



# Never Forgotten

Vol. 11, Number 1

SPRING – SUMMER 2010

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

## 2010 - the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of WWII!



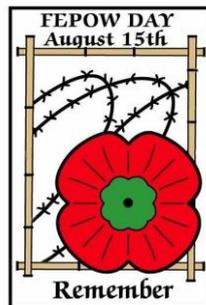
*Exploring the former Karenko senior officers' POW Camp at Hualien*



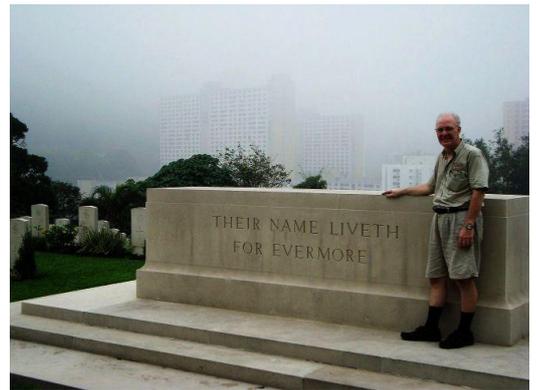
*Interviewing former POW camp guard from Karenko & Shirakawa camps*



*New Taipei City Gov't historical plaque installed on Tainei Prison Wall*



Please join us for  
FEPOW Day  
Sun. Aug. 15



*Taiwan POWs graves photographed at Sai Wan War Cemetery*

### REMEMBRANCE WEEK 2010

Be sure to mark the week of November 10 – 17 on your calendars and in your date books, and plan to be with us for this great annual event which features a banquet on November 13th and the Remembrance Day service at the Prisoner of War Memorial Park at Kinkaseki on the 14th. We hope that former POWs and their families will make an effort to come as we have a special program prepared for these guests. If you are interested, and for more information, please contact the Society by mail or email at the addresses shown on page 2 of this newsletter. Hope to see you in November!

## **TAIWAN POW CAMPS MEMORIAL SOCIETY**

**P.O. BOX 665, YUNG HO  
TAIPEI 234, TAIWAN, R.O.C.  
TEL. 8660-8438 FAX. 8660-8439  
E-MAIL [society@powtaiwan.org](mailto:society@powtaiwan.org)**

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

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**UK - Cliff Foster** [cliffoster\\_600@hotmail.com](mailto:cliffoster_600@hotmail.com)

**Aust. - Rod Martin** [ramartin46@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ramartin46@optusnet.com.au)

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**William Stanton** - Director, American Institute in  
Taiwan

### **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 (Jinguashi)
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. INRIN - (Yuanlin)
10. INRIN TEMP. (Yuanlin)
11. TOROKU - (Touliu)
12. TAKAO (Kaohsiung)
13. KUKUTSU (Taipei)
14. OKA (Taipei)
15. CHURON Evacuation Camp (Taipei)
16. MARUYAMA Evacuation Camp (Taipei)

## **Thought . . .**

Many people will walk in and out of our lives, but only true friends will leave footprints in our hearts!

# EXPLORATION OF THE KARENKO POW CAMP

Last fall some new information came our way regarding the former Karenko POW Camp in Hualien. For some time I had been hoping to confirm several aspects of the camp's location and history and finally things all started coming together.

My good friend Gene Hirte put me in contact with an expat friend of his, Orrin Hoopman who lives in Hualien and was interested in helping me with my quest. I contacted Orrin and he immediately set out to find as much local info as he could. As well at that time I was also contacted by the granddaughter of one of the former Karenko and Shirakawa camp guards and on questioning him, got a lot of valuable information which helped to fill in the rest of the story.

I had planned to go to Hualien just after Chinese New Year in February to visit the former camp and explore the area further, and in January set about to make contact with the Military Police Base which is the current site of the former Karenko Camp. Application for a visit to the base had to be completed and this took some time but was finally accomplished.

