

# Never Forgotten

Vol. 9, Number 1

SPRING – SUMMER 2008

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

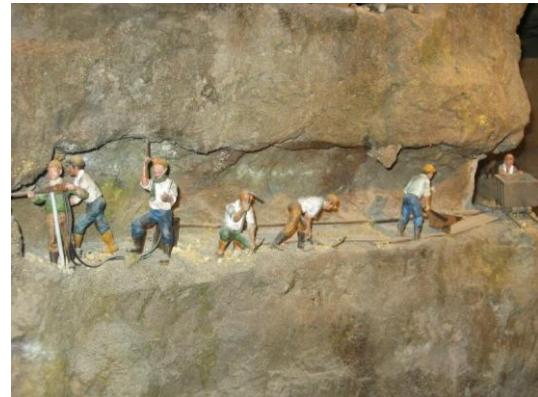


ANZAC Day - Remembering  
POW cousins lost at sea

## 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.*

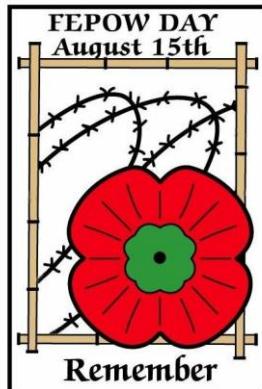
*We will remember you!*



Men working down the mine... suffering...  
- diorama at the Jinguashi Mine Museum



The Taiwan POW Memorial - a monument to brave and gallant men



Sharing the POWs' story at Academia Sinica, Taipei

## REMEMBRANCE WEEK 2008

- Be sure to mark the week of November 12 – 19 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 15th and the Remembrance Day service at the Prisoner of War Memorial Park at Kinkaseki on the 16th. 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!

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**Australia - Rod Martin** [ramartin@ozemail.com.au](mailto:ramartin@ozemail.com.au)  
**USA - vacant**

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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 . . .***

**Only one life ... 'twill soon  
be past. Only what's done for  
others will last!**

## FROM THE DIRECTOR...

It always seems that when you think you are going to have some quiet time to catch up with things, that exactly the opposite takes place. This year has been no exception so far.

The new year started off in a major effort with the Gordon Highlanders' Museum to establish a definitive list of former Gordons who were POWs on Taiwan. This is almost complete at this time.

We have had some excellent opportunities to share the POWs' story with institutions of higher learning here in Taiwan. In December I was honoured to be asked to give a lecture on the Taiwan POWs at the National Cheng Chi University for their Masters in Taiwan Studies Program. Then in March noted British historian Michael Hoare and I gave a presentation on the Kinkaseki Camp at the Academia Sinica.

That we are still uncovering history here is evident with the visit to the former Taiwan Japanese Governor's Mansion in January and finding the former Takao Hospital site in May. (See stories pgs. 6-7 & 9)

Finally after many months of trying, and much government red tape, thanks to the assistance of the Canadian Trade Office in Taipei, fellow board member Jack Hsu - a retired ROC Navy Lt./Cmdr. and I were able to visit the ROC Naval headquarters to view what we believe is the remains of the man-made lake that the POWs at Taihoku Camp 6 dug by hand those many years ago. We are now in the process of trying to confirm this with several of the POWs in the UK who worked on the project. We will have an article in the Fall Newsletter on this exciting new discovery.

We have had a number of visitors this year – from the UK Mr. & Mrs. Stuart Blincoe, nephew of the late well-known former Taiwan POW Jack Butterworth and nine British MP's. Also local schools, groups and individuals have participated in tours of the camps.

The daily work of answering inquiries on the POWs and the camps, compiling the archives and constant updating of the Honour Roll continues.

We are still doing research on the Karenko Camp at Hualien; planning to place a plaque on the old Taipei Prison Wall to commemorate the 14 American flyers executed there in June 1945. In August our first Taiwan "FEPOW Day" will take place with a POW film and displays of POW artifacts, documents & photos.

The "George Harrison Memorial Project" is on the way to completion with all the funds being raised and a memorial service planned for this September. Thanks to all those who contributed to this worthy cause. (See page 5 for further details.)

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".

## Kinkaseki POW Camp & POWs Featured in Discovery Channel Program on Taiwan

KEY POINT PRODUCTIONS – a prominent Taiwan film-maker, which also has offices and production facilities in Beijing and Shanghai China, is currently working on a series of programs in English for the **Discovery Channel** that depict several areas around the island. The series is entitled "Taiwan – Unknown Island" and features programs on Kinmen, Tainan, Alishan, Penghu and the village of Jinguashi, to name just a few. Prominently covered in the Jinguashi film will be the story of the WW II POW camp and what is being done today to remember the men who suffered there.

