



Never Forgotten

Vol. 8, Number 2

FALL – WINTER 2007

The Official Newsletter of the TAIWAN P.O.W. CAMPS MEMORIAL SOCIETY

Remembering!



Your suffering for us in the hands of our infamous enemy makes all of us sad. Words are too empty to thank you for what you have suffered for us – and what you have given us! Your going does not mean that we will forget. Your memory will live on with us as an example of great courage in the unselfish performance of duty for the sake of others. We will remember you!



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LOGO of the TAIWAN POW CAMPS MEMORIAL SOCIETY

Our logo - a poppy cross superimposed on a map of
Taiwan - was chosen because in the fall of 1998 the
returning POWs laid poppy crosses at all the former
campsites they visited. The poppy cross is recognised
worldwide as a symbol of remembrance to war
veterans.

THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE TAIWAN POW CAMPS MEMORIAL SOCIETY. . .

- * to continue the search for survivors of
the Taiwan POW camps from 1942 – 45.
- * to search for the locations of the
former Japanese POW camps on the
island of Taiwan. [*completed*]
- * to ensure the memory of the Taiwan
POWs is not forgotten. [*ongoing*]
- * to help with the organization of, and
participate in, the Commonwealth and
Allied memorial service for the Taiwan
POWs at Chinguashi every November.
- * to help educate the people of Taiwan
in a little-known part of their history.
- * to provide information to researchers,
scholars, museums and POW groups
on the Taiwan POWs' story. [*ongoing*]

LIST OF TAIWAN POW CAMPS. . . all found !

1. KINKASEKI #1 (Chinguashi)
2. TAICHU #2 (Taichung)
3. HEITO #3 (PingTung)
4. SHIRAKAWA #4 (Chiayi)
5. TAIHOKU #5 MOSAK (Taipei)
6. TAIHOKU #6 (Taipei)
7. KARENKO (Hualien)
8. TAMAZATO (Yuli)
9. KUKUTSU (Taipei)
10. OKA (Taipei)
11. TOROKU - (Touliu)
12. INRIN - (Yuanlin)
13. INRIN TEMP. (Yuanlin)
14. TAKAO (Kaohsiung)
15. CHURON (Taipei)

Thought . . .

“What we have done for ourselves
dies with us....what we have done
for others remains and is immortal.”

FROM THE DIRECTOR. . .

2007 has been another very busy and fruitful year in our efforts to make the story of the Taiwan POWs known to the world and to make sure that the men who suffered and those who died on this island during World War II will never be forgotten.

Through my travels to Japan, China and North America this year I have been able to interact with fellow researchers, explore former WWII POW campsites, meet with former POWs and veterans and hold memorial services to remember the men.

I have had some wonderful and memorable experiences, one of which was the reunion of the former crewmembers of the USS Block Island – one of the two aircraft carriers that helped evacuate the POWs from Taiwan in September 1945.

Another was the opportunity to help host a tour to Shenyang and to lead nine former POWs and their family members back to the former Mukden Camp there. In addition, our goal to ensure that the former Taiwan POWs - who were later transferred to Mukden, will be honoured and remembered there has also finally been realized.

We have had a large number of overseas visitors this year – from the Netherlands, the UK and the USA, as well as local groups and individuals taking tours of the camps. It is wonderful to be able to share first-hand the story of the Taiwan POWs with them and very rewarding to see the peace and closure this brings to them and their families.

We had another memorable Remembrance Week this year with 17 overseas guests. The theme was “remembering in the future”, and this was brought out by the participation of the younger family members present with us for the first time.

We still have many projects on the go, as well as the daily work of answering inquiries on the POWs and the camps. Work on compiling the archives is moving forward and we are constantly updating the Honour Roll on our website, with over 4200 of the 4344 POW names listed thus far.

As mentioned in our last newsletter, work is ongoing with the research on the Karenko Camp at Hualien, and we are looking at possibly erecting a memorial there. We are working with the Taipei City Gov't. to place a plaque on the old Taipei Prison Wall to commemorate the 14 American flyers executed there in June 1945, and we are also pursuing possible memorials for Taihoku Camp # 6 and Toroku Camp in the coming year. The “George Harrison Memorial Project” is also a top priority at this time and I hope that many will contribute to this worthy cause.

I want to thank our many friends and supporters worldwide for your continued help, encouragement and support. Thanks to those who continue to send us information, photos and other items to help tell more of the Taiwan POWs' story. Together we will ensure that the Taiwan POWs are “never forgotten”.

