



Never Forgotten

Vol. 10, Number 2

FALL – WINTER 2009

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

Another eventful year!



Dedication of the POW Memorial on the site of the former Toroku POW Camp – June 6th



Dedication of the American Airmen's Plaque at the old Taipei Prison wall – June 20th



2nd FEPOW Day celebrated - August 15th



Presenting the Taiwan POWs' story at the Lung Ying-tai Foundation's Taipei Salon - Oct. 24th



Six former Taiwan POWs return to Kinkaseki for Remembrance Day 2009



So proudly they wave - flags at Jinguashi POW Park on Remembrance Day 2009

**TAIWAN POW CAMPS MEMORIAL
SOCIETY**

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**LOGO of the TAIWAN POW CAMPS
MEMORIAL SOCIETY**

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

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

- * to continue the search for survivors of
the Taiwan POW camps from 1942 - 45.
- * to search for the locations of the
former Japanese POW camps on the
island of Taiwan. [*completed*]
- * to ensure the memory of the Taiwan
POWs is not forgotten. [*ongoing*]
- * to help with the organization of, and
participate in, the 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!

DEDICATION OF THE AMERICAN AIRMEN'S MEMORIAL



Side entrance to the Taipei prison near the spot where the executions took place.



Message from Michael Teng, Division Chief, Taipei Dep't of Cultural Affairs.



Address from Christopher Patton, Dep. Chief, Liaison Affairs, American Institute.



Reps from ROC-VAC, POW Society, AIT and Taipei City Gov't. unveil the plaque.

On Saturday June 20th a memorial service was held at the site of the former Taipei Prison to honor and remember the American airmen who were captured by the Japanese when their aircraft crashed or were shot down over Taiwan in the fall of 1944 and the spring of 1945.

These men were not considered to be POWs but rather “war criminals” and as such were held in the old Taihoku (Taipei) Prison, often in solitary confinement. They were starved and beaten and suffered great hardships. On May 29th 1945, 14 of these airmen were given a mock trial with no defense and were sentenced to death by firing squad. The sentence was carried out on June 19th 1945 – less than two months before the Japanese surrender! The remaining airmen were released in September 1945 and returned to their homeland again.

On June 19th 2005, a memorial service was held by the wall to commemorate the death of the US Army Air Corps and US Navy airmen who were murdered 60 years ago on that date. It was decided then that some kind of plaque should be placed on the wall of the old prison to remember the sacrifice of those men for our freedom.

The Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society is pleased to have worked with the Department of Cultural Affairs of the Taipei City Government, and with the support of the ROC Veterans Affairs Commission and the American Institute in Taiwan, we are proud to have brought this project to its completion. We thank them all for their help and support in recognition of these brave airmen.

This memorial will stand as a remembrance of the courage and strength and sacrifice of those American airmen many years ago. They were needlessly taken from us when they were so young. They are gone – but they will never be forgotten!



Piper Mal Turner leads the march to the plaque.



Mark Wilkie reading the poem “Remember Us”.



TPCMS Director reads a note from Charles Parker, brother of slain airman.



Ms. Tina Chen, Taipei City Gov't. lays a wreath for the families of the airmen.

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!

EDWARD L. ROLLIE

SGT., 515TH CAC, US ARMY.
FEBRUARY 19, 2008

JOHN M. WALKER

PVT., 24 PG, 21 PS US ARMY AIR CORPS
MARCH 19, 2009

FREDERICK G. PAULSEN

CPL., 4TH US MARINES
APRIL 2009

JOHN W. GRIFFING

PFC., 200 CAC. US ARMY
APRIL 18, 2009

RICHARD A. HARRALSON

RM2C., US NAVY
APRIL 20, 2009

HARRY FURBANK

GNR., 80TH ANTI-TANK REGIMENT, R.A.
APRIL 22, 2009

TELESFORO V. ARCHULETA

PFC., 200 CAC. US ARMY
AUGUST 20, 2009

ABEL F. ORTEGA

PVT., 192ND TANK BTN. US ARMY
AUGUST 24, 2009

WILLIAM J. MONDAHL

SGT., 5TH FIELD REGIMENT, R.A.
AUGUST 28, 2009

CARL A. PASURKA

SGT., 515 CAC. US ARMY
AUGUST 29, 2009

"We Will Remember Them"

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 this November. We look forward to working with Scott and the staff of the CTOT in the days ahead.

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 DEAR POW FRIENDS. . .

