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Martin Schenck 8/24/93

After returning to Midway Island and completing our first war patrol, we turned the boat over to the relief crew, they overhauled the engines, guns and torpedoe tubes. While the boat was being overhauled for about a week, the crew was allowed to rest, swimming, fishing or drinking beer, whatever suited you best, most all drank beer.

After the overhaul, we loaded supplies, test dived the boat and guns, everything being alright we headed west across the Pacific for the Philippines. After about a month at sea, we received a message ordering us to the island of Panay, in the Sulu Sea to rescue 19 U.S. citizens. Panay is an island bounded on the north by the island of Mindoro and on the south by the Islands of Negros and Cebu. We entered the Philippine Islands through San Bernardino Strait, they are very treacherous waters because the Japanese had mined most of the waters in the islands. As we rounded the southern part of Panay we entered into the waters off the town of Iloilo, it was early morning on 20 March 1944. Captain Olsen raised the periscope and saw a large crowd of people walking behind the tree line, along the beach, he also saw the signal raised in the trees we were to look for. We headed back out to sea until it got dark and remained there for several hours. Still submerged, we headed back to the town, about 1,000 yards from the beach we battle surfaced, this is when the deck gun crews prepare to do battle with the five inch gun plus the 20mm and 40mm guns. As we surfaced a small boat carrying a Colonel Garcia and Captain Hawley, both of the Philippine Army, came aboard. Captain Olsen, looking through his binoculars, saw many more people than the 19 he was told to rescue. Colonel Garcia said there were 58 people not 19, most of whom had

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walked a long way to get to Iloilo, he asked Captain Olsen if he could handle them. I guess the Captain was in shock seeing all those people and trying to figure how he was going to take this many people on a sub that was built for a crew of 85. But he said yes he could. Captain Garcia sent a flash light signal to shore, and soon the evacuees began to come aboard. Seeing these people and the condition they were in made you heart sick. They were a ragged, barefooted mixture of old men and woman, returning officers and soldiers, young men and women, and children of all ages. One woman was eight months pregnant. All were aboard by dark so we headed back to sea. The entire ships company was berthed in the after battery room, except for the torpedo room watch standers, there were three men assigned to each bunk, one would sleep, one would be on lookout or watch, and the other would be waiting to go on watch. This is what we called hot bunking. After a while it got pretty rank, the reason there is no water to take a shower or even a wet rag to wipe yourself off with. With the evacuees came body lice, hair lice and cockroaches, the boat was soon infested with them. The people had no clothes, so the crew gave them what few things they had. All the men and boys were lodged in the after torpedo room. The Chief Petty Officers quarters were occupied by one mother with her two month old baby, one pregnant woman, two elderly women and a young girl, I think her name was Gwendolyn, she was very sick. Many of the passengers had tropical ulcers. The body odor was very strong. Everyone was fed two light meals a day, with soup at midnight. The passengers ate like they hadn't eaten in a month. Conditions in the forward torpedo room was really bad, because the children urinated and defecated on the deck, even the grown ups had problems. The toilet system on a submarine

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is a difficult piece of equipment to operate, the toilet is divided into two tanks separated by a flap. First you open a sea valve to let water into the bowl, you then close the valve, do your business, open the flap allowing the waste to enter the lower tank. You now build up pressure in the impulse tank so that it is five pounds more than the sea pressure, after doing this you open the sea stop valve and the sea valve, holding your foot on the flap lever, you throw the lever on the impulse tank to the sea side of the valve. After this you do everything in reverse. If not everything will hit the overhead. It was very difficult to teach the passengers to use it. Another strange thing was seeing a two year old baby smoking and inhaling a cigar while being breast fed by its Filipino mother. Also I saw two young girls picking lice out of each others hair and cracking them with finger nails.

The men seemed to have suffered more with there feet than the women, they had ulcers and cuts from the jungle grass on their legs and feet. Having lived for over two years in the jungle fleeing from one hiding place to another, they were in fairly good health. I remember a young boy about 5 years old, his eyesight was damaged by the blazing sun while he was adrift at sea with his family for many days, he was totally deaf in his right ear because a bomb exploded near him. His father, a Lieutenant in the Army, was killed. The boats medic was kept busy with all kinds of problems, keeping Gwendolyn alive was his biggest problem. Some of the people told us what happened to this girl. She and her four younger sisters and three younger brothers had been chased into the jungle surrounding their home, they were trying to hide from a Japanese patrol, the Japs killed a lot of people in the town, including Gwendolyn's great-grandmother, seeing this the girl went into

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shock. She became worse when the Japs fired machine gun burst into the area she was hiding in. She hiked through dense jungles and mountains to reach the pick up point, she was nearly dead when she was brought on board, her temperature was about 104 degrees, it remained that way for a week, then it suddenly dropped and she got well. During the trip to Darwin Australia with all the people on board it sometimes became hard to breathe. At night when we surfaced the fresh air flowing through the boat seemed to revive everyone. On arrival in Darwin and turning the passengers over to the Army medics, we started to clean up the mess, we brought all the mattress up to spray for lice and air them out. We scrubbed everything with hot soap and water, and after that with carbolic acid disinfectant and cockroach and lice bombs. After cleaning everything, we again prepared for another patrol, but remembering those brave men, women and kids and the hardship they endured to survive, it gives you courage to go back and try to end the suffering of all the enslaved people of the world.