



Never Forgotten

Vol. 9, Number 2

FALL – WINTER 2008

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

2008 - Another Wonderful Year!



FEPOW Day – Sunday, August 10



Exploring remains of the Senior Officers Camp at Liao Yuan, China



Discovery of the Taihoku POW's lake



Being conferred as a Research Fellow of Shenyang University



Visiting with FEPOW friends on the UK tour



Memorial Service for George & Gladys Harrison - Sept. 30th



Enjoying fellowship with the POWs at the UK POW Reunion - Sep 12 - 15



Placing a Poppy Cross at the COFEPOW Museum in memory of the Taiwan POWs



Another successful & memorable Remembrance Week event - Nov 12 - 19

**TAIWAN POW CAMPS MEMORIAL
SOCIETY**

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**TAIWAN POW CAMPS MEMORIAL
SOCIETY - BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Michael Hurst, MBE - Society Director -
VP and General Mgr., J. Chen Enterprises Taiwan;
Writer; Historian

Prof. Jerome Keating, PhD. - Professor,
Writer; Historian

Jack Hsu - Supervisor, Admin Dept., SEMPO,
DORTS, Taipei City Gov't.; Ret. Lt. Cmdr., ROC Navy

Ted Chen - Project Executive, Institute of History
and Philology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan

Mark Wilkie - Educational Development and
Training Practitioner; Historian; former soldier

Stuart Saunders - President, Esdesign Industrial
Design

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Missionary, Canada

Harry Blackham - former FEPOW, England

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Australia - **Rod Martin** ramartin@ozemail.com.au

USA - vacant

EX-OFFICIO. . .

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Commerce and Industry Office, Taipei

Michael Reilly - Director-General, British Trade
and Cultural Office, Taipei

Ron MacIntosh - Executive Director, Canadian
Trade Office in Taipei

Menno Goedhart - Representative, Netherlands
Trade and Investment Office, Taipei

Michelle Slade - Director, New Zealand
Commerce and Industry Office, Taipei

**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 memorial service for
the Taiwan POWs at Chinguashi every
November. [*ongoing*]
- * 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 . . .

When life throws you a
curve, remember - one move
can turn it into a home run!

Taiwan Celebrates FEPOW Day

FEPOW (Far East Prisoner of War) Day was first conceived last year in the UK and is a concerted drive to have August 15th designated as a day to especially remember all those – military and civilians, who suffered imprisonment by the Japanese during World War II. The movement is spreading worldwide and for the first time ever this year the event was celebrated in Taiwan.

Organized by the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society and co-sponsored by the Department of Cultural Affairs of the Taipei City Government, the event was held at the Taipei Film House in the heart of the city on Sunday August 10th. More than 30 turned up for the afternoon's activity which featured an exhibition of World War II and prisoner of war artifacts from the Society's growing museum collection, a remembrance service for the POWs and the showing of the film "A War Story" – which depicts the life of Major Ben Wheeler a Canadian doctor in the infamous Kinkaseki Camp.

Society board member Jerome Keating was the emcee and after welcoming all the guests, explained a little of what FEPOW Day means and what its goals are for the future. Society director Michael Hurst MBE then shared a little of the Taiwan POWs' story and what the Society is doing to tell that story and make sure that the former Taiwan POWs are never forgotten.

Just prior to the showing of the film a short remembrance service was held on behalf of all the FEPOWs. Board member Mark Wilkie – a more recent veteran, spoke about remembrance and read a tribute to the POWs entitled "A Time to Remember". A moment's silence was observed and then the hymn "Abide With Me" was played. As this hymn – a favorite of all of the captives softly filled the room, the words were read and everyone could understand and feel why this old hymn meant so much to them.

Following the film a time of fellowship was held with refreshments and many stayed to view the exhibit and chat and ask questions about the POWs in Taiwan. We want to thank the Taipei City Government and the Taipei Film House for their assistance in making the day such a success, and we hope that when we hold it again next year, we will have an even greater turnout.

Below are a few photos of the day's activity:



Society Director Michael Hurst addressing the gathering



Former veteran Mark Wilkie pays tribute to the POWs



The WWII Military & Far East Prisoner of War Exhibit



Viewing the displays and learning about the FEPOWs

In Memoriam

The following former Taiwan POWs 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!