Two more dear FEPOW friends have passed away this summer. They have been very special friends and have helped so much in my study of the former Taiwan camps. Here is a tribute to them . . .

CARL A. PASURKA –

I have known and corresponded with Carl and his family for many years. His son Carl Jr. found our website and contacted us and we have been friends ever since. I would always call Carl and his wife Lorraine whenever I was back in Canada in the summer to have a chat and we had some great conversations together. I would always get a Christmas card from them and periodically a note of thanks for remembering the men through our work. They were always such an encouragement to me.

Carl was in Toroku Camp for a couple of months before moving on to Japan. When we had the dedication of the Toroku POW Memorial this past June I showed his picture – then and now, and told a bit of his story. He was so pleased with this and I'm so happy that we were able to get the memorial up and dedicated while he was still with us. He will be missed, but not forgotten!

ABEL ORTEGA –

Abel was also a dear friend who I talked with every time I returned to Canada for a vacation. He was also in Toroku Camp and in his later years wrote a book on his experiences as a POW. He too was very pleased to know that at last there was a memorial to him and the others who had suffered so terribly on the hellship the *Hokusen Maru* and who had experienced a bit of a reprieve from their ordeal as POWs during their brief stay at Toroku Camp.

Abel was a member of the famous 192nd Tank Battalion and had survived the Bataan Death March. He had lived through the horrors of Camp O'Donnell and Cabanatuan before being sent via Taiwan to Japan where he finished out the war. After the Japs surrendered Abel and several other men made flags from the parachutes that were used to drop food and supplies to them before their evacuation. He had a great spirit and was very involved in POW circles in the US in his later years.

PASSING POWS. . .

As you can see from the list of those who have passed on in these past few months, it consists mainly of American ex-POWs. This is because we are getting reports and being told of their passing and we are grateful for this information so we can honour them one more time.

However, we have a lot of men still listed in our POW survivors' rosters who we have not heard from for a long time – in some cases many years, so we don't know if they're still with us or not. We would appreciate hearing from anyone who knows of the passing of former Taiwan POWs in the UK, the USA, Australia, the Netherlands, Canada or wherever. Let us not forget them – ever!

ANOTHER NEW POW CAMP DISCOVERED . . .

In July of this year, while doing some further research into the evacuation of the POWs from Taiwan in September 1945, it was discovered that the men who had previously been in Shirakawa Camp when the war ended were not returned to Taihoku Camp 6 as was previously believed. Rather, I discovered that they were put up in the former Maruyama Japanese Convalescent Barracks which stood on the site of the present Taipei Soccer Stadium on Chungshan North Road in Taipei.

This camp was in operation for a period of only 10 days from August 27th to September 5 – 6, 1945 and served as a temporary holding camp for the men from the former Shirakawa Camp awaiting evacuation by the American and British Navies.

The Maruyama Camp was a companion camp to the Churon Camp located east of the Matsuyama (now Sung Shan) Airport in Taipei. Churon Camp held all of the men who had previously been in the Kukutsu Camp in the hills south of Hsintien. All of those men had been moved there from Kinkaseki Camp in May – June 1945. This camp was in operation from August 25th – September 5th.

So now, in looking at the overall picture of the Taiwan camps, we have decided to re-allocate the Churon Camp to the status of “*temporary evacuation camp*” along with the newly discovered Maruyama Camp, so now we can more accurately say that there were 14 actual POW camps operational on Taiwan from 1942 through 1945, with the two temporary evacuation camps, making a total of 16 altogether.



Map of Maruyama Camp area in the lower left hand corner with the Taiwan Shrine – now the Grand Hotel area in the upper right corner. The Keelung River and Chungshan North Rd. and bridge can also be seen.

FEPOW DAY 2009

FEPOW Day 2009 on Saturday August 15th was a great success with more than 30 local friends and supporters in attendance at the Spot Theatre in Taipei for the occasion.

After a brief introduction about FEPOW Day and the work of the Society, a service of Remembrance was held with readings by Ted Chen and John Collins, and a prayer of Remembrance was offered by Rev. Diane Wong. The service closed with the playing of the remembrance CD “Before You Go”.

Following this, the film “Paradise Road” starring Glenn Close and Frances McDormand was shown. Directed by Bruce Beresford, it depicts the lives of the civilian women captured by the Japs and how they formed a choir to help overcome their situation and torment.

It is a true story, accurately portraying the brutality shown even to women and children by their Japanese captors, and how they triumphed over adversity. All those present were very moved by the film and were grateful for being shown another aspect of the POWs’ story, this time as pertaining to the civilians.

