

# Bruno Stasica:

World War II Paratrooper

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## Bruno Stasica:

I was born September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1921. I entered the Army in 1942. I went to the 28<sup>th</sup> division. After that I had my application in for the Air Force. They finally called me to get to the Air Force. I went overseas in 1942. Sometime in February of 1943 \_\_\_?\_\_\_ 3 or 4 times. First combat was in [Mindoro] Saw a lot of action there. After that we went to \_\_\_?\_\_\_. Saw a quite a lot of action down there. It was hot and humid and a lot of stuff that I wouldn't like to talk about what I saw. From there we took a rest and went to Corregidor. We jumped on Corregidor it'll be February 16<sup>th</sup>, 1945, just before, nine years since I jumped on Corregidor. I probably stayed there until March 2<sup>nd</sup> 'til MacArthur came on the island when everything was secured. We lost about 227 men, about 700 casualties. From there we went back to our base camp. From there we spent about two weeks \_\_\_?\_\_\_ to Nago. Some outfit was there but they needed some help. We didn't parachute there; we just come out and helped them. I was fighting there until we left about March 25<sup>th</sup>. I got wounded April 12<sup>th</sup> and that was all \_\_\_?\_\_\_. That's all.

**WILL:** You jumped out at Corregidor. That was when you were first coming back to take over Corregidor?

**STASICA:** Yeah.

**WILL:** Take over the Philippines?

**STASICA:** Yes. I jumped at Corregidor. That was—it was hard. Everybody, I'm sure \_\_\_?\_\_\_ because you know, the terrain was terrible.

**WILL:** That was hard to hit. That was nothing but rock.

**STASICA:** Yeah, rock. That's what they call it, The Rock.

**WILL:** Where did you take off from?

**STASICA:** Mindoro. All the way from Mindoro down there.

**WILL:** Okay. So they had all ready landed on Mindoro and secured that?

**STASICA:** Yeah. They secured that.

**WILL:** They secured the airfield.

**STASICA:** Yeah, it was all secured. The Japanese were in a tunnel. Big beautiful town there, hospital and everything like that. But that's just the way it was.

**WILL:** Was the tunnel in addition to the tunnels that were there?

**STASICA:** Yeah.

**WILL:** Before the Japanese took over?

**STASICA:** A hospital in there and everything. And little railroad going through there.

**WILL:** Did you see any evidences of the U. S. troops that were there before the Japs took over?

**STASICA:** No, I didn't see any troops. I just—They were captured when the Japs took over.

**WILL:** And the Japanese had been—they were there for at least 2 years. Something like that.

**STASICA:** About 2 years.

**WILL:** Before you guys came back and took over.

**STASICA:** Before we came back and took over.

**WILL:** You went back afterwards. You secured Corregidor. You went back to Mindoro.

**STASICA:** Mindoro. Stayed there about 2 weeks. \_\_\_?\_\_\_ [Nago], That's where I was wounded, April 12<sup>th</sup>. The day Roosevelt died. I was the last of my party.

**WILL:** Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup> wasn't it?

**STASICA:** April 12, 1945.

**WILL:** It was a Thursday, wasn't it?

**STASICA:** I don't know if it was Thursday, was it?

**WILL:** I think so.

**STASICA:** I don't remember what day it was. That was the day that I knew—I think we're ahead \_\_\_?\_\_\_ two days.

**WILL:** They're ahead of us.

**STASICA:** Yeah, I know. Three or two.

**WILL:** One.

**STASICA:** I got the news in the morning that Roosevelt died. I got hit in the afternoon.

**WILL:** They're just on the other side of the International dateline. So there must be 14 or 15 hours ahead of us.

**STASICA:** Yeah. That's what it was when I got the news. But there was something I could \_\_\_?\_\_\_, When I got back to the states I had malaria bad. Had that about 3 or 4 times.

**WILL:** You were in the hospital here, then?

**STASICA:** Oh, yes. Well, I \_\_\_?\_\_\_ sometimes I had no place to go. I went to a motel up the street. I was sick \_\_\_?\_\_\_.

**WILL:** When you came back, where were you in the hospital?

**STASICA:** I was in the hospital in Indiana. After I came back I didn't go to the hospital \_\_\_?\_\_\_. I just had nothing here. \_\_\_?\_\_\_. Mustering out pay and all that stuff. That's it.

**WILL:** Where did you get discharged?

**STASICA:** In Indiana, Camp Atterbury, Indiana. I got out January 9<sup>th</sup>, 1946. I was still in the hospital about a year. I was in El Paso, Texas, \_\_\_?\_\_\_. They gave us a 60-day leave. Come back and \_\_\_?\_\_\_ will give you another 30 days. Well, I got transferred to Indiana. Well, what else do you want to know? (Laughter)

**WILL:** Let's get started again. Okay.

**STASICA:** I went to Jump School in Fort Benning, Georgia in 1942. I took my training there for a month. Learned to parachute \_\_\_?\_\_\_. Jumped off a tower and everything like that. \_\_\_?\_\_\_ Job be-

fore I earned my parachute, you know it took me 5 days to make it.

**WILL:** Where did you get your basic then?

**STASICA:** Georgia.

**WILL:** In Georgia?

**STASICA:** Yes.

**WILL:** So you went through basic and then went into Jump School right after that.

**STASICA:** Yes. I went after training to the 28<sup>th</sup> Division. So after I went to Jump School they shipped me overseas.

**WILL:** Direct to ...

**STASICA:** Pacific.

**WILL:** And that was directly to the Philippines?

**STASICA:** Not to the Philippines. New Guinea.

**WILL:** New Guinea, and you were there for ...

**STASICA:** Oh, about a year or a year and a half.

**WILL:** Before you went up to the Philippines?

**STASICA:** Yes.

**WILL:** What did you do while you were in New Guinea?

**STASICA:** We fought there \_\_\_?\_\_\_ when they first jumped down but I

wasn't with that bunch because I came a little later. They were there 30 or 40 days. I come back to New Guinea when we all come together. That's about all I know about that. We lost a lot of men there. We have a lot of reunions now, every year. I went and had lot of fun there. Anything else?

**WILL:** Well, sure, I don't know what all they want so anything.

**STASICA:** Well, I was following a tank. There's 2 fellows beside me. Think they both got killed there. The Japanese opened up so fast, I don't know what happened. All I know my gun exploded. That was the last of me. Jumped in the hole or went back to first aid.

**WILL:** So the M-1 got hit.

**STASICA:** \_\_\_?\_\_\_ it blew right off. Some guys said, "You looked like the 4<sup>th</sup> of July." What else? I should have gotten prepared. On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1944, I was coming out of the Coronado Theater. It was on a Sunday, heard the news the radio, Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor. Well, I said, "Oh, my Gosh, what am I gonna do now?" That's about all. I guess. I waited until I got in the service. I was working at Roper's. A machinist with a 60 millimeter shell. I was single at the time. I know I had to go so I just back in 1942 ...

**WILL:** So you enlisted:

**STASICA:** Yah. That's about all.