On February 22nd I arrived in Hualien and went to work. I first located and photographed the site of the former cemetery where the three POWs who died at Karenko were buried. I placed poppy crosses on the approximate locations of the original graves of Maj/Gen. Beckwith-Smith Commander of the British 18<sup>th</sup> Division, Col. Paul Bunker and M/Sgt James Cavanaugh of the US Army.



*Poppy crosses commemorate POWs at the old cemetery*

In the morning of the 23rd I met Orrin and we explored the harbour area and the docks where the ships carrying the POWs to Taiwan had docked. Little has changed since those early days although Hualien Harbour has been greatly enlarged and modernized since then.

In the afternoon I set out to trace and confirm the route the POWs had taken to get to and from Karenko Camp. The Americans were marched to the camp from the harbour when they disembarked, but a couple of weeks later the British contingent were first put on a local train and taken to the downtown station and then marched the rest of the way to the camp. I also met with a local historian friend and visited the Hualien Culture Bureau for permission to visit the base.



*The old docks and harbour buildings at Karenko*

Wednesday February 24<sup>th</sup> was a red letter day, for after many years of research and wanting to visit the former camp I finally got to go inside the base for a walk about. I was met by Capt. Lin who was very interested in the POWs' story and had done quite a lot of research on his own. We were able to share a lot of information during our time together.

He took me all around the camp and we explored every part and actually uncovered the overgrown remains of two of the former Japanese storage sheds. The military base has restored the former Japanese camp commandant's house and office – it is used as a meeting hall now. We also located the foundation of the former Japanese camp guards billet, the remains of the pig and goat shed and the walkway and washroom foundations behind the POWs' 2-storey barracks.



*The camp headquarters building restored*

It was exciting to turn back the pages of time and to walk in the place where the senior officers and governors had been those many years ago. I am grateful to the Base Commander and Capt. Lin for their warm hospitality and for their interest in the POWs and our work of remembering them. They will not be forgotten!

*Karenko Camp was in operation from Sept. 1942 – June 1943. All of the highest-ranking officers and the governors of all the Asian colonies were held in this camp.*

# 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 not be forgotten!*

**DAVID BRENZEL**

PFC., 59<sup>TH</sup> CAC, US ARMY.  
JANUARY 14, 2009

**LESLIE E. DAVIS**

SGMN., ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS  
MAY 2009

**RALPH W. WALDEN**

PFC., 59 CAC. US ARMY  
AUGUST 22, 2009

**GEORGE A.E. POOLE**

PTE., 2<sup>ND</sup> BTN., EAST SURREY REG'T.  
DECEMBER 23, 2009

**LYNDAL B. PRESLAR**

PFC., 4<sup>TH</sup> US MARINES  
JANUARY 14, 2010

**JAMES H. BENTICK**

GNR., 80<sup>TH</sup> ANTI-TANK REGIMENT, R.A.  
JANUARY 14, 2010

**BEN GOUGH**

BDR., 155<sup>TH</sup> FIELD REGIMENT, R.A.  
FEBRUARY 14, 2010

*"We Will Remember Them"*

*Please let us know if you hear of the passing of any former Taiwan POW as we want to make sure they are remembered once more on this page.*

## Welcome...

We are honoured to welcome Mr. Scott Fraser, the new Executive Director of the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei as an ex-officio member of our board of directors as of last November. We look forward to working with Scott and the staff of the CTOT in the days ahead.

We would also like to welcome for the first time the representative of the American Institute in Taiwan, Mr. William Stanton to our ex-officio board of directors. We are pleased and honoured that the US State Dept has found our Society worthy of their official support. We are also thankful for the support that the Liaison Affairs Section of AIT has given us over the years.

### 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 wire / transfer to our account here. Please contact us for the pertinent account information. Thank you.

## REMEMBERING A DEAR FEPOW FRIEND. . .

*We have lost a very dear FEPOW friend with the passing of Ben Gough. Here is a short tribute to him . . .*



**BEN GOUGH at the 2009 Taiwan POW Reunion**

I can't say enough about the respect I had for Ben and the great friendship we shared over the years. He inspired me so much in my work and he was so helpful in those early days, vigorously working to help me find former Taiwan POWs and let them know what we were doing here in Taiwan in their honour. If it hadn't been for Ben in those days, I wonder if we would ever have found as many of the former Taiwan POWs as we have.