The programs on Kinmen and Tainan have already been released and had great reviews. In all, these TV programs could be seen by over 10 million viewers all across Asia, We hope it might also be picked up and shown on the **Discovery Channel** in North America and the UK as well, but that is uncertain at this point. We are very excited at the potential this has to let people know about the POW camp at Kinkaseki, with additional brief references to the other 14 camps as well.

Key Point contacted me early in 2007 and we discussed the project and how we could co-operate to make sure that the POWs' story was told sincerely and accurately, and together we have spent a good part of last year working on it. Some preliminary filming was done last fall, and in November at our annual Remembrance Week event the company filmed some of our activities and the memorial service at Jinguashi.

There was still some filming that needed to be finished this spring and the long, cold and rainy winter delayed the shooting, but it is all finished now and the program is in the final stages of editing and production. It is expected that it will be shown some time in October of this year. We will try to let everyone know when the program will be aired when the time comes if possible.

I am very grateful to the production team – producer Da Jung Chang, Director Ja Ming Wu and project assistant Kate Tsai, for their untiring efforts to work with us to get the POWs' story right and to make sure that the men are properly honoured and never forgotten.

### On the set photos -



Filming POW Interview

With Director Wu & Kate

# 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!

**JOSEPH W. (BILL) COX**  
GNR., 9<sup>TH</sup> COAST REGIMENT R.A.  
NOVEMBER 19, 2007

**AVRIL J. DAVIS**  
S1C, US NAVY  
DECEMBER 11, 2007

**GEORGE S. PATTERSON**  
CAPT., ROYAL ARMY SERVICE CORPS  
ADC TO GEN. PERCIVAL  
JANUARY 3, 2008

**CIPRIANO B. RAMIREZ**  
PFC., US ARMY  
FEBRUARY 1, 2008

**VIRGIL L. AIMES**  
SGT., US ARMY  
FEBRUARY 3, 2008

**JOHN MCEWAN**  
GNR., 155<sup>TH</sup> FIELD REG'T. R.A.  
FEBRUARY 27, 2008

**JACK SYMON**  
CPL., 4<sup>TH</sup> BTN. NORFOLK REG'T.  
MAY 2008

and

**MRS. MARJORIE GARNER** – April 28, 2008  
- Widow of former Taichu & Heito POW  
Ernest Parker (Died at Heito Camp – Sept. 26, 1944)

*"We Will Remember Them"*

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

We would like to wish a very special Happy Birthday to the man who we believe is the oldest surviving Taiwan POW. Capt. Wyndham K. Forbes – former Adjutant of the 5<sup>th</sup> Field Reg't. Royal Artillery – is celebrating his 99<sup>th</sup> birthday on June 26<sup>th</sup> this year.

Mr. Forbes has been a good friend and long-time supporter of our Society ever since we first made contact back in 2001. He is one of the last surviving officers of the Taiwan camps and he has shared many stories and memories with us. He first came to Taiwan in November 1942 on the England Maru and was held in Taihoku # 6 Camp until August 1943 when he was moved to the new officers' camp at Shirakawa as POW # 453. While there he was the illustration editor for the POWs' "Raggle Taggle" magazine and also contributed several articles. We wish Wyndham a very Happy Birthday from the Society and its many friends.

## TAIWAN'S FIRST EVER ROVER SCOUT TROOP – IN A POW CAMP!

Early In January this year we received an email from Cliff Phillips in the UK, the son of former Taiwan POW Arthur Phillips of the 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. Manchester Reg't. who was held in Heito and Shirakawa camps.

Cliff shared a most interesting story of how while as a POW at the Shirakawa Camp in the spring of 1945, his father had been made a member of the first ever Taiwan Rover Crew and sent us a copy of his father's membership certificate (below).



I had heard of the establishment of this Rover Crew by Major Isaac Pedley from other POWs who had been members, but this was the first time that I had actually seen any articles that pertained to it.

As with much of the Taiwan POWs' story, very little was known of this here in Taiwan and even in Scouting circles worldwide. Another man in the UK, Colin Walker, had done some research into the subject several years ago and has an excellent website telling the account of the Scout Troops that operated in the Japanese prison of war camps at Changi, Shirakawa Taiwan and on the Death Railway in Thailand. The story of the part these Scout groups played in the camps is remarkable. It can be found at: <http://www.scouting.milestones.btinternet.co.uk/bamboo.htm>

When reading Colin's account of the Shirakawa Camp Rovers, it read like a "who's who" of POWs that I have come to know over the years – a number of them personally. It also shows that many of these men, who had been members of the Scout Movement in their youth, brought the leadership abilities they had learned with them to the army and it also helped in their experiences as POWs. As is often true of many great leaders in history, they had all been members of Scouting and lived by its principles.

