



San Diego Chapter 1 Member Biography

Bob Vogler

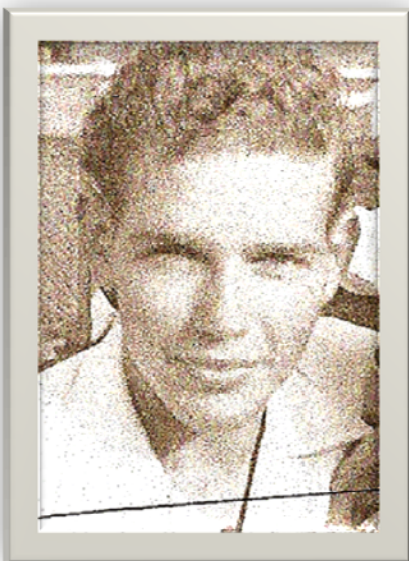
Bob was born in Seattle, WA, but grew up in Southern California. He enlisted in the military service in the Army Air Corps in January 1940, without any “Boot Camp” training.

He was almost immediately sent to the Philippines arriving there May 21, 1940. His military training there consisted of watching the sergeant show how to shoot the Springfield rifle and a machine gun, which he used on Bataan in combat.

Life in the Philippines at that time was some what relaxed. He was off duty each day by noon so he attended the Philippine University in the afternoons. His knowledge of aircraft instruments gave him a chance to work on airplanes of KLM, Philippine Airlines and any others who needed correction of their planes instruments.

On Dec. 7th he was assigned to the 17th Pursuit Squadron, commanded by the first Ace of WW II, “Buzz” Wagner. Later he met the crew of the B-17 piloted by Colon Kelly the Medal of Honor winner.

However things got bad when the Japanese Forces took over



the islands and Bob and 1,800 others went in the hold of a ship to Formosa, and then to Korea. This miserable trip in the hold of a Japanese freighter lasted 22 days. Where the body waste was hauled out in the same container in which the meager food was delivered.

They were sent to a Japanese industrial manufactory complex; called Mukden, Manchuria. Here they lived in sod covered barracks and walked five miles to work and back at night; where temperatures reached 45 below zero.

They were there to build locomotives for the Japanese war industries. These guys managed to learn how to do the work even though few had any machine work experience.

They also learned how to “pinch” oil lines to bearings; leave a hole in a gas tank, etc that caused great frustration with the Japanese in charge. Their reaction was to take 150 of the worst offenders, including Bob, back to Japan and the Lead Mines; where they each had a cart that they had to fill each day before they could leave; or they stayed another 8 hours.

At war’s end this big 6’ 3” guy came back to the states at 80 pounds; retired from the Air Force after 20 years as a Master Sergeant.

Bob was employed by General Dynamics, for 20 years as a Manufacturing Development Engineer, retired and still resides in San Diego.