Our thanks once again to Ms. Tina Chen and the Taipei City Gov’t. Culture Bureau for their assistance in making the day a success. We are already beginning to plan for next year’s event.

FROM THE DIRECTOR . . .

Another exciting year is concluding for the Society as we continue to research and tell the story of the former Taiwan POW camps and the men who were interned in them, and also to erect and dedicate POW memorials in their memory.

The enquiries from family members and friends of the former POWs continue to pour in and this keeps me extremely busy as well.

This year has been outstanding with the dedication of the War & Peace Memorial Park at Kaohsiung Harbour – the site of the Taiwan POW Hellships Memorial in May, the dedication of the Toroku POW Memorial on June 6th and the dedication of the American Airmen’s plaque on the old Taipei Prison Wall on June 20th (see story on page 3). I have also been privileged once again to be able to travel to the UK for another wonderful reunion of former Taiwan POWs and then on to Scotland for POW visits as well.

For next year – the 65th anniversary of the end of WWII, we are making plans to erect two more POW memorials at the two schools which were the sites of the former Inrin and Inrin Temporary Camps. We also expect to be having some other special 65th anniversary events which will be announced later.

I am continually grateful for all the interest and support that is being given to us from various government and civic organizations and many friends. Without your help this work could not go forward. It is thanks to you that the POWs are being remembered. I wish you all a blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous year ahead in 2010.

POW Evacuation Memories

The *USS Block Island* was one of the two aircraft carriers which evacuated the Taiwan POWs from Keelung Harbour and took them to Manila following the Japanese surrender in September 1945. The former crew-members have a wonderful association which helps them to keep in touch and every year they have a reunion to remember former times and comrades. In 2007 I was honoured and privileged to be able to attend the reunion in Providence RI, USA (see article in the Spring-Summer 2007 newsletter).



*The USS
Block
Island
off
Taiwan
in 1945*

Late this past spring I was in contact with Bill MacInnes the editor of the *USS Block Island Association* newsletter "Chips off the old Block". I suggested to Bill that maybe we could canvas the members of the ship's crew who took part in the evacuation of the POWs from Taiwan for their memories of that mission, and the response we got was fantastic. Many of the men shared their stories with us and we would like to share a few brief excerpts from some of the responses we received. . .

Kenneth Benson, FC 3/C, CVE 106

In the early part of September 1945, we were ordered to Formosa to evacuate the POW's from the island. We sent destroyers with a group of Marines and a medical team from the *Block Island* into the harbor. We also put aircraft in the air for support. The destroyers brought the POW's back to the waiting aircraft carriers. I saw them bring the POW's on board and it was unbelievable to see the condition they were in. Some of the men only weighed about 80 pounds.

Emil G. (Buzzy) Bazzini, CM 1/C, CVE 21/106

When the DE brought the prisoners out to our ship, it was a horrible sight - walking skeletons, almost all starved to death. Also, quite a few were very bad off and had to be brought aboard on stretchers. Folding cots were lined up on our hangar deck for them to sleep on and I'll swear many of them slept with smiles on their faces.

D. Kelly Berglin, RM 3/C, CVE 106

The POW's were in horrible shape. They were nothing more than skeletons dressed in rags. We helped them up the ladder to a sponson where a shower was rigged. The prisoners were showered, disinfected and powdered to kill their body lice. Most of their rags were tossed over the side.

Richard Cross, S 1/C, CVE 106

It was unbelievable the condition that these men were in. They could not have lived a lot longer on Formosa. They were so thankful for our help.

Louis (Bud) Hellwig, RM 1/C, CVE 21/106

I had the honor and the privilege of being the radioman who contacted a British battleship in the west Pacific and sent it the names, serial numbers and home addresses of all the survivors. The British forwarded this data on so families

would get the information of their rescued loved ones. Transmitting this material was then - and is now, the most satisfying radio duty I have ever been involved in.

Loren S. Hewitt, S/SGT USMC-VMF-511, CVE 106

At times it was somewhat emotional for my crew and me because the prisoners were in such need and they could not believe they were being treated so well. My crew and I were so happy we could help them.

Harry McKay, S 1/C, V2 Division, CVE 21/106

One thing I will never forget is the sight of so many emaciated bodies being brought aboard the ship. It was heart rending. Their gratitude was plain to see. We had turned the hangar deck into one large bunkhouse by setting up cots for the liberated prisoners. At one end was the Sick Bay for the men that needed medical attention.