This story is especially meaningful to me as I too have been involved in Scouting – for more than 30 years – in Canada and also here in Taiwan.

Cliff has kindly donated his father's certificate to us for our POW museum collection, and so once again it is back in Taiwan for all to see, and to help us remember another part of the Taiwan POW story.

## Welcome...

We are honoured to welcome Ms. Michelle Slade, the new Director of the New Zealand Commerce and Industry Office in Taipei as an ex-officio member of our board of directors as of this past November.

Michelle replaced Clare Fearnley who left Taiwan for another posting. We want to express our appreciation for the interest and support that Clare and her staff gave to our Society and we wish her well and look forward to working with Michelle and the staff of the NZCIO in the days ahead.

## NEW POW SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE FOR AUSTRALIA

We are happy to announce the appointment of Mr. Rod Martin as our new representative in Australia. Rod, whose father - Gnr. A.W. (Bert) Martin of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anti-tank Reg't. - a POW at Kinkaseki and also in Kyushu Japan, has been a staunch supporter of our Society over the past several years and has offered to take up the position left vacant with the passing of our former rep Sid Dodds.

Rod came to Taiwan in 2001 to take part in the annual Remembrance Week activity hosted by our Society and to visit the former camp where his father had been imprisoned. He has supported the Society ever since. Rod can be contacted by email at: [ramartin@ozemail.com.au](mailto:ramartin@ozemail.com.au)

## A Memorial for George Harrison

We are pleased to announce that the funds for the George Harrison internment and memorial have all been raised, thanks to kind and generous donations from our members and friends, many coming from George's fellow prisoners of war and their families.

We are planning to hold the internment service on Tuesday September 30, at the Surrey and Sussex Crematorium – Balcombe Road in Crawley, West Sussex, at 2pm in the afternoon. A Royal British Legion padre will officiate at the ceremony.

We invite any and all friends of George Harrison - former L/Bdr. 5<sup>th</sup> Field Reg't. R.A. and his wife, to attend this event to help honour and remember a great man who gave himself so tirelessly and unselfishly for the betterment of his fellow POWs.

Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society Director Michael Hurst will attend the ceremony, as well as a representative from the Royal Artillery Association, and we look forward to seeing many FEPOW friends there as well.

For further information and details, please contact Cliff Foster by email at: [clifffoster\\_600@hotmail.com](mailto:clifffoster_600@hotmail.com) or Tel. 01293-421357.

\*\* Please let Cliff know before August 31<sup>st</sup> if you are planning to attend the memorial service.

## TAIWAN POW HONOUR ROLL UNDERGOES MASSIVE UPDATE

Over the past few months the POW Honour Roll on our website has been massively updated to correct all the American and Australian POW listings. The Dutch section had been completed to our satisfaction a couple of years ago, thanks to the kind assistance of Henk Nouwens, former Deputy Director of the Netherlands Trade Office.

With my good friend and well-known American POW researcher Roger Mansell, I have worked for the past six months to finally get the names of all the American POWs on Taiwan as correct and complete as can be for now.

While going through this process I encountered names and listings that were incorrect or incomplete, but as I previously only had old records and sometimes just the POWs' own hand-written notes to go by when compiling the list, there were bound to be errors. I'm pleased to say that all have been corrected as far as we know at this time.

We still need to find about 250 names before the Honour Roll is complete with the names of all 4344 men who were held here as POWs, but we hope with further research and help from our FEPOW friends that we can finish the task.

It has taken a tremendous amount of work over the past eleven years to get to this stage, because with the exception of only two of the camps which had POW lists, I have had to glean the names from various miscellaneous sources worldwide – often just one name at a time.

One of the greatest sources has been the POWs and their family members who have shared diaries and notes and other information with me. It is mostly by reading through all this material and picking out the names, ranks and regiments that we have built up the roll over the years.

For their aide in our work and research, thanks must also go to the wonderful archival and online material supplied by the NARA in the US and the Dept. of Veterans' Affairs and the AWM in Australia. These sources have helped us to verify the names and details of many of the POWs.

