</sup>

at one o'clock

The Chapel

National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific

2177 Puowaina Drive

Honolulu, Hawaii  
reception to follow at  
The Officers Club  
Marine Corps Base Hawaii at Kaneohe Bay

r.s.v.p

[WW2PacificHeroes@gmail.com](mailto:WW2PacificHeroes@gmail.com)



## Honoring the Memory of Those Who Died Aboard the Hellship Enoura Maru



On January 8th 1945, the Japanese freighter Enoura Maru, en route from the Philippines to Japan with its human cargo of American and Allied prisoners of war, was bombed by American carrier aircraft while anchored in Takao (Keelung) Harbor, Taiwan. About 300 POWs, nearly all Americans, were killed. Many of those who were injured died in the days that followed.

The men were first buried in a mass grave at Takao Harbor. After the war the remains were exhumed and brought to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific "Punchbowl". Because most remains could not be identified they were buried in 20 communal graves located in Section Q. All of them are marked "Unknowns" and dated January 9, 1945.

The 20 graves are the final resting places of brave American and Allied POWs from the Philippines who had suffered in Imperial Japanese prison camps. This memorial stone is dedicated to those men so that their story will never be forgotten.

This Memorial Monument was placed here in 2018 by the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor Memorial Society and the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society.