ALEX W. McCREIDIE

GNR., 155TH FIELD REGIMENT, R.A.
2000 – NOT REPORTED EARLIER

JOHN MCCANN

PVT., US ARMY
JUNE 3, 2007

JOSEPH L. BOUDOLF

CM1C, US NAVY
FEBRUARY 21, 2008

ALEXANDER H. MATHEWS

CPL., US ARMY.
MARCH 14, 2008

EVERETT C. ROSEEN

1ST SGT., US ARMY
MARCH 29, 2008

CLEMENT P. SCHMITT

PFC., 59TH CAC US ARMY
JULY 5, 2008

WILLIAM "BILL" NOTLEY

GNR., 155TH FIELD REGIMENT, R.A.
AUGUST 14, 2008

EDWARD L. ROLLIE

SGT., US ARMY
DATE UNKNOWN

HARRY CHATT

BDR., 125TH ANTI-TANK REG'T, R.A.
OCTOBER 6, 2008

GEORGE MCKAY

SGMN., ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS
OCTOBER 15, 2008

MAURICE CUNNINGHAM

SPR., ROYAL ENGINEERS
NOVEMBER 8, 2008

WYNDHAM K. FORBES

CAPT., 5TH FIELD REGIMENT, R.A.
NOVEMBER 14, 2008

GEORGE E. BURLAGE

CPL., US MARINE CORPS
DEC. 4, 2008

"We Will Remember Them"

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". Thank you.

REMEMBERING DEAR POW FRIENDS. . .

So many of our dear FEPOW friends have passed away this year. Many have been very special friends and have helped us so much in our study of the former Taiwan camps. Here are tributes to a few of them . . .

John McCann - was the only Takao POW to ever contact us and through him we learned about conditions in the camp and the men who were there.

Clement Schmitt - was the only American ex-POW from a Taiwan camp to ever re-visit Taiwan. He came here in 2004. He had been in the Taichu Camp following his journey in September 1942 on the hellship Lima Maru. He only stayed in Taiwan for two months as later in mid-November that year he and the other Americans were transferred to Yokohama Japan. He spent his later years visiting schools in his native Florida, sharing his story with the students in an effort to help them learn and remember the suffering of the POWs for their freedom.

Bill Notley - the "little boxer of the 155th Field Reg't.", was a lightweight boxing champion in the army and a dear friend. Bill almost never missed a POW reunion anywhere and was always happy to be with his old mates again. He came to Taiwan in 2000 and I met him several times in the UK as well. Always having a cheery smile and a good story to tell, he will be missed by his many comrades.

Harry Chatt - had also become a good friend over the past couple of years. Harry supplied us with a lot of material, documents and drawings of his time as a POW. He was supposed to attend this year's POW reunion in Newcastle but wasn't feeling well at the time. I spoke to him on the phone at his home after the reunion and he was very cheery but sadly he died just three weeks later.

George McKay - although we hadn't had much interaction over the years, George always liked to receive our newsletters and when I knew I would be visiting Scotland this September I telephoned him to try to arrange a visit. We both looked forward to meeting for the first time, but unfortunately he wasn't well so our meeting never took place. He died a month later.

Maurice Cunningham - was a very dear and long time FEPOW friend. We first came to know each other in 1998 and we visited in his home several times. He also gave me a lot of material and information about the camps and the men, and was instrumental in helping me with a lot of info on the camps and finding the men. I had been to see him in September during my visit to the UK and he passed away quite suddenly in early November.

Wyndham K. Forbes - aged 99 years, was our oldest Taiwan FEPOW. In our last issue we wished him happy birthday and we were looking forward to celebrating his 100th. He was one of the last of the officers, a good friend and instrumental in helping with information about the Shirakawa Camp. His 1943 Christmas card, given several years ago, is featured on our website this year.

It is very apparent that we are losing these wonderful men at an increasing rate and it is so important that we make sure that they are honoured before it is too late!

TAIHOKU CAMP POWS' LAKE CONFIRMED

As mentioned in our last issue, fellow board member Jack Hsu - a retired ROC Navy Lt./Cmdr. and I were able to visit the ROC Naval headquarters in Taipei to view what we believed was the remains of the man-made lake that the POWs at Taihoku Camp 6 dug by hand those many years ago from 1942 - 45.