It is sad however that no such material or service exists in the UK. As the greatest number of POWs on Taiwan came from the UK, it would be great if we had similar listings we could use to check the names we have found. There is material in the National Archives in London, but they don't seem to want to make it available to the public – at least not freely and easily. It seems that the British Gov't is not willing to spend the money or make the effort as the US and Australia have done. There is a file of all the British WWII service personal that can be accessed, and you can search for POW record cards and other info - IF you go there in person, otherwise it is almost impossible to get any information about UK POW veterans of WW II.

So now the only part of our Honour Roll that is incomplete is the part covering the British POWs. It is hoped that one day the gov't. there will also honour their WWII veterans as the Americans and the Australians do, for the benefit of those of us who want to do what we can to help make sure these wonderful men are not forgotten.

View the Honour Roll at: [www.powtaiwan.org](http://www.powtaiwan.org) – *The Men*

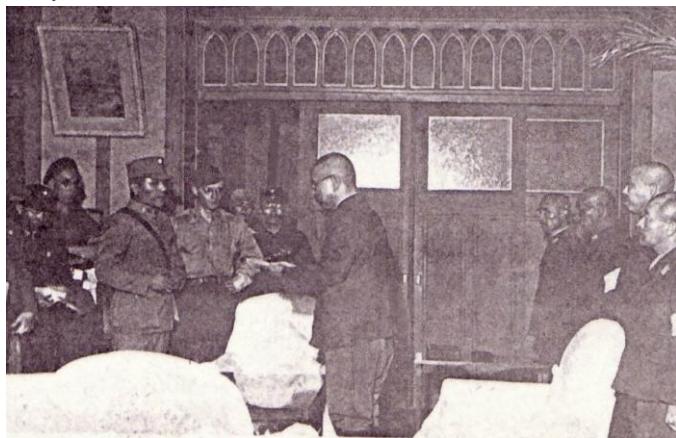
# VISIT TO THE FORMER TAIWAN GOVERNOR'S MANSION

It was 62 years ago in March this year that two military jeeps with machine guns mounted on the back pulled up in front of the gates of the Taipei Presidential Guest House, then known as the Taiwan Japanese Governor's Mansion.

This unit was a part of one of the special allied investigation teams that were sent back to Asia after the war to investigate Japanese wartime atrocities and to round up potential war criminals for trial. In this squad were Major Freddie Crossley (former officer commanding the POWs at Kinkaseki - present day Jinguashi); Gen. Lee of the Chinese Army; Judge Advocate James Munro; Capt. J.T.N. Cross, another officer at Kinkaseki; Stephen Green, US Army Interpreter and Sgt. Jack Edwards, a Kinkaseki POW.

Jack told me the story many years ago how that when they found the front gate locked, the other men boosted him over the wall and on landing he saw two Japanese guards with rifles and fixed bayonets standing there looking at him. However they offered no resistance and turned and walked down the driveway into the mansion.

Jack then ran to the front gate and unlocked it to let his comrades into the compound. From there they entered the house where General Rikichi Ando, Taiwan's 19<sup>th</sup> and last Japanese governor was waiting for them, along with General Isayama, his Chief of Staff and some of his other aides.



*Arrest of Gen. Rikichi Ando, Gen. Isayama and aides*

General Lee of the Chinese Army read the charges to Governor Ando and his aides. They were then taken into custody and moved a short distance down the street to the Colonial Governor's Office (now the Presidential Office), which served as the temporary combined military headquarters for Formosa. Here Ando, Isayama and their aides were officially identified, formally charged with being war criminals and placed under arrest.

The next day Ando and the others were flown to Shanghai where they were put into the Ward Road Prison to await trial. It was here that Gen. Ando committed suicide by consuming a cyanide capsule that had previously been hidden in his tube of toothpaste. Thus he avoided the shame of standing trial and facing possible execution as a war criminal.

For many years since first hearing this story, I have wanted to visit the former residence to have a look around to

see if anything remained of those former times. This past October I put my request to the Protocol Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and after some arranging permission was granted for a visit on January 14<sup>th</sup> this year.



*Front Gate of the Taipei Presidential Guest House*

I was met by a representative of MOFA and volunteer guide Mr. Chen. During the following several hours we explored the house and grounds took lots of photos. The mansion had been renovated extensively from 2001 – 2004 and so much has changed – like the Japanese Imperial “chrysanthemum” decorations being replaced by Chinese “plum blossoms”, but a lot was still there from the former time. The mansion today continues to reflect the glory and splendor of the Japanese colonial era.