His courage and stamina are an inspiration to us all and this is shown by his determination to attend every reunion that we ever held, and to also make the long journey to Taiwan in 1999 to re-visit the places where he had suffered so much as a POW. He shared many personal experiences with me over the years too, and when I was having some heart troubles a few years back he encouraged me greatly.

His warm smile with the twinkle in his eye, his great sense of humour and infectious laugh will always remain with me. He was a gentle man and a gentleman, and I know he was highly respected by all the other FEPOWs and their family members as well. He will be sorely missed not only by his family and close friends, but also by many hundreds of others who knew him and were associated with him. His passing leaves a void in my life and I will remember him always. Rest in peace my friend!

## FROM THE DIRECTOR. . .

In this 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the end of World War II we are pleased to report that a number of projects have already been completed. Late last fall we learned of a former Taiwanese POW camp guard who had worked at the Karenko and Shirakawa Camps and he has provided us with some valuable information.

In late February we travelled to Hualien to explore more of the former Karenko Camp and its environs. Then in early April we finally met the former guard and learned a lot more about the Shirakawa Camp as well.

In January and February much time was spent working on updating and completing several Taiwan POW rosters. Thanks to the assistance of Rod Beattie and some records he was able to provide, we have now completed the listing of all the POWs who died in Taiwan, what they died from, where they were first buried and where they are now buried or commemorated. Thanks to help from Jim Erickson, noted hellship researcher in the States, we have also been able to list all the British and Dutch POWs who travelled on the hellship Hofuku Maru – those who died in the sinking, those who were off-loaded in the Philippines and those who came to Taiwan.

Also, working with Stewart Mitchell, a researcher with the Gordon Highlanders Museum in Scotland, we have put together a complete list of all the former Gordon Highlander POWs on Taiwan. It is so great to finally have all these records completed after so many years in the works, and it is thanks to fellow historians and researchers like these who so kindly work together and share their material with us that we can do it.

We have had a number of overseas visitors this year and it is good to see the increase in interest in the camps and the former POWs by the family members.

Our visits to schools to tell the POWs' story has increased this year as well with first-time participation from the Taipei American (International) School. We are always happy to share information on the POWs and the camps with schools, clubs and organizations.

During the summer we are going to look into erecting POW memorials at the two schools in Yuanlin which were the sites of the former Inrin and Inrin Temporary Camps, a visit to Shirakawa Camp is in the planning stages and we will be holding our 3<sup>rd</sup> FEPOW Day event on Sunday August 15<sup>th</sup>.

This spring we have given our website a new look with a revision to the homepage and also added some more material. The site is doing very well thanks to the interest in the Taiwan POWs' story shown by so many. We are now in the top 10 POW websites worldwide. We are ranked 8<sup>th</sup> by Google in the major POW Page Rank Order for which we are very pleased. Our friends at COFEPOW are ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> and my good friend and fellow researcher Roger Mansell's site is ranked 5<sup>th</sup>. In another Google listing we are ranked 4<sup>th</sup>.

We are hoping for a good turnout for this year's 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Remembrance Week event. We hope to see many of our friends and supporters in Taiwan out, as well as some overseas guests. Thanks again to everyone for your interest and support!

## TAIWAN POW GRAVES PHOTO PROJECT . . .

Following the end of World War II, the Imperial War Graves Commission (now the C.W.G.C.) sent workers to the Far East to search for the burial sites of the men who died in battle and as POWs of the Japanese. Their intent was to bring them together in a number of war cemeteries to make sure they had a fitting final resting place where they could be remembered.

In the spring of 1946, one such team came to Taiwan and removed the remains of all of the POWs who were buried in the former POW camp cemeteries and other places and transferred them to Hong Kong, and re-interred them in the Sai Wan War Cemetery.