During the summer months and at the POW reunion in September, we were able to confirm this with several of the POWs in the UK who had worked on the project. It is wonderful at last to have uncovered yet another piece of the legacy of the Taiwan POWs.



View of the POW lake with the island as it is today.

We want to thank the R.O.C. Ministry of Defense and the R.O.C. Navy Headquarters for their help and co-operation in this historic venture.



FROM THE DIRECTOR. . .

This has been a very exciting year for the Society. With the discovery of many new historical records and the further exploration of the former POW sites on the island as well as in Manchuria, plus visiting with former POWs at the reunion and throughout the UK, and with the production of the film on Jinguashi which will be shown across Asia in December, we have accomplished much toward telling more of the story of the Taiwan POWs and to ensuring that they will never be forgotten.

I am also pleased with the correspondence we have received from the POWs and their family members. This year we have had a lot of enquiries from family members and relatives for information on POW fathers, grandfathers, uncles etc., and not only have I been able to help these folks, but they have also contributed to our knowledge of their loved ones who were POWs here. It is by working together like this that we can learn more of the POWs' story.

Once again I want to thank our many friends and supporters worldwide for your encouragement, help 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".

Welcome...

We are honoured to welcome Ms. Alice Cawte, the new Director of the Australian Commerce and Industry Office in Taipei as an ex-officio member of our board of directors as of this November.

Alice replaces Steve Waters who left Taiwan for another posting. We want to express our appreciation for the interest and support that Steve and his staff have given to our Society over the past several years and we wish him well and look forward to working with Alice and the staff of the ACIO in the days ahead.

TAIWAN POW HONOUR ROLL IS NOW NEARLY COMPLETE

In our last issue we talked about the improvements and updates to our Honour Roll made earlier this year, and mentioned that basically it was only the British section that was incomplete and lacking a lot of information, due to the British government's lack of care and support for the records and the memory of their WWII veterans.

Well in this issue I am happy to report that thanks to a huge amount of material found in the National Archives in Washington DC by my good friend and well-known American POW researcher Roger Mansell, we have now been able to add a lot of information on the names, ranks and regiments of many of the British POWs that we were previously missing. These records were only declassified in May of this year, and had we had this material years ago it would have saved a tremendous amount of work. We are so pleased to have it at last – even if it did come from the USA rather than the British government and its archives.

Thanks to this recent find, the names of most of the British POWs on Taiwan are as correct and complete as can be for now, and with some further additions and corrections that have been made to the Roll this fall, we are very close to having all or most of the names of the men who were POWs on Taiwan listed.

There is still some work to be done yet to help make sure these wonderful men are not forgotten, but we have come a long way with the Honour Roll this year.

View the Honour Roll at: www.powtaiwan.org – *The Men*

DEDICATION OF MEMORIAL PLAQUE TO HONOUR EXECUTED POW AIRMEN

We are still patiently working on the project to erect a plaque on the wall of the former Taipei Prison to honour the memory of 14 the American airmen who were needlessly executed there by a Japanese firing squad 63 years ago. We hope to have it in place by next June.

Efforts are ongoing with the City of Taipei and Taiwan Telecom to finalize all of the details and plans, and local Taiwan friends and supporters will be notified of more details by email as progress is made.



2008 TAIWAN POW REUNION

Sept. 12 - 15 – Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK

When Mrs. Eileen Bacon - a friend of the Harry Brant family, came to Taiwan in 2007 for our Remembrance Week event, she asked “Why don’t we have this kind of reunion in the UK?” I explained that it takes someone to plan and organize these kinds of events and that not many were willing to do that nowadays with the busy life that everyone leads. Later, after she returned home to the UK again, I received an email from her stating that she felt that she wanted to organize a reunion “for the men” and could I help? I readily agreed and over the next many months we worked together with the able assistance of her daughter Clare Towns to put together what was a wonderful event.

Over 65 people attended the reunion which was held at the Sea Hotel in South Shields - including 13 former Taiwan POWs, many with their family members and several other family members and friends as well. Cliff Foster our UK rep helped with the program and we invited FEPOW researcher Keith Andrews to join us as well.