Sailor's Family Sends the Society Historic Photos

In late October we received an email from Linda and David Pickens of North Carolina in the USA letting us know that they had seen our website and that Linda's father Frank Wells Y1C had taken part in the evacuation of the POWs from Taiwan in September 1945 as a member of the crew of the *USS Brister* DE327.

The *Brister* was one of four DE's that went into Keelung Harbour on September 6th to transport the POWs out to the aircraft carriers *USS Block Island* and *USS Santee* for evacuation to Manila and freedom.

Linda and David advised us that during this mission her father had taken photos of the operation, and as the *Brister* also carried 50 POWs to Manila, he had talked with some of the men and photographed them as well. They wondered if we would like copies of the photos.



Frank Wells - 1945

Of course our response was affirmative so David and Linda kindly had the photos professionally copied from the original negatives and also had them scanned and put onto a CD. Within a few weeks the package arrived and my hands trembled as I opened it, in anticipation of what I would find inside.

The photos are an incredible piece of WW II history and we are so pleased to have them to further add to this chapter of the Taiwan POWs' story. It was through Frank's diary that we learned that the *Brister* had carried 50 POWs to Manila, and also thanks to his photos and his recording the names and address of several of the prisoners, that we were able to add nine more names of hitherto unknown former Taiwan POWs to our Honour Roll.

On sending the material Linda wrote, “The pictures taken by my father are a testament to the strength and courage of all the POWs freed that day. For all the hardship he had experienced, nothing could compare with the suffering and bravery of the POWs. What they had witnessed and what they had survived could not be measured other than in their spirit to live and to bear witness for those who had not survived.”

We are so grateful to Linda and David for their kindness in donating these items. In this way they are helping to further ensure that the POWs - and the sailors who rescued them, will never be forgotten.



POWs waiting evacuation



POWs on the Brister

In Memoriam

*The following former Taiwan POWs and friends
have passed away since our last newsletter.
We extend our sincerest sympathy to the families
of these men and assure them that although they
are no longer with us, they will - Never Be
Forgotten!*

ROBERT P. GARCIA

PVT., US ARMY
NOVEMBER 8, 2006

BALTAZAR M. APODACA

PFC., 515TH CAC, US ARMY
JANUARY 17, 2007

BOBBY T. BACON

PFC., US ARMY
JUNE 10, 2007

C. JOHN GREEN

SPR., ROYAL ENGINEERS
JULY 5, 2007

FERGUS McGHIE

GNR., 155TH FIELD REG'T. R.A.
AUGUST 25, 2007

JOHN MURRAY

GNR., 9TH COAST REG'T. R.A.
OCTOBER 27, 2007

SID DODDS

GNR., 5TH S.L. REG'T. R.A.
NOVEMBER 21, 2007

ERIC CARTER

PTE., 1ST / 5TH SHERWOOD FORESTERS
NOVEMBER 22, 2007

also

MRS. JOAN SEED

November 1, 2007
- Widow of former Kinkaseki POW
Peter Seed (Died 1977)

"We Will Remember Them"

The passing of POW friends...

Once again several of our very dear POW friends have left us in the past few months.

Joan Seed, the wife of the Kinkaseki Camp doctor Peter Seed, passed away at home on November 1. Joan was a dear friend to all of the POWs, and especially to my wife Tina and me. She came to Taiwan in 2000 and attended all the reunions in the UK as well. She was our guest for the ceremony at Buckingham Palace when I received my MBE – representing the POWs' wives and widows, and we have stayed in her home near Manchester. She was such an encouragement to me in the work and I will miss her very much.

(Cont'd on page 5)

TAIWAN POW MEMORIAL TREE . . .

Sunday November 18, 2007 another memorial was dedicated in the *Taiwan Prisoner of War Memorial Park* on the site of the former Kinkaseki POW Camp.

This time it was a "living" memorial – in the form of a Taiwan Green Maple tree which the Taipei County Government planted as part of the upgrade to the park in 2005.

Over the past two years the tree has done well. It is healthy and has grown, and during that time it has survived several typhoons. Like the former POWs, it is standing straight and tall in the midst of adversity – the storms and the rain and the cold weather that characterize the village where the POWs slaved those many years ago.

This summer we decided to adopt the tree and dedicate it to all the POWs who were interned in the fifteen former Taiwan camps and their family members. This fall a plaque was designed and manufactured and just a few days before our annual Remembrance Week was scheduled to begin, the plaque was installed at the site.