*General Rikichi Ando started his military career as an instructor at the Japanese Army War College from 1924 to 1925. Between 1932 and 1934 he was the military attaché to Britain so he could speak English. After a variety of field and staff positions, he became the commanding officer of the 5th Division in 1938. Later that year, he was assigned as the commanding officer of the 21st Army in China, where he remained until 1940. He then served as the commander-in-chief of the Japanese Southern China Area Army.*

*In 1941, he retired from active service, but was quickly recalled to duty once the Pacific War broke out in December, as the commander-in-chief of the Taiwan Army. In 1944, he was named the commander of the 10th Area Army based on Formosa, and from then until the end of the war, he was also the governor-general of the island. In both of these roles he was responsible for the treatment and the welfare of the POWs, which resulted in him being accused of war crimes. On October 25, 1945 he signed the surrender of all the Japanese forces in Taiwan in the old Taipei City Hall building.*

More photos on page 7

## The Taipei Presidential Guest House - 2008

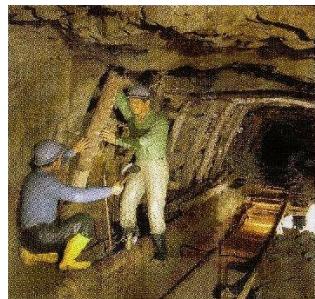


*Photos from top to bottom:*

1. The front entrance to the house
2. The Main Hall where Gen. Ando was arrested
3. Rear view of the palatial building

I would like to thank the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign Affairs for allowing me to view this part of Taiwan's history.

## TAIWAN'S POW MEMORIALS BECOME RECOGNIZED IN WORLDWIDE TRAVEL GUIDES



**Kinkaseki**

Over 1,000 Allied prisoners were brought to Kinkaseki during World War II. More than one-third had died by the time of liberation. They did slave labor in the deep mines where sand, local miners refused to go - 250 meters (800 ft) below sea level, on hards and knees, in temperatures up to 55°C (130°F). Their spartan diet was rice and watery vegetable soup. Beatings were regular, especially if the heavy daily quotas were missed. Some prisoners died in the wooden coffins they had to sleep in.

A memorial that marks the remnants of "Hell Camp" was erected in 1997. An annual commemorative ceremony is held here.

Major international travel guide books - **Insight Guide**, **Lonely Planet** and **Rough Guide** now all feature articles and information on the former Japanese POW camp at Jinguashi (better known as Kinkaseki), as well as reference to the other camps and memorials erected by the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society around the island.

**Insight Guide** has a good description of what there is to see at Jinguashi with a short summary on the POW camp. **Rough Guide** has perhaps the best presentation, not only highlighting the things to see and do at Jinguashi's Gold Ecological Park, but also a good and accurate story of the camps and the POW Society and the other memorials erected around the island. The website is also mentioned which hopefully will be a good contact feature. **Lonely Planet** includes a mention of Jinguashi in its section on travel in the northeastern part of the island.

**Jinguashi**  
Jinguashi is one of the few villages that have survived the changes of urbanization and plagues of atmospheric allies and others to explore. Much of the old village is preserved within the absorbing Gold Ecological Park, which is the main attraction of the town. The park contains a cluster of houses terminating on the eastern side of the temple at Cypress Temple. Rebuilt in 1933 based on an 1896 original, the temple is noted principally for its bronze bell, which is rung every day at 10:00 AM. To the left of the temple is a small gate that leads to the trailhead for Teapot Mountain (Sihe) a very 2km climb as the trail goes along the ridge you're standing in the right place! It's a little across the area of the top, from where the views are magnificent. Back at the temple, take a look at the bridge over the river, the bridge is called the Golden Bridge and Bawang Mountain, which is just a lookout over the valley and "Yingyan" Bay. Next to the bridge in the river here has stayed the water yellow, creating a two-tone effect in the water. The water is very clear and clean. To the right of the old copper refinery (known as "Thirteen Levels" in Chinese) make for a short walk down the hillside to the waterfall. The waterfall is located on the mountainside are the world's longest double veins, all now abandoned, which is the Shuanglong Waterfall (or Golden Falls) nearby also gets its name from the two veins. The waterfall is about 10m high and 10m wide. The waterfall passes the falls (NT\$15), otherwise it's a long walk down back at Cypress temple. There is a small shop near the falls selling souvenirs and refreshments. The park containing the Kinkaseki Monument and the remains of a Japanese prisoner of war (POW) Camp. A small memorial marks the area where 1135 POWs were buried. The camp was built in 1942 and housed 1,000 POWs. The camp was known simply as "Prisoner of War Camp No. 1" or "Kinkaseki". The Japanese built the camp in a hilly area, so the POWs had to walk across the river and up to the Gold Park via Old Chung Alley, or return to the temple by the end of 2006 a trail should connect this with the Gold Museum.