I have been to Hong Kong and visited the cemetery on many occasions and have taken photos of many of the Taiwan POWs' graves. It has been my desire for several years to have a complete collection of photos of all of the Taiwan POWs' gravestones in order to be able to provide copies to any POWs or family members who wished to have one. So this spring from May 13 – 17 I went to Hong Kong to do just that. In the four days I was able to complete the task and now have digital photos of every former Taiwan prisoner of war grave. There are over 480 graves in the collection and I would be happy to send any POW or family member a copy of their loved one's grave photo at no charge in honour of those men who suffered and died here in Taiwan.

**FREE FEPOW GRAVE PHOTOS** - I would also like to mention that there are others who share the same dedication to making sure that the FEPOWs are remembered. Rod Beattie at the Thai-Burma Railway Centre in Thailand has photos of all the graves in Kanchanaburi, Chungkai and Thanbyuzayat War Cemeteries, and he will also make photos available free of charge to any who contact him at - [admin@tbrconline.com](mailto:admin@tbrconline.com) .

Likewise, Hong Kong war historian and researcher Tony Banham will provide photos of those men who died in the battle for Hong Kong as well as the Hong Kong POWs buried at Sai Wan and Stanley War Cemeteries free of charge to those who contact him at [tony@hongkongwardiary.com](mailto:tony@hongkongwardiary.com) .

While some war graves organizations charge for their photos, there are other organizations that do not. The Australian War Graves Photo Archive and the Canadian "Maple Leaf Legacy" Photo Project are two such organizations who provide photos free of charge, and there are individuals in the UK and other places who have websites offering free photos as well. You can Google "War Graves Photo Projects" to learn more.



**Sai Wan War Cemetery, Hong Kong**

# WE GOT COMPANY! - VISITORS TO TAIWAN IN 2010

**MR. HENRY TSANG – Member of Parliament for NSW Australia** – came to Taiwan in January and I was honoured to be asked to conduct a tour for him and his niece Shannon Lin. They wanted to visit the Kinkaseki Camp and pay their respects at the memorial to the Australian POWs we had in Taiwan, although none were actually in the camp there. All the Australian POWs were held in Heito, Karenko or Shirakawa Camps.

We met at the hotel and my good friends at Edison Travel provided the transportation for the day's activities. We made our way to Jinguashi via Jiufen and followed the route the POWs took to the camp. We visited the Gold Museum and the mine tunnel and other points of interest in the Gold Ecological Park. Then we moved to the POW Park for a tour of the area and a short memorial service at the POW Memorial.



*Henry presenting the RSL plaque*

will go up in the future POW museum once it is opened.

On our way back to Taipei we stopped off at Keelung to view the harbour area where the POWs arrived and departed. It was a wonderful day and so good to be able to pay a special tribute to the fifty-five Australian POWs who were here in Taiwan in WWII.



*Henry and Shannon by the POW Memorial*

## TRACING HER FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS . . .

Last year I received an email from **Brooke and Steve Chilcott** in the USA, letting me know that they were coming to Taiwan on a cruise ship and would like to visit the camp where her father was held as a POW here back in 1944-45. They wondered if I could help arrange it for them. I replied that I would be happy to take them to the camp as it would be difficult for them to get there on their own.

Brooke's father, Sgmn1C Stuart Hambley USN, had been on the Hokusen Maru and upon arriving in Taiwan in November 1944, was sent to Toroku Camp along with almost 300 other POWs to recover from the arduous hellship

voyage. He stayed there for two months and then along with most of the men, was sent on to Japan, where he finished out the war in a POW camp near Tokyo.



*S1c. Hambley*

On the afternoon of April 6 I met the Oceania Cruise Lines ship *Nautica* at Keelung Harbour and Brooke and Steve were waiting for me. I took them to Taipei where they checked into the hotel and then we had dinner and a nice visit.

The next morning we were on our way by High Speed Rail (Taiwan's bullet train) and arrived in Taichung about 9:30 am. Then we took a regular train to Toulou where board member Mark Wilkie picked us up with his car and we drove to the Gou-ba Elementary School.