On Sunday morning as the guests arrived they observed the tree with its plaque and surrounded by a garden filled with poppy crosses and artificial poppies. The dedication ceremony took place prior to the regular Remembrance Day service at 10:30am.

Pastor Diane Wong of the Church of the Good Shepherd (Anglican) in Taipei officiated at the dedication and asked everyone to hold out their hands together as if in blessing the tree while a prayer of dedication was read. Members of the Brant family placed a large poppy cross at the base of the tree in honour and memory of Harry Brant Sr. who passed away earlier this year.

It was a very moving but happy moment for everyone as now there is an official POW Memorial Tree here in Taiwan to match the one that the Society and friends planted and dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas, Staffordshire UK in 2003. The memory of the POWs will live on through these two trees.



More photos on page 8

A Veteran Speaks. . .

In memory of all those who served...

Those of us who served can say with pride
I served my country in her time of need.
When democracy and freedom of speech
Were threatened to be replaced by a dictatorship,
We survived deprivations of food and comfort –
Shed blood, sweat, tears; were scared out of our wits
So that our country and the free world could enjoy
Freedom of speech, freedom to make decisions
And freedom to travel wherever we want –
So that our children would have a better place to live.

Please don't ever forget!

NEW POW SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE UK

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Cliff Foster as our new representative in the UK. Cliff, whose father - Gnr. A. J. Foster of the 5th Field Reg't. and a POW at Taihoku Camp # 6, Kinkaseki and Kukutsu, has been in contact with the Society over the past several years and has shown a vital interest in our work.

Cliff has had a great deal of involvement in the past with the Royal British Legion and has worked tirelessly over the years for the veterans and the former prisoners of war in the UK.

He is currently heading up the George Harrison Memorial Project on our behalf (*see article in the next column*).

For those in the UK, Cliff can be contacted by email at: cliffoster_600@hotmail.com / Tel. 01293-421357

The passing of POW friends...

(Cont'd from page 4)

Sid Dodds returned to Taiwan in 1998 and was the Australia rep for our Society for many years until recently when he suffered a stroke. He was instrumental in helping us find other POWs "down under" – including several former Dutch POWs. We kept in close touch all those years and I will really miss his cheery personality and his encouragement.

Eric Carter was another good ex-POW friend in the UK, and we were privileged to visit him and his wife Joan on several occasions. They were also with us for the dedication of the Taiwan POW Memorial Tree at Alrewas in 2003.

We extend our sympathy to the families of these wonderful people and assure them that these dear friends will live in our hearts and memories forever.

A word regarding donations to the Society:

Banks in Taiwan are reluctant to accept anything other than US dollars, so if making a donation to the Society please send the funds in **US\$** - preferably in a bank draft/cashier's cheque – made payable to "J. CHEN".

A Memorial for George Harrison

As you will have seen on our 'In Memoriam' page of the last issue, we noted the passing of **George Harrison, L/Bdr. 5th Field Reg't. R.A.** who was a POW in Taihoku Camp #6, Kinkaseki and Kukutsu Camps. He was a medical orderly and greatly assisted Dr. Wheeler and Capt. Seed in caring for the men. As the first medic to be allowed to go down the mine at Kinkaseki, he was instrumental in helping many men who were injured by rock-falls and other accidents, and he is also credited with saving a number of lives. I'm sure there are very few men who were in those camps who didn't know of George and who may have even come under his care at some time or other.

When Dr. Wheeler and Capt. Seed were sent to Shirakawa Camp, it was George and David Donnelly who were left on their own to care for the remaining 350 men. Later, after the Kinkaseki POWs were all moved to the jungle camp at Kukutsu, George and David assisted the American and British doctors who came into the camp with further medical care for the men until the war ended.

It has come to our attention that although George and his wife - who pre-deceased him the year before, were both cremated, no actual provision was made for a proper internment or memorial plaque for them. This is such a shame for one who did so much for the men, and we would like to do something to ensure that George and his wife are given a fitting burial and a memorial plaque. Our Society has decided to undertake this project and we are asking for your help.

Our UK representative Cliff Foster, whose father was also a POW at Taihoku, Kinkaseki and Kukutsu, became good friends with George in his last years, and he is representing the Society on this project. We have custody of the ashes and Cliff is working with a local cemetery to arrange a place of internment and a fitting memorial plaque. The cost will be about £1,250.00 or US/CAD\$2,500.00. We have already received a little over £225.00 and we have pledges for more, but we still have a way to go to before we can have the internment service which will be officially conducted by a Chaplain from the Royal British Legion.