Friday was registration and the welcome dinner and a great time of renewing old friendships and meeting new friends. Saturday morning was spent fellowshiping together, taking group photos and giving an interview to the local media. In the afternoon – after a delicious fish and chip lunch, we had a delightful bus tour to Bamburgh Castle and the north coast village of Seahouses. The Saturday evening dinner was very special as we were joined by Cllr. Alex Donaldson, the Mayor of South Tyneside and his wife Brenda, and afterward an evening of fellowship and reminiscing followed.



With Eileen and the former Taiwan POWs

Sunday morning saw everyone gathered at the Hebburn War Memorial for a very meaningful remembrance service in honour of the Taiwan POWs. The local branch of the Territorial Army – The Javelin Bn. of the Parachute Reg’t., provided an honour guard and wreath escorts and led the march to the memorial to begin the service. After a welcome by Cliff Foster and the opening prayer read by Keith Andrews, Cllr. John Anglin, Deputy Mayor of South Tyneside brought greetings from the city. I then gave a few words of tribute on behalf of the Taiwan POWs, which was followed by readings and remembrances by former POWs Stan Vickerstaff and Stan Wood. George Reynolds and

Adam Gallant, great-grandson of Harry Brant then shared the question and reply for why do the veterans march and



George & Adam reading

mourn - a very moving reading. Mollie Warner, sister of former Kinkaseki medic Clarence Parker and Greg Brown, grandson of Stan Wood both read poems in tribute to the men. Following this Andrew Blake the county rep for the Royal British Legion brought a tribute to the POWs as well.

The Northeast Concert Band played *Amazing Grace* and this was followed by the remembrance message and prayer read by Keith Andrews. The band played *Abide with Me* during the laying of the wreaths and trumpeter Ian Watson rendered the *Last Post* and *Reveille*. To conclude the service everyone read in unison *The FEPOW Prayer*.

After the service we were treated to a lovely lunch at the TA hall and this was followed by a time of fellowship in the lounge of the Sir William Fox Hotel. I showed the film “*Kinkaseki Then and Now*” and it brought back a lot of memories for the men. Later that evening we had a wonderful closing dinner with live music - the old wartime songs and other favorites, and special thanks were given to Eileen and Clare for all their hard work and efforts in organizing the reunion. It was a wonderful weekend and there has even been some talk of doing it again next year!



Scenes from the reunion & memorial service

NOTE: Following the reunion I spent another 2 1/2 weeks in the UK, travelling to Edinburgh and Glasgow, meeting with other Taiwan POWs and family members and enjoying the Scottish culture – and food! Then it was down to Yorkshire where I stayed with Cliff and Margaret Phillips and visited the National Arboretum and the COFEPOW Museum as well as some other FEPOWs and sights of interest. I want to thank Cliff and Margaret for their hospitality and also for helping to arrange all my travel and hotels in the UK. The last week was spent in Crawley, Sussex with Cliff Foster for the memorial service for George Harrison. (See story pg 7)

A Memorial for George Harrison

The internment service for the ashes of Taiwan POW George Harrison, former L/Bdr. 5th Field Reg't. R.A. and his wife Gladys took place on Tuesday September 30, at the Surrey and Sussex Crematorium in Crawley, West Sussex, at 2pm in the afternoon. Royal British Legion padre Rev. Grahame Berridge officiated at the ceremony.

Attending the event, were three former POW mates - Stan Vickerstaff, George Reynolds and Jack Fowler - to help honour and remember a man who gave himself so tirelessly and unselfishly for the betterment of his fellow POWs.

Major-General Michael Steele, President of the Horley Branch of the Royal Artillery Assoc. and several members of the local Royal British Legion including standard bearer Geoff Paston, were also present.



Memorial service for George & Gladys Harrison

Our UK POW Society rep Cliff Foster was the driving force behind organizing the memorial service and making the arrangements with the crematorium for the internment of the ashes and the dedication of the memorial bench. It was a lovely service and we are glad that George will now have a proper final resting place. Thanks so much, Cliff.

In addition, with the funds raised by the Society, a teak bench was obtained and dedicated with a bronze plaque to George and Alfred Foster who is also buried in this cemetery and the other Taiwan POWs. This memorial will ensure that their memory lives on forever.