We were met by Principal Hsu and some teachers and students and began our visit with a walk around the school area. I showed them where the old classrooms had been where the POWs stayed and the general layout of the camp. We visited the area behind the camp where the POWs grew vegetables and the stream where they washed up after work.

Following this the school provided us with a traditional Taiwanese lunch which everyone thoroughly enjoyed. After a further time of fellowship we moved to the memorial for a short remembrance service in honour of Brooke's father and the other men who were in the camp.

One of the students presented some flowers to Brooke and gave a welcome address. Then following some remarks by myself and the principal, I read a message sent to us for the occasion by Guy Wright, a surviving Toroku POW, sharing a few thoughts on his time in the camp. Then we laid the flowers on the memorial, followed by taps, two minutes silence and then reveille. To close the service Steve read the FEPOW Prayer. It was a moving experience for Brooke and Steve and a fitting tribute to her father.

We returned to Taipei and I took them back to Keelung again. While sad to part, it was good to have met two more wonderful FEPOW family members and we hope that in the future many more will come to Taiwan.



*Steve and Brooke by the Toroku POW Memorial*

(more on page 10)

## Help Wanted . . .

Ann Bennett is looking for information on her father - **WO1 Richard (Dick) Bennett of the Indian Army Ordnance Corps** who fought in the battle of Malaya and S'pore and first was a POW on the Death Railway. In 1944 he was returned to S'pore and put on the hellship Hofuku Maru which was sunk en route to Japan. He was then put on the Hokusen Maru in the Philippines and came to Taiwan in November 1944. He was sent to Shirakawa Camp where he finished the war.

Ann is wondering if there may be any of the men who were in Shirakawa who might have known or remembered her father and if so, could you kindly contact her at - [bennettann62@yahoo.com](mailto:bennettann62@yahoo.com) .

Another request comes from Alison Pandis. Her father Gnr. **Albert J. Goodwin of the 5<sup>th</sup> Field Reg't. R.A.** came to Taiwan on the England Maru in November 1942 and was first in Taihoku Camp 6. He later went to Kinkaseki and Kukutsu and after repatriation from Taiwan he was sent to Australia for medical care. If anyone remembers Gunner Goodwin, please get in touch with Alison at [infobrit@otenet.gr](mailto:infobrit@otenet.gr) .

## SHARING THE POWS' STORY WITH STUDENTS AT THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS . . .

This spring I was honoured and privileged to be able to present the story of the Taiwan POWs at both the Taipei American School and the Taipei European School. On April 13<sup>th</sup> I addressed an assembly of Asian Studies students at TAS and then on Saturday April 17<sup>th</sup> guided them on a tour of the former Kinkaseki POW Camp and surrounding area at Jinguashi.

There were 45 very interested students and teachers on the trip and we had a great day exploring the Gold Ecological park, the mining museum, the old mine tunnel and the former POW camp site and surrounding area. We held a short memorial service at the POW Memorial in which the students took part. Here are a few photos from the day –



(Above) Students in the mine and (right) taking part in the memorial service

## INTERVIEW WITH A FORMER TAIWAN POW CAMP GUARD

Late last year I received an email from a young Taiwanese lady telling me that she had seen our website and was interested in the story of the Taiwan POWs since her grandfather had been a former guard in the camps at Karenko and Shirakawa.

At that time I was doing further research into the Karenko Camp and so immediately had questions I wanted to ask her grandfather. Through her and her father, I was able to communicate with her granddad Mr. Ko and learn many things in preparation for my upcoming exploratory trip to Hualien in the new year.

Finally in early April I had the opportunity to visit with her grandfather and the family in their home near Chiayi. We spent a wonderful day together sharing information, and I got a lot of good detailed information on the two camps and what took place in them. Together we were able to piece together more of the POWs' story. Mr. Ko was so pleased to be able to help me with my research and I am very grateful to him for sharing so much information with me, and also to his family for their kindness and warm hospitality. We are planning other meetings in the future which I am looking forward to.