We are asking our friends and supporters if they would like to donate to this very worthwhile cause. Donations should be sent directly to Cliff Foster in the UK and he can be contacted by email at: cliffoster_600@hotmail.com for more information and to make arrangements for sending the donations.

This is a wonderful opportunity for all of us to recognize and say thanks to a great man, and to ensure that he will not be forgotten. Please help us to achieve this goal.

POW HONOUR ROLL

The POW Honour Roll on our website now contains over 4200 names of the former 4344 Taiwan POWs. It is searchable, thus making it easier to find names and details of the former POWs. Click on the section entitled "THE MEN" to view the Honour Roll.

65th ANNIVERSARY REMEMBRANCE WEEK - 2007

It was 65 years ago this year – in late August of 1942 - that the first prisoners of war of the Japanese were brought to Taiwan, then known as Formosa.

That first group came from the Philippines and was comprised of Gen. Wainwright and most of the senior officers from Bataan and Corregidor, plus a number of enlisted men. They landed at the port of Takao – now Kaohsiung, and spent about a week at Heito Camp near present day PingTung before being transferred to Karenko Camp on the eastern coast of the island. A couple of weeks later most of the senior British and Australian officers including Gen. Percival and the governors of Malaya, Singapore and the Straits Settlements, also arrived at Takao and soon joined their American counterparts at Karenko.

More Americans from the Philippines arrived in mid-September and were sent to Taichu Camp where they remained for two months. Other small groups came in the fall of 1942, and then in November another large movement of POWs took place.

A convoy of hellships bound for Japan off-loaded about 500 British prisoners from the *Dainichi Maru* at Takao in mid November. 300 went to Taichu to replace the Americans who were then loaded aboard the *Dainichi Maru* and sent on to Japan. The remaining POWs were kept at Heito Camp.

About this same time 1100 British POWs were shipped from Singapore on the hellship *England Maru* and landed at the northern port of Keelung on November 14th. 523 of these men were sent to the Kinkaseki Camp and the balance went to Taihoku Camp # 6 in present day Taipei.

More prisoners continued to arrive from Singapore, the Dutch East Indies and Hong Kong throughout 1943 and then more Americans came into the Taiwan camps in 1944. By early 1945 a great many of the 4344 Taiwan POWs had been moved to Japan and Manchuria leaving about 1200 remaining when the war ended in August 1945.



The “hellship” England Maru

On November 14th - 65 years to the day when he landed here the first time, former POW L/Bdr. George Reynolds of the 5th Field Reg^t. R.A. arrived in Taiwan again. Accompanying him were his brother and his daughter and her friend, along with the family members of two other former Taiwan POWs Harold Brant and William Anderson.

All of the men had been POWs at Kinkaseki, and Sgt. William Anderson of the 155th Lanarkshire Yeomanry had died there in January 1945. He was represented by his granddaughter Sally Dorrian.

Like George, L/Cpl. Harold Brant of the 9/11th Indian Division Signals had visited Taiwan four times since his release as a prisoner of war and he wanted to come again last year, but was not in good health and sadly he passed away on March 10th. Ten members of the Brant “clan” and a close friend joined the group this year to pay tribute to Harry, as he was affectionately known.

Remembrance Week started off as usual with a visit to Chinguashi for a look at the former POW camp and mine. The group viewed the POW exhibit in the Museum of Gold and later toured the # 5 mine tunnel which is very similar to the # 6 tunnel where the POWs slaved those many years ago. Later they were shown the route the POWs had to take to go to work at the mine each day, and this was followed by an extensive tour of the former camp area. On the way back to Taipei a stop-over was made at the docks in Keelung Harbour where the men had arrived on that cold, rainy November day back in 1942, and where George had sailed home to freedom in September 1945.



Former POW George Reynolds (center) and FEPOW family members outside the entrance to Kinkaseki # 5 Mine Tunnel

The next day was spent in sightseeing around Taipei, visiting many prominent landmarks like the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial, the Lungshan Temple, The Grand Hotel, the National War Memorial and a drive by of the former Taihoku Camp 6 site where Harry and George spent their first months as POWs in Taiwan.

On Saturday morning the group visited the hills south of Hsintien for a memorial service on the site of the former Kukutsu Camp where the men from Kinkaseki were moved after the mine closed in the spring of 1945. This move likely saved their lives as they were destined to have been put down the “short cut” tunnel and blown up as a final act to “dispose of all the prisoners and leave no trace” as the Japanese high command had ordered.