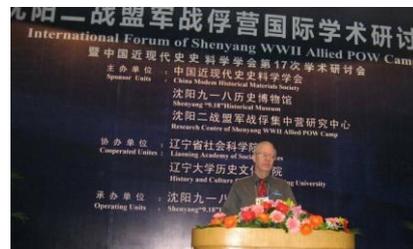
With Stan, George, Jack and Cliff by the memorial bench

RETURN TO MUKDEN

On the invitation of Ao and Pat Wang of the Mukden POW Remembrance Society and the gov't of Shenyang City, Liaoning and Jilin Provinces in China, on October 15th of this year I once again found myself back in Mukden Manchuria.

This was my third visit to the area and I had been invited to speak at a conference on the Mukden POW camps, telling the part the Taiwan POWs played in the story. I was joined by POW researcher Roger Mansell - a long-time friend and associate, Wiko Lamain a former Dutch civilian internee, two former Mukden POWs and a number of family members.

The conference was good as I was able to share more of the story of the Taiwan POWs who came to Mukden in the last year of the war. While there I was honoured to be made a Research Fellow by Shenyang University and also by the 918 Museum Research Centre, for my work with the Taiwan and Mukden POWs. Roger was also given this honour.



Speaking at the POW conference

Perhaps the most exciting part of the visit was the trip north to Liao Yuan, to work with POW researcher Li Jun and the gov't. officials working on preserving and restoring the former site of the Hsi-an POW Camp where the top generals and governors of the Asian colonies were held in the last months of the war. I had been working with Li Jun for many months and now had the opportunity to see the site for myself.

Two exciting days were spent exploring the site and having meetings with officials to try to plan the best way to preserve the site and make a meaningful POW museum. There are a number of obstacles to overcome but we will be working together on this project and I know one day it will come to be.

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Exploring the site of the Hsi-an Camp – old POW bldg.

Meeting to discuss the future POW museum

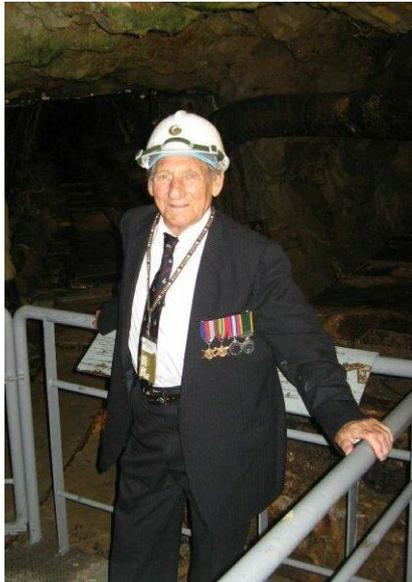


W/ Li Jun (l) and gov't. officials

2008 REMEMBRANCE WEEK – A SPECIAL TIME

It was 66 years ago on November 13th 1942 that a Japanese hellship called the England Maru, docked in Keelung Harbour with 1150 allied prisoners of war aboard. 523 of those men were sent to the infamous copper mine camp at Jinguashi, better known in those times as Kinkaseki, and Walter Kirkby was one of those men – he was POW # 278. On November 12th 2008 he returned to the camp again!

This time it was as a guest of the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society, and he was here – not to slave down the mine, but to see the old place again as a free man and to lay his ghosts to rest. He came from Yorkshire in the UK with his wife Mary, daughter Christine and son-in-law Bob Gate.



“Down the Mine” in better times

While taking a tour of the Gold Ecological Park, the mining museum and the POW display, the old mine tunnel and finally the POW camp site, his mind wandered back over the years and he could vividly remember the time he spent there. He could also remember his mates, some of whom lay buried in the cemetery across the valley from the camp when he left

Taiwan in February 1945 to go to another prison camp in Japan. It was there – on the island of Kyushu in the Omine Camp, where he finished the war – this time slaving in a coal mine!

Friday saw the arrival of two more POW guests - Brian and Jim Ferguson, the sons of L/Bdr. George F. Ferguson, 5th Field Reg't., R.A. who had been a prisoner at Taihoku # 6 Camp for all of his time in Taiwan.

Saturday morning the group took a trip to the Kukutsu “jungle” Camp in the hills south of Hsintien for a memorial service with our Taiwanese friends there. (See story pg 9)

On Saturday evening our annual POW banquet was held once again at the Imperial Hotel in Taipei and as every year, a good number of friends and supporters turned up for an evening of excellent food and fellowship.

