



The Philippine Scouts Heritage Society, with the support of “Keep the Spirit of ’45 Alive” coalition and the American Battle Monuments Commission, kicked off the global Tribute that marked the conclusion of the Spirit of ’45 WWII 70th Anniversary Commemoration Weekend on Sunday, August 16, 2015.

The event was a solemn wreath-laying ceremony with several guests of honor including retired Philippine Army Major Jaime L. Guerrero who was a Philippine Scout with the 88th Field Artillery in Bataan during WWII.

Thank you to the PSHS members in Manila and the Philippine Living History Society for taking the lead in honoring the memory of those who served and sacrificed in the cause of freedom during WWII who lie at rest in the American Cemetery in the Philippines.

Speech written and delivered by Mr. Gabe Ruaro.

"Ladies and gentlemen, our veterans and their families, honored guests, good afternoon. 70 years ago, a world of hope and peace, forged by acts of courage, emerged from the ashes of one consumed by destruction and war.

We who are fortunate to live in the world our veterans fought for gather here to commemorate the end of the most terrible conflict in the history of mankind.

We find ourselves amidst the graves of 13,000 who left their homes to protect their loved ones from tyranny, never to return. Many more who fought beside them do not lie next to them in eternal peace; their names are etched in the stone of the walls surrounding us.



We are here to remember them all, and to show our gratitude for their sacrifice.

It would be far too easy to remember them only collectively, without recalling the brave young man each of them was—to remember them without knowing anything about them or their acts of heroism. We are here, then, to remember each one of those buried or memorialized here.

And so we remember the fallen of Bataan, immortalized in the Camp O'Donnell Memorial.



We remember Lt. Sandy Ninninger, Sgt. Robert Owens, Sgt. Leroy Johnson and the 20 other Medal of Honor Recipients who are honored on these hallowed grounds, and whose feats have become legend.

We remember Henry G. Lee, the poet of Bataan, whose verses encapsulated the horrors of war and the fighting spirit of our soldiers.

We remember the Sullivan brothers, who fell together as they had lived together. We remember the farm boys and the city boys, the Filipinos and the Americans, those who died in far-flung fields and those who died defending their homes. We remember all these brothers in arms.



We also remember those lucky enough to come home from the war, but who are no longer with us. We remember Col. Edwin Ramsey of the 26th Cavalry, who recently passed, but whose cavalry charge at Morong, the last mounted charge in US Army history, will live long in our memories.

Finally, we are here to stand with the loved ones who were left behind—those for whom the toll of war lingered long after the last shot was fired and the last ship had come home. For them and with them, we celebrate the lives of their fathers, husbands, friends, brothers, and sons, while we commemorate the end of the Second World War.



To paraphrase Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, therefore, we gather here today because our dead brothers still live for us, and bid us think of life, not death— of life to which in their youth they lent the passion and joy of the spring.

We are here to listen to the great chorus of life and joy, amid the awful orchestra of seen and unseen powers and destinies of good and evil, so that our trumpets sound once more a note of daring, hope, and will.

Once more, welcome, everyone, and greetings from the Philippine Scouts Heritage Foundation."

Photos by Edwin Pao, Albert Labrador, and Bong Manayon.