**Prisoner of war camps in Taiwan**  
Taiwan's "hell ships" is relatively in the English-speaking world (in part thanks to the film bridge on the River Kwai), but few people are aware that the Japanese used concentration camps in Taiwan during World War II. More than 4,000 men were incarcerated in various camps in Taiwan during the war. Most of the men were captured in Southeast Asia (Burma, Thailand, Malaya, Indonesia, and Philippines) and sent to Taiwan to work in coal mines and quarries. They were each camp revolving around a system of forced labor in Camp No. 1, also known as Kinkaseki, which was built in 1942 and housed 1,000 POWs. The camp became more in appalling conditions, while there's a long walk down back at Cypress temple. There is a small shop near the falls selling souvenirs and refreshments. The park containing the Kinkaseki Monument and the remains of a Japanese prisoner of war (POW) Camp. A small memorial marks the area where 1135 POWs were buried. The camp was built in 1942 and housed 1,000 POWs. The camp was known simply as "Prisoner of War Camp No. 1" or "Kinkaseki". The Japanese built the camp in a hilly area, so the POWs had to walk across the river and up to the Gold Park via Old Chung Alley, or return to the temple by the end of 2006 a trail should connect this with the Gold Museum.

**Insight Guide (top) and Rough Guide (at left) are helping international visitors to learn about the Taiwan POW camps, and hopefully they will want to come and discover more about them firsthand from the POW Society. The Society is working on opening a Taiwan POW Museum in the Taipei area in the near future, thus providing more information on this little-known part of WW II history.**

## HELLSHIPS MEMORIAL IS FEATURED IN KAOHSIUNG TRAVEL GUIDE



The "Taiwan Hellships Memorial" which is located near the Kaohsiung harbour in the Chijin District, has been included in the latest Kaohsiung City travel guide book pictured on the left.

The guide book tells the story of the hellships and in particular the bombing of the Enoura Maru in January 1945 and how the memorial is in remembrance of all those POWs who suffered and those who died on the hellships in Taiwan waters.

Hopefully all these new travel guides will help to make international travelers, as well as people in Taiwan, more aware of the Taiwan POWs' story. We must never forget!

# NEW POW SOCIETIES FORMED TO HONOUR MUKDEN POWS



In the past year two new societies have been formed in the USA to remember and honour the prisoners of war who were interned in the former Mukden POW Camp in what is now the city of Shenyang in Northeastern China.

This has come about as a result of the dream of Mr. Ao Wang, a native of Shenyang – whose father worked for the famous Chinese general Chang Hsue-Liang prior to World War II. Ao and his family escaped from China as the Japanese advanced, and he has lived in America most of his life. A few years ago he had the idea to try to save what remained of the Mukden POW Camp buildings and turn them into a WW II museum.

He has made several trips back in recent years to meet with local gov't. officials to discuss the project, and in 2005 they finally decided to adopt his plan. In the past two years the museum has developed and last year in May a group of former POWs and family members and friends paid a visit to the old camp and museum.

As director of the Taiwan POW Camps Society and a friend of Ao and his wife Pat, I was invited to go along. [There was a report on the trip in our Spring-Summer 2007 newsletter]. I had previously been with them in 2004 when they visited Shenyang, Liao Yuan and Pingfan – the site of the infamous Unit 731 near Harbin with another group, and at that time we made another strong presentation for the preservation of the old camp site. We also made a presentation to gov't. officials in Liao Yuan – formerly called Hsi An - which was the site of the POW camp where the high-ranking senior officers and the governors of all the East Asian colonies were kept in the last months of the war, to erect some kind of memorial to those men as well.

As a result of Ao's many visits and the successful co-operation between the governments of Shenyang City and Liaoning Province, the 918 Historical Museum, the local Mukden POW Camp Study Group, the University of Shenyang History Dep't. and the Mukden Survivors Association, the museum in Shenyang is now a reality.

There has been a renewed interest in the Mukden Camp by the family members of the former POWs as well and at last year's annual **Mukden Survivor's Association** meeting in September, it was decided to form a "**Mukden Descendants' Group**" to help carry on the memory of the men who were POWs there.

To help educate people about the former Mukden Camp and to promote the museum in Shenyang, the **Mukden POW Remembrance Society** [MPOWRS] was formed in January. Ao Wang is the president, former POW Randall Edwards is the vice-president, and descendants Ron Parsons and Gloria Myers, along with Ao's wife Pat, Louisa Deng and Barbara Blackhorse round out the board of directors.