Walter Kirkby with WWII Vet Art Scholl



Sunday the 16th saw threatening weather with some rain, but that did not dampen the spirits of the more than 70 people who showed up for the Remembrance Day service on the site of the former Kinkaseki POW Camp in the POW Memorial park in Jinguashi.

Piper Mal Turner led off the service with a selection on the bagpipes, Rev. Diane Wong opened the service in prayer and Michael Hurst, Director of the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society gave the opening remarks, introduced the POW guests and spoke about remembering those who sacrificed so much for our freedom.

Michelle Slade, Director of the New Zealand Commerce and Industry Office in Taipei brought a message on behalf of the Commonwealth and Allied representatives, before Walter Kirkby reflected on his time as a POW there and his memories of his mates. Jim Ferguson then spoke on behalf of his father, and Chris Gate read the poem “POW Tribute”

Mark Wilkie, a POW Society board member read “A Time to Remember” which was followed by a message and prayer of remembrance from Rev. Wong. Wreaths were laid on the memorial as the pipes softly played and this was followed by the Last Post, a minute’s silence and Reveille – ably played on the trumpet by Andrew Tsao.

Walter paying tribute to his mates and remembering his time at Kinkaseki Camp



Everyone then joined together in reciting the “Ode of Remembrance” before our piper played his closing number to end the service. A time of fellowship followed around the memorial and at the picnic lunch provided by the Trade Offices at the nearby community center.

It was a great weekend and a wonderful week for our POW guests and we hope we will have more POWs and their family members coming to join us in years to come.



POW guests with Piper Mal Turner

UPDATE ON THE KAOHSIUNG WAR & PEACE PARK



The City of Kaohsiung has announced that work is still ongoing with the renovations to the War and Peace Park at Chijin Beach. The work is progressing nicely and the project is now expected to be completed by the end of February 2009.

We hope to attend the dedication ceremony sometime after that and will bring you photos of the completed park and the dedication ceremony in our 2009 spring issue.

MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD AT KUKUTSU CAMP



With our Taiwanese friends at Kukutsu Camp for the memorial service

On Saturday November 15th our Remembrance Week guests went to the Kukutsu “jungle” Camp in the hills south of Hsintien to join with our Taiwanese friends there in having a memorial service for the men who were interned in that camp. Many of the POWs there had been friends of Walter Kirkby and George Ferguson, and although neither of the men had been at Kukutsu Camp, both families wanted to join with our Taiwanese friends to pay respect to their comrades at the memorial site.

Following a lovely service accompanied by a local Chinese urhu orchestra, we were all invited to stay for lunch at a local guest house before returning to the city.

MORE ON THE SITE OF THE OLD TAKAO CITY HOSPITAL...

In our last issue we mentioned the discovery of the site of the former Takao Hospital. Since then – with further assistance from Ms. Grace Liu of the City of Kaohsiung Culture Bureau, we have been able to learn more.

The hospital was established in 1914 and called “Takao Hospital”. It had internal medicine, surgery, ophthalmology and three therapeutical departments. For many years it was the main hospital in downtown Kaohsiung – or Takao, as it was known back then. The hospital provided good medical care to the residents of Takao right through to the end of the Second World War and beyond.

During WWII, the hospital treated many local residents who were injured in the bombing of the city and harbour area. Located not far from the harbour, it was used at times to treat very serious medical cases in the Takao POW Camp, as well as a number of men on some of the hellships which came to Takao on their way to Japan. One of the largest groups was a number of men off the Tottori Maru in October 1942. The POWs were in such a bad state that they were left in Takao for care and some even died there.

In 1945, after retrocession from Japanese occupation, the name of the hospital was changed to “Taiwan Provincial Hospital” and the departments of OBS, Pediatrics, ENT and Dermatology were added; by 1958 there were 150 beds.

The hospital closed down in 1978 and moved to another part of the city. It was re-named the “Kaohsiung Municipal Min-Sheng Hospital” and the bed capacity was increased to the present number of 338. In 2003 the hospital was assigned the task of being a primary disease control center and it is also a regional medical teaching center.

Below are a couple of old pictures of the Takao Hospital taken in its declining years. This will at least give some idea of what the buildings looked like when the POWs were there.

We are thankful to the Kaohsiung City Culture Bureau and the Minsheng Hospital for their help in tracing this story, and hopefully in the future we may learn even more about it and the men who were treated there.