Mr. Ko (2nd from right) sharing his camp experiences with us.



TAS students & teachers at the Taiwan POW Memorial

On May 5<sup>th</sup> I spoke to the Grade 9 history classes at the European International School. It is wonderful to be able to share the POWs' story with the younger generations.

# Historical and POW Plaques Restored. . .

The Taiwan POW Memorial was first erected in 1997 and in the years that followed additional plaques were installed at the site to tell more of the POWs' story.

Over the past few years the plaques had become weathered with the result that the lettering had almost entirely worn off. For some time we desired to have the lettering re-painted but due to lack of time and facilities we found it hard to accomplish.

Then the Taipei County Culture Bureau and Tourism Dep't asked if there was anything they could do to help maintain the POW Park and we made the suggestion about re-painting the lettering on all of the signs and plaques. So during the spring months they had their workers refurbish them, and on a recent visit to the site they look much better now.



Also, more than a year ago the historical plaque that was on the wall of the former Taipei Prison on Chinshan South Road, where we dedicated our memorial to the American airmen, had fallen down. I brought this to the attention of the Taipei City Culture Bureau and urged them to replace the historical plaque as it was valuable in helping to highlight the history of the old prison. They said they would look into it, and of course with governments these things take more time, but in early May when I went by the memorial I noticed that another plaque was mounted beside ours. It took a while but the city came through for us and we are very grateful. Now together, the two plaques tell the significant story of the area's darker past.

We are very grateful to the two branches of government for their interest and support in helping us preserve history.



City Gov't. Prison Wall historical plaque on left

# COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL RIBBON BARS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SOCIETY



For the past number of years there has been a growing movement worldwide by former veterans - and also their family members, to commemorate their service with the use of medal ribbon bars. The Americans have used them on their uniforms, while the British and Commonwealth do not, but some are now wearing them in place of medals on dress jackets and blazers.

Also, family members are wearing their father's and grandfather's medals on the right breast at ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies and parades. This is now an acceptable and frequent practice in honouring the veterans worldwide.

Sometimes however, the original medals worn by dad or granddad have been lost, donated to a museum, or are in possession of another family member. Sometimes there may be so many medals or the medal ribbons are frail and worn so that it is not practical to wear the original medals.

Recently we have found a man here in Taiwan who can make hand-woven, custom medal ribbon bars of any style, size or color - from a single bar to a multiple one, thus enabling one to have a replica of their loved one's medals in that form for wearing on remembrance occasions.

Our Society is working with him to offer very reasonably priced, custom-made ribbon bars for any medal or series of medals. If you would like to have a ribbon bar to show your loved one's medals and to wear on remembrance occasions then we would be happy to supply them for you.

The ribbon bars can be made in full size - 32mm x 12mm for British and Commonwealth, and 35mm x 10mm for the USA. Miniatures can also be made at 16mm x 10mm and they look very smart.

Medal companies in the UK and America charge very high prices for such items - in most cases 2, 3 times our price, so if you are interested please drop us a line and let us know what bars you would like made up and we will get back to you with a quote and tell you how to order.

The following two illustrations show a typical FEPOW ribbon bar as well as one for the European Theatre.



- FEPOW Bar - 3 ribbons



Europe Theatre - 4 ribbons

Please contact us at [society@powtwin.org](mailto:society@powtwin.org) if interested. We look forward to helping you if we can.

# TRIP TO KINKASEKI - TAIWAN - NOVEMBER 2009 - by Peter Bowkett

## IN MEMORY OF HAROLD VINCENT BOWKETT

*The following story was written after a visit to Taiwan for our Remembrance Week event and we wanted to share it with our readers to show what such a visit can mean to the POWs and their family members. Hopefully it may encourage more to come and join us in future years. This account has been edited – for the complete story see our website. Ed*

I suspect the earliest part of planning for this trip actually must have started when I was a young boy of seven or eight years of age at home in Clydach Wales, as I recall one day asking Dad why he had scars on his back and he told me that they were from working in the copper mine whilst he was at a Japanese Prisoner of War camp in Kinkaseki, Formosa (now Taiwan).

