

Program: Life Under Japanese Occupation, a Personal Experience

Speaker: Gonz Chua, MD, FACR, Scientech Member

Introduced by: Jeff Rasley

Guests: Vicky Ko, Frances and David Russell, Sara Jo Shoup, G. DeBota, Steve Sheline

Attendance: 117

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The talk involves Gonz's personal and family experiences and materials from "Under the Rising Sun" and "Blood On the Rising Sun", books written about the sufferings of the Filipino people under the occupation of the Japanese Empire from January, 1942 to Philippine liberation and Japanese surrender in August, 1945.

A few hours after attacking Pearl Harbor, Japanese bombers based in Formosa started attacking U.S. bases in the Philippines. A couple of weeks later, Japanese land forces landed and entered Manila on January 2, 1942. General MacArthur's forces retreated to Bataan and Corregidor and later retreated to Australia in April, 1942.

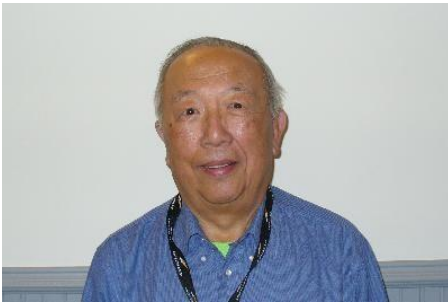
The Japanese immediately established a government, Philippine Executive Commission, under the complete control of General Homa. Nippongo became the official language.

In the first few months of occupation, numerous atrocities involving rape and the summary executions of nuns were reported. Churches, schools and universities were taken over and used as barracks and munitions depots.

Price controls of food and commodities were imposed with summary execution if one was caught storing or selling gasoline. Filipinos and Chinese were subjected to torture even for very mild offenses. Incidents involving our family and other Filipinos under those oppressive conditions were discussed.

As General MacArthur's forces started reclaiming the Philippines, the Japanese forces began their systematic attempt to kill off every Filipino in Manila. This was against the explicit command of their CIC, General Yamashita, to leave Manila as an open city. Our family survived the intense fighting and the fire that engulfed the whole city. Manila was finally liberated after a whole month of door-to-door, street-to-street fighting.

Over one hundred thousand civilians were killed in the one month of fighting, second only to Warsaw in the history of the Second World War.



Gonz Chua, MD, FACR