View of the front of the hospital circa 1970's



View of the hospital compound from an upper floor. The hospital was spread out over a large area.



Speech to Taipei Rotary Club Lunch - November 27th

By E.F. Einhorn, Editor Rotary "Typhoon" Newsletter

On November 27th, Michael Hurst MBE, the founder and director of the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society here in Taipei, shared with us a little of the story of the more than 4300 allied prisoners of war who were incarcerated in 15 Japanese POW camps here on Taiwan during World War II, and his efforts to find the camps and make sure that the men are never forgotten.

He briefly gave a chronological rundown of the POWs' movements from the Philippines, Singapore and the Dutch East Indies to Taiwan and the distribution of the POWs throughout the island's camps. He talked about their voyages on the "hellships" and the deplorable conditions under which they were transported as POWs.

He described the conditions the men had to live under – starvation, disease, lack of medicines and medical care, overwork, beatings for anything that didn't please the Japanese, loneliness and withheld news and letters from loved ones at home. He spoke of the deaths – more than 10% of the POWs on Taiwan died.

Michael then told us of a couple of his upcoming projects to erect a memorial at the site of the former POW camp near Toulou and also of his efforts to get a plaque placed on the wall of the old Taipei City Prison to remember the 14 American airmen who were needlessly executed there in June 1945.

In closing he shared with us several stories of reconciliation between some of the former Taiwanese camp guards and the POWs who have returned to Taiwan under his Remembrance programs. He pointed out that we must never forget the suffering and sacrifice that was made by the POWs for our freedom.

He thanked our club for its interest and support and said he looks forward to continuing a relationship with us and will keep us informed of upcoming projects and events.



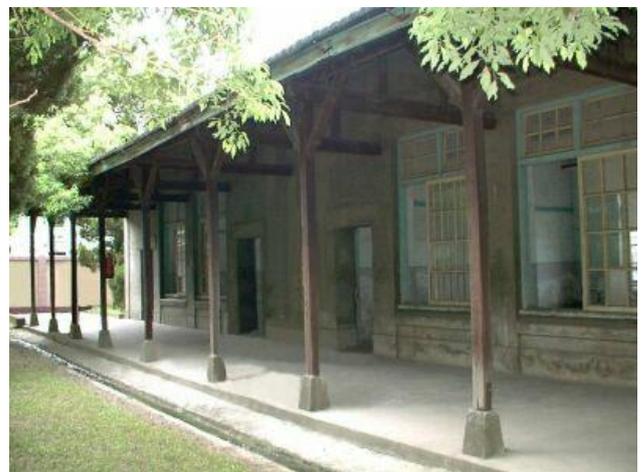
Speaking to the Taipei Rotary Club luncheon.

POW memorial to be erected at the old Toroku POW Camp

After five years of planning and hoping, the dream of erecting a POW memorial stone on the site of the former Toroku POW Camp near Toulou is finally coming true.

The site of the camp was first discovered in September 2000, and at that time we found to our amazement that one of the original buildings used by the POWs still remained from the earlier days. We discussed the possibility of trying to get a memorial stone erected there, but it was not until September of 2003 that any interest was shown within the local community.

Then in November 2003 for some mysterious reason the old part of the school was torn down – what had been Taiwan's last remaining POW structure was gone! Even then we did not give up and still hoped to erect a memorial on the school grounds to remember the 294 American POWs off the hellship Hokusen Maru who were in the camp from November 1944 to January 1945.



Taiwan's last POW structure – torn down in 2003

Over the next couple of years, efforts by local TPCMS Board member Mark Wilkie to have discussions with the school on the project came to naught, but thanks to his initial efforts, this fall, the principal and the school board expressed an interest in preserving the memory of the former camp for the school's 90th anniversary in 2009.

Presently meetings are being held and plans are underway to have a memorial stone – similar to those in the other former Taiwan POW camps – erected on the grounds of the school next spring. There is a big celebration planned for April and it is hoped to include the dedication of the Toroku POW Memorial at that time.

There are still a number of survivors of Toroku Camp living in the US, and we are hoping that perhaps one or two might come to Taiwan in the spring to join us for this event.

It just proves that patience and determination can win out, often over seemingly impossible odds, and we are pleased that at last the Toroku POW Memorial will become a reality. More to come in the next issue.