Over the past eight years or so I have been in touch via email with Michael Hurst MBE, Director of the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society. Michael told me that they hold an annual Remembrance Service in Taiwan every November, and with my wife Liz's support we decided to sign up for the 2009 trip.

Liz and I decided to start our trip in Singapore where all the POWs were captured. I remember Dad talking about Changi Jail, and I had read in the books the terrible details of the trip they made in the hellship from Singapore to Taiwan - known then as Formosa.

Flying up from Singapore to Taiwan we passed over the Malayan peninsula where the POW's had fled from the Japanese onslaught and we also flew over the China Sea where all those years ago they would have suffered for weeks in the hellships, not knowing where they were going or what to expect.

Meeting up with Michael at the Taipei Airport we found out there were twenty two people in our party including six FEPOW's – five who had been in the POW camp at Kinkaseki. Three of them had been back before and for the other three it was their first time. Hearing a Welsh voice and making the enquiry it turned out that one of them - George Reynolds lives in Newport and had been to Dad's funeral in 1990! The others were Jack Fowler, Stan Vickerstaff, Bill Roy, Ken Pett and Stan Wood.

The FEPOW's confirmed the conditions they were kept in - tortured, beaten, made to walk to the mines to work and starved - some were less than five stone in weight when freed. They had to steal food if they could from anywhere, and would eat grass, leaves, insects - anything to try to keep alive. Many died in captivity and were buried at the camps - later their bodies would be repatriated to the war cemetery in Hong Kong.

We made our first trip up in the mountains to Kinkaseki on the Thursday. On reflection I was glad that we went twice as the visit was very, very emotional indeed. We saw the site of the copper mine where the POW's trudged to each day - up one steep hill and down the other side - and spent some time deep in our own thoughts in the impressive Memorial Park now on the site of the original POW camp. We also visited a museum and an adjoining mine where our POW's confirmed to us that the original tunnel we saw there was much the same as the one they went into every day to work.

The weather was damp and misty - George told us that it seemed to rain most of the time they were prisoners there - it was strange to experience that same weather.

On Saturday we went to the second POW camp - Kukutsu. This was known as the Jungle Camp and it was where the POW's were sent to die. The plan was to starve them there - it was so far away from anywhere that the bodies would never have been found.

When we got there we were welcomed by crowds of locals as well as press and TV - together with a Chinese band and an orchestra. We held a service there - Liz and I both did readings - and we then went into the jungle where the original camp had been. A lady who has since built her house there welcomed us with open arms.

Seeing both those sites I was now able to link together the actual places with the images I'd had in my mind for many years before reading the books, and I really did feel a connection. My sister Cath summed it up in a text message back to me – “what a pity we didn't know more about all this before Dad died”.

In the evening we had a formal dinner back in Taipei with Foreign Ambassadors and other dignitaries. All of the POW's stood up and told their stories, and as well as mentioning Dad in both programs for the Memorial Services, Michael also talked warmly about Dad at length during his speech and then asked Liz and I to stand, upon which we were warmly applauded.

On the Sunday we went back to Kinkaseki for the formal Remembrance Day service. So glad I'd been there on the Thursday as the atmosphere was something quite special. Other veterans were there - as well as the ambassadors we'd met previously - and local dignitaries. There were flags and a marquee in addition to which the local people put up some special flowers to mark the service. There was a Piper and a Taiwanese trumpeter.

Quite a formal occasion, the POW's did readings as did yours truly (just!) following which we laid wreaths at the memorial. The piper played "Amazing Grace" and the trumpeter played "Last Post" - thank goodness Liz was there to hold me - I've never experienced emotions like it.

The fellowship of the people on the trip was amazing, and to meet, spend time with and to listen to the stories of the POW's was something Liz and I will never forget. I personally feel that something has been lifted from my shoulders - visiting this place that I've known about for over fifty years and finding out so much more about it.