The group was welcomed by the local residents and a joint bi-lingual Remembrance Service was held at the memorial erected by the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society in 1999 and re-dedicated after its relocation in 2004.

(con't on page 7)

REMEMBRANCE WEEK 2007 *(cont'd.)*

During the service we were favoured by musical selections played on traditional Chinese instruments by a local orchestra, and with poems read and remarks from several of those present, as well as the laying of wreaths handcrafted from local flowers by the district chairman's wife, it was a service that we soon won't forget.



Memorial Service at the former Kukutsu Camp

Saturday evening featured the POW Banquet in honour of the returning POW and the family members. A special ceremony - "The Empty Table" - was held at the outset to commemorate those former POWs who are no longer with us and thus could not be present at the dinner.



The "Empty Table" – remembering those no longer with us.

Former POW George Reynolds spoke and expressed his gratitude for what is being done here in Taiwan to honour and remember the men who suffered in all of the camps here. Then Molly Graham spoke on behalf of the family of Harry Brant, bringing a tribute to her father. Sally Dorrian then related how the death of her grandfather in the Kinkaseki Camp in 1945 affected her and her whole family. In closing she proposed a toast to him and all the FEPOWs.

The Remembrance Service on Sunday morning was well attended again with more than 80 persons present. The main service was preceded by the dedication ceremony for the new Taiwan POW Memorial Tree (*see article on page 4*). The tree will stand as a living memorial to all the Taiwan POWs, and along with the Taiwan POW Memorial Tree erected and dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum in the UK in 2003, it will honour the men in perpetuity.

The Remembrance Service featured an address by Mr. Ron MacIntosh, Executive Director of the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei – our co-host for this year's event, and tributes to the POWs and the veterans were rendered by former POW George Reynolds and Sally Dorrian.

Leeann Brant-ley, the granddaughter of Harry Brant read "A Time to Remember", and to conclude 10 year-old Adam Gallant, the great-grandson of Harry Brant and another granddaughter Nikki Graham, read the poem "We Will Remember Them". It was a very moving moment as the young generation pledged to always remember the POWs.



The young people remember and honour the former POWs.

Following the addresses and reading of poems, wreaths were laid to remember those who made the supreme sacrifice for their country and also those who returned home, scarred and marked for life because of their ordeals here in Taiwan's prisoner of war camps.

Once again Canadian piper Mal Turner played the marches and accompanied the laying of the wreaths on the bagpipes, and Andrew Tsao a student from Taipei American School played Taps and Reveille. Rev. Diane Wong of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Taipei gave the message and led the Prayer of Remembrance at this year's service.



Former POW George Reynolds pays tribute to his mates.

The Week of Remembrance continued for our visitors from Monday to Wednesday with some sightseeing and visits to special venues around Taipei City and County. We were sad to see them go and we look forward to next year when hopefully more POWs and family members will return to be with us for this memorable event.

More Remembrance Day Photos



The Taiwan POW Memorial Tree



POW Memorial Poppy Garden



Dedication of the POW Memorial Tree

A few more scenes from this year's 11th Annual Remembrance Day event – held on the site of the former Kinkaseki Prisoner of War Camp at Chinguashi, Taiwan, Rep. of China



Taiwan POW Memorial with flag tributes



The Last Post and Reveille



A minute's silence – Lest We Forget!

USA - VFW NATIONAL COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF VISTS TAIWAN

Mr. George Lisicki, USA Veterans of Foreign Wars National Commander-in-Chief for 2007-2008, Mrs. Lisicki and Mr. Michael Wysong, Director of VFW National Security & Foreign Affairs, visited Taiwan from September 8 to 11. Society Director Michael Hurst was pleased to assist the ROC Veterans' Affairs Commission in hosting a trip to Chinguashi for these distinguished guests on September 9. They had a tour of the former POW Camp and laid flowers on the POW Memorial. The visitors showed great interest and felt privileged to be able to witness a former part of WW II history.

During their time together some discussion was held regarding the VFW supporting worldwide FEPOW Day. It is hoped that the VFW will help sponsor and promote FEPOW Day in the United States in honour and memory of the thousands of American ex-POWs who suffered so much in POW camps all over the Far East. Mr. Lisicki promised to present the plan to the national executive of the VFW and it is hoped that they will take up the cause as well.



Touring the former POW campsite



Cmdr. Lisicki & Director Wysong pay tribute to the former POWs



With VAC Staff by the POW Memorial