The society hopes to raise funds to take former POWs back to the Shenyang to visit their old camp and also make it possible for family members, researchers and others who are interested to go as well. They also plan to assist the museum in gathering artifacts, documents, and photos etc. that will enhance the museum's collection and further tell the story that must not be forgotten.

The first POWs into Mukden were a group of 1300 Americans from the Philippines who arrived in November 1942. They were soon joined by 100 British and Australian POWs who came from Singapore via Korea. That first winter was hard and more than 150 POWs perished from the cold, starvation, beatings and lack of medical care. The POWs worked as slaves in several factories in the Mukden area, supposedly helping the Japanese war effort, but in reality they sabotaged the machines and the equipment they were supposed to be building. As a result, 150 of the POWs were moved from Mukden to Japan to work as slaves there.

In the fall of 1944 more than 350 officers and enlisted men were moved to the Mukden "area" from Taiwan where they had been held for more than two years. This included all the highest ranking officers and the governors of the Asian colonies that the Japanese had conquered. They were moved to the Hsi An Camp on Dec. 1, 1944 and the other men were moved to the main camp at Mukden in May 1945.

One of the veterans who has been particularly active in the effort at Shenyang is former OSS Sgt. Hal Leith who parachuted into Mukden the day after the Japanese surrendered to free the prisoners – in particular Generals Wainwright and Percival and the other senior officers and governors - and that is another whole story in itself!

*Former POW barracks building at the Mukden POW Camp – now restored as part of the museum*



Most of the over 200 military and civilian POW camps in Asia have disappeared. Mukden is one of the few places where anything remains from those former times and is possibly the best preserved of all the surviving Asian POW camp sites. The cruel treatment that the POWs received there is typical of all the Japanese POW camps in Asia. The lack of food, medication, and sanitation led to a high casualty rate among the thousands of POWs throughout all their camps. By preserving the Mukden Camp, the story of all the camps in Asia can be told. The new society has a website at [www.mukdenpows.org](http://www.mukdenpows.org) and their email address is [info@mukdenpows.org](mailto:info@mukdenpows.org).

The **Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society** supports the work that Ao and MPOWRS is doing to further tell the story of the suffering and sacrifice of yet another group of Japanese POWs, and we urge you to support them too.

# KAOHSIUNG WAR & PEACE PARK GETS RENOVATION



**The Taiwan Hellships Memorial**

In January 2006 the Taiwan Hellships Memorial was dedicated in the newly constructed “War and Peace Park” located along the west side of the spit of land that forms the outside boundary of Kaohsiung Harbour. It was here in 1945 that the bodies of more than 350 POWs were buried in a nearby mass grave after the hellship Enoura Maru was bombed by US carrier planes while in the harbour waiting to go to Japan.

The park has been part of the ongoing development of the Chijin area for several years and has come through several stages. When we first built the memorial there, the area was barely recognizable as a “park” but in the past couple of years improvements have gradually been made with the addition of shrubs and walkways, a paved stone square and benches, and it is now beginning to take on a nicer appearance.

The City of Kaohsiung has announced that it will further develop the area this year and the work is expected to be completed by September.

We will bring you more on the development with some photos - hopefully in our next issue in the fall.

## HELP WANTED...

Local researcher and friend of the POWs in Scotland, Mr. Campbell Thomson writes -  
“ I am researching the history of my local regiment, the Lanarkshire Yeomanry, and am seeking information about the part played by the 155th Field Regiment [Lanarkshire Yeomanry] in the Malayan campaign”. I can be contacted at - Tel 01698 350849 or email: [ct@jcthompson.co.uk](mailto:ct@jcthompson.co.uk)

## 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.

## DISCOVERY OF THE SITE OF THE FORMER TAKAO CITY HOSPITAL . . .

On a recent trip to Kaohsiung in early May this year I asked my host from the Kaohsiung City Culture Bureau if anything was known of the location of the old Takao City Hospital. The answer was negative.

Over the past few months I had come across several references to the hospital in POW records and stories. There were a number of accounts of local POWs being treated there and POWs who had been on the hellships having died there, so I was keen to find out just exactly where the hospital had been. I had some old aerial photos taken by the USAAF in their reconnaissance and bombing runs over the city in 1944-45 which showed the general area, so using these we set off in search of the former hospital buildings.

As always, once we got in the approximate area where I thought the hospital should be, we began to ask the older local residents and soon we were told exactly where the hospital had been.

There is nothing left of the former site. It is now a residential housing development. The hospital closed down more than 30 years ago and moved to another part of the city. It was re-named the Minsheng Hospital and we are presently working with them to try to learn more about the old site and its history. More to follow!



