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Memories of Hitting the Beaches in World War II

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Sept. 5, 1995

Contact: Bob Aaron, 309/556-3181**Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine****Memories of Hitting the Beaches in World War II****Editor's Note:** M. Russell Bramwell, a native of Bloomington, Ill., practices law in Palatine, Ill.

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.--What was it like when the U.S. invaded the Philippine island of Luzon during World War II? Just ask M. Russell Bramwell. He was a Navy lieutenant (junior grade) aboard an LSM, ships used in amphibious assaults on enemy beaches.

"It was probably the biggest party of ships you could imagine," Bramwell said. "We landed a company of Army personnel and tanks and trucks on the beach. The LSM was so maneuverable, we went back to the cargo ships, loaded up and hit the beach again. We kept doing this for four days. We were under fire from Japanese planes on and off."

Bramwell also helped troops hit the beaches in places like Borneo.

Bramwell's wartime experiences are recounted in the Fall, 1995, edition of *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine* in an article, "A Change in Plans: IWU and the War," marking the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. The article, written by Bob Aaron, IWU's director of public relations, is attached to this news release.

Bramwell was an IWU biology-chemistry pre-med major in 1941-42.

He returned to IWU after the war, recalling: "The university still had pretty girls and wonderful professors. Bloomington was my hometown. My fraternity, Theta Chi, was there. And, I had only a few courses to take" to graduate.

IWU, founded in 1850, enrolls 1,860 students in a College of Liberal Arts, College of Fine Arts, and a four-year professional School of Nursing. The university's endowment is valued at more than \$100 million. A \$25 million Center for Natural Science Learning and Research opened Aug. 28. A \$15 million athletics and recreation center opened in the fall of 1994. The Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching promoted Illinois Wesleyan to a "Baccalaureate I" institution in 1994, a classification that places it among 164 highly selective National Liberal Arts Colleges in the annual *U.S. News & World Report* rankings. *Barron's Profiles of American Colleges*, another respected college guide, rated IWU "highly competitive (+)" in its latest edition. *101 of the Best Values in America's Colleges and Universities* calls IWU "undoubtedly one of the finest small colleges in the country," adding, "Illinois Wesleyan has surged to national prominence on the basis of its reputation as a school with a rock-solid academic program."