

it but the Japanese saw him and started firing. He jumped into the sea and was shot several times. Miraculously, he lived and managed to escape – swimming for nine hours and eventually finding his way through the Philippine jungle to American guerrilla forces. It was Nielsen's story that helped convince the American Command to rescue the prisoners at Cabanatuan prison camp. It was also his story that made the prisoners of Cabanatuan particularly terrified. The Cabanatuan POWs had heard all about Palawan. They had assembled a secret radio and, in fact, knew a lot about American movements and successes in the war. The radio was ingenious. It was assembled inside a water canteen. Former POW James Hildebrand recalled how the prisoners tricked the Japanese into helping them build their secret radio: "...[The guys] were fixing Japanese radios and they would take certain parts out and tell the Japanese those parts needed replacing, and it was up to the Japanese to get those parts. Well, the Japanese never asked for those parts back, and if you get enough parts you can make a radio, and that's exactly what they did. They fooled the Japanese. Living in Fear The news of Palawan terrified the POWs. Many felt that they