Both my daughters have recently been to Japan with Pacific Ventures. As a family, the four of us hope to return to Taiwan again in the near future so that they too may experience what their Grandfather and his friends endured all those years ago.

**TAIWAN POW VISITORS – con't. from page 6**

## **POW'S DAUGHTER VISITS HELLSHIPS MEMORIAL**

Acting Executive Officer for the Port of Long Beach California, Diane Jacobus, was in Taiwan on business in March and while here met with Society Director Michael Hurst to talk about her father - Lt. Cmdr. Ernest Wade a US Navy doctor, who died on the Brazil Maru on the way to Japan after the bombing of the hellship Enoura Maru in Kaohsiung harbour in January 1945.

They shared information and Diane was able to learn a bit more about the conditions on the hellship and the circumstances leading up to her father's death.

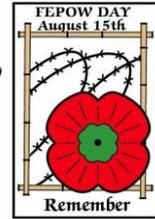
On Monday March 22<sup>nd</sup> Diane visited the Taiwan Hellships Memorial at the War and Peace Memorial Park in Kaohsiung and laid a tribute of flowers in honour of her father and the other men who died in that terrible sequence of events.



*Diane Jacobus (inset right) at the Hellships Memorial in Kaohsiung paying tribute to her father.*

## **FEPOW DAY 2010**

FEPOW Day 2010 will be held on Sunday August 15th and this year we will be celebrating the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II with a special program to remember the men who suffered and those who died here in the Japanese POW camps on Taiwan.



We are planning an event similar to last year, with a POW and military artifact exhibition, the showing of a POW film, a Remembrance Service and a time for discussion and learning about the FEPOWs.

Once again our event will take place at the Spot Theatre in Taipei with the doors opening at 1 pm. Announcements will be sent out to local friends and supporters here in Taiwan giving the exact details, so please set aside August 15<sup>th</sup> now in your date books and calendars and plan to be with us on that day.

FEPOW Day is a special day that has been set aside around the world to remember all those who were held as Japanese prisoners of war during World War II. We hope that many of our members and supporters will take this opportunity to join us for a memorable afternoon of remembering and paying tribute to those who suffered and those who died, for the freedom we now enjoy. See you in August!

*FEPOW Day lapel pins (as shown above) are available - please contact the Society for details.*

## **Heroes Return 2: Your chance to visit Taiwan**

The Heroes Return 2 scheme will provide Lottery funding to help World War II veterans who saw active service to visit the areas where they served and take part in visits (within the UK and overseas) to mark the anniversary of events that led to the end of WWII. Visits must take place between **1 April 2009** and **31 December 2010**. The deadline for applications is **31 January 2011**.

WWII veterans resident in the UK or Republic of Ireland who saw active service overseas with or alongside the British and Allied Armed Forces in the Second World War are eligible to apply for this grant. Veterans may be accompanied by a spouse and/or a carer. Widows and widowers of WWII veterans are also eligible, in most cases.

### **More info?**

If you have any general questions about the scheme and whether you are eligible, ring the application helpline at **0845 0000 121**.

### **Also see the website at:**

<http://www.heroesreturn2.org.uk/> and

[http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog\\_heroesreturn\\_qa.pdf](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_heroesreturn_qa.pdf) - for detailed questions and answers

### **Download the application form at:**

[http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog\\_heroesreturn\\_application.pdf](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_heroesreturn_application.pdf)

**To all our UK FEPOW friends and family members** - this offer from the Big Lottery Fund provides a great opportunity for you to come to Taiwan in 2010. *The Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society* organizes an annual Remembrance Week Event every year in November and visitors are also welcome to come at any time throughout the year as well. We can help you with travel arrangements and with the application forms. If you are interested, please contact us for more info on the dates of our events and how we can help. We would love to have you with us and to be able to take you back to the site(s) of your former camp(s) and pay tribute to your mates or loved ones. You may contact us by mail or email – see details on page 2 of the newsletter. We hope to see you in Taiwan on 2010!