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The Great Raid: Rescuing The Doomed Ghosts Of Bataan And Corregidor (Movie Tie-In-Edition)



Synopsis

The Great Raid film will be showing in theatres across North America starting on August 12, and the screenplay is co-written by Miramax author William B. Breuer and Hampton Sides. The movie stars Benjamin Bratt, Joseph Fiennes, James Franco, Connie Nielsen and Martin Csokas. The Great Raid is a must-have for fans of WWII books. Breuer expands on the information in the bestselling Ghost Soldiers with descriptions of the military efforts of Gen. MacArthur operating from Australia from 1942-1945, and much more on the clandestine operations in Cabanatuan Town. Throughout the book are powerful, first-person recollections from the men who ran the underground operations in the Philippines, as well as the families back home receiving news that their loved ones survived.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Like many people, I read and generally enjoyed the 2001 bestseller Ghost Soldiers: The Epic Account of World War II's Greatest Rescue Mission. What I didn't realize when I picked up this earlier book, was that it covers almost the exact same material, but in a much less engaging way. (It should be noted that both books owe a huge debt to Forrest Johnson's 1978 book Hour of Redemption: The Heroic WW II Saga of America's Most Daring POW Rescue, a debt acknowledged in Ghost Soldiers but not by this book.) Here, Breuer provides a workmanlike account of the post-Pearl Harbor political and military context that led to the U.S. "abandonment" of the Philippines, its subsequent fall to Japan, and the horrific fate of the US and Filipino soldiers taken prisoner. He similarly sketches out the spy network that operated under Japanese occupation, the regrouping of U.S. forces as the war in Europe wound down, and the planning and execution of the titular raid to

free 511 POWs. This material all more or less overlaps with Ghost Soldiers but isn't nearly as well written. Breuer has a penchant for trite melodramatic phrasing, and tends to repeat information over and over and over as if his reader has no memory. It also doesn't help that instead of simply writing "three Rangers did X", he writes, "John Q. Doe of Springfield, IL, James R. Doe of Anywhere, WY, and Jesse T. Doe of Plainview, MI did X."

Buy the book. Read the book. Then, buy the movie. Watch the movie depicting this true story about the heroic and incredibly daring rescue of prisoners of war remaining in a camp near Cabanatuan on the main island of Luzon, the Philippines, towards the end of WWII. This is a compelling saga of the decision by middle management military officers, based upon reports that General MacArthur's invasion to retake the Philippines was being used by the occupying Japanese Imperial Army to eliminate all prisoners held in camps throughout the islands, to immediately plan and execute a military rescue operation to save these defenseless people. In early 1942, the Japanese army conquered the Philippines and took approximately 92,000 Filipino, American, and a collection of emigres from all over the world prisoner, after completing the destruction of defending forces at Bataan and Corregidor. The Bataan Death March is legendary. You must read about it. After almost three years of captivity, with the American military engaged in retaking the islands with their landings at Leyte and rescue imminent, the few remaining prisoners probably were unaware that the Japanese High Command had ordered that all prisoners be killed and their remains covered up in mass graves to hide the deeds. Prisoners who managed to escape from another camp encountered elements of the advancing liberators and described to them the horrors they had witnessed and the plans the Japanese had to exterminate the remaining human vermin. Word passed up the chain of command and the decision was made, planning ensued, and the rescue operation undertaken...undertaken by people you might never have heard about, if not for what they accomplished here.

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