Site of the former Takao Hospital

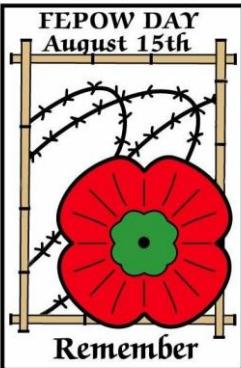
## NEW POW MEMORIAL TO BE ERECTED AT FORMER SENIOR OFFICERS CAMP

Recently I received word that the Chinese government in Liao Yuan, Liaoning Province is planning to preserve the buildings and erect a memorial on the site of the former Hsi An Senior Officers' POW Camp there.

This announcement comes four years after a presentation was made to government officials in 2004 on a trip we took to the area at that time. (see story pg 8)

At present we are working with the local historians and museum people in Liao Yuan to further research the story of the former camp and the 32 men who were interned there – all of whom were in Taiwan for more than two years prior to their arrival in December 1944.

Our goal to ensure that the former Taiwan POWs will be honoured and remembered in Manchuria has also finally been realized. We will have more to report later.



# FEPOW Day - August 15<sup>th</sup>

*"A day to remember the tens of thousands of allied prisoners of war and civilian internees who were captured by the Japanese in World War II.*

*They suffered from hunger, disease, torture and despair – and many thousands died, for the freedom that we enjoy today."*

*FEPOW Day is a worldwide day of remembrance for the Far East POWs. Please join with us this year and every year to celebrate this special day."*

## PLEASE REMEMBER THE PRICE THEY PAID !

The FEPOWs (Far East Prisoners of War) endured 3 ½ years of the most horrific mental and physical treatment, including starvation, diseases, over-work, beatings, torture etc. Those lucky enough to return home continued to suffer in silence with ongoing nightmares and bad health, yet they endeavored to try and live normal lives, never complaining or asking for anything. They have never been fully recognized for all the mental and physical torment they went through, and we would like to see that they are permanently honored with a memorial day in their name.

FEPOW Day is a day of remembrance for all those who were held as Japanese Prisoners of War during World War II - whatever nationality, color or religion, and whether service personnel, civilians or romusha (Asians pressed into slavery by the Japanese who overran their countries).

The idea for FEPOW Day was first conceived by a group of FEPOWs, their family members, historians, researchers and friends in the UK. August 15th was selected to be the date as it is the day Japan surrendered, and those who gained their freedom could look back and remember lost mates who did not make it through the nightmarish existence of the Japanese labor camps, and also their first day of freedom. It is not intended to minimize or replace VJ Day or VP Day - as it is sometimes referred to now, but to be celebrated equally with it.

FEPOW Day is spreading worldwide and was celebrated for the first time last year on August 15<sup>th</sup>. We hope that veterans' organizations - the various Legions worldwide, the American VFW, the RSL's from Australia and New Zealand, the allied nations' governments and all those who support and wish to remember the FEPOWs, will endorse this special day of remembrance and join with us to remember those who suffered so much.

More information may be found at <http://www.fepow-day.org> where a web petition and a draft letter are available to add your support. Please help us to make this a day when we can universally remember the FEPOWs, whether in our own home or at gatherings around the world.

Very Sincerely,

*The FEPOW Remembrance Day Group*

NOTE: The Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society is proud to be a part of this project with the FEPOW Day Group, and is currently the representative for Taiwan and Asia.

## UPCOMING EVENTS . . .

### SPECIAL FEPOW DAY EVENT BEING PLANNED FOR TAIPEI

This year for the first time ever, we are planning to hold a special commemorative event to celebrate "FEPOW DAY" here in Taiwan. It will be held on Sunday August 10 at "The Taipei Film House" on Chungshan Road.

There will be a memorial tribute to the FEPOWs, followed by a showing of the film "A War Story" – depicting life in the Kinkaseki POW Camp from 1942 - 1945. In addition a collection of Taiwan POW artifacts will be on display.

For those in Taiwan, an email will be sent out several weeks before the event with further details. We hope you will join with us for this memorable occasion. We thank the City of Taipei for co-sponsoring this event with us.

### DEDICATION OF MEMORIAL PLAQUE TO HONOUR EXECUTED POW AIRMEN

We are pleased to announce the dedication of a plaque to be set 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 after a mock trial 63 years ago. A memorial service was previously held at the site in June 2005.

We are still working on finalizing all of the details and plans for the event, and the date, time and meeting place will soon be confirmed.

Local Taiwan residents will be notified of more details by email closer to the time of the dedication ceremony.