Harvey Murdock, GM, CVE 106

The look in their eyes and the smiles on their faces is a scene I will always remember. I cannot imagine the true feelings they had after the ordeal they had endured for so long. I don't believe there was anyone who weighed 100 pounds. I visited with one of the Scottish men and he gave me his kilt; it is moth-eaten but I still have it.

William D. Nanney, S 1/C, CVE 106 (Baker)

I worked in the bakery. We prepared food for the POWs and fed them. They ate so much that they made themselves sick. Even with the best care that we could give them, we still lost some. I will never forget the faces of the prisoners that we took on our carrier to Manila. It was both a sad day and a good day for me. It hurt to see them so malnourished and to look at the scars they had where they had been beaten and tortured by our enemies. It was also a great day to know that they were now free and they would be going home at last.

Quentin Nelson, SKD 3/C, CVE 106

It certainly was a pitiful sight to see these men come aboard, as most of them were no more than walking skeletons. They had suffered immensely under the Japanese but were very happy to be free and knowing they were going home. This experience of rescuing the POW's is something a person will never forget.

Ben Owens, PhM 1/C, CVE 21/106

Two Pharmacist Mates from the *Block Island* (myself and Ed Simpson) and two from the *USS Santee* were flown to the airstrip in Taihoku to care for the great number of men who were in need of medical treatment. The condition of the POWs remains in my mind to this day over 60 years later. If anyone has any doubt as to the treatment that POWs had at the hands of the Japanese, I can tell you that it was horrible. It made us feel great that after all these years of war we could be a part of an operation that would allow some of these Allied Prisoners of War to start their journey home. We thanked God for this important opportunity.

Joseph D. Zook, Night LSO, CVE 106

Even at age 87, I will never forget the skeletons we laid out on the cots on the hangar deck. I don't know how they survived, of course, many didn't.

There were many more stories related to this mission which will be released later on our website and in the book on the Taiwan POWs. The former POWs are forever grateful to the men of the Block Island and all the other ships that took part in their evacuation from Taiwan.

The Story of the Kilt . . .

As noted in the *USS Block Island* excerpts, GM Harvey Murdock became friends with one of the Scottish Gordon Highlander POWs and before disembarking in the Philippines the POW gave Harvey his kilt. When I mentioned to Bill and Harvey that I would like to have some photos of the kilt, Harvey graciously decided to donate the



**Harvey Murdock
as a young Gunner's
Mate on the USS
Block Island**

kilt to us for our future POW Museum. It has already been on display once at our POW banquet in November.

On hearing this news I did some research into who the kilt may have belonged to. There were only a few men from the Gordon Highlanders left on Taiwan at war's end and I knew my good friend John Emmett had been transported from Taiwan on the *Block Island*, so at first I believed the kilt may have been his. What a coincidence and a small world it would be if it was his kilt. I have his Glengarry cap which he left to me.

When the kilt finally arrived here in early September – in fact 64 years to the week that the POWs were evacuated from Taiwan in 1945, and after checking the initials and serial number I discovered that it was not John's but rather it belonged to a man named James Gray, also of the Gordon Highlanders.

Harvey wrote when sending the kilt, *"I feel so very good that the kilt is where it should be. With my best regards, HM"*.

It is so great to have this very special and personal part of Taiwan's POW history included in our POW collection after all these years. Our thanks to Harvey for donating it and also to Bill and Judy MacInnes for their help in getting the kilt to us. We will not forget the service rendered to the Taiwan POWs by Harvey and the other crewmembers of the *USS Block Island*.



Harvey today - at his home in Utah - and the kilt

Sharing the Taiwan POWs' story on Radio Taiwan International

Radio Taiwan International is Taiwan's national broadcaster. It broadcasts worldwide in 13 different languages.

"Time Traveller" is a 10 - minute weekly English programme. It is aired every Wednesday in seven time slots and is also available on demand via the internet.



**Headquarters building
of Radio Taiwan
International in Taipei**

Early this summer I was contacted by Ms. Shih-han Huang a journalist at Radio Taiwan International's English Service. She hosts the programme, *Time Traveller*, in which she introduces stories about Taiwan's history. She kindly invited me to share with her listeners worldwide a little of the largely unknown story of the former Taiwan Camps and the men who were interned in them.

The interview was spread over two programs as Shih-han wanted to do one interview "live" at one of the POW camps sites and the second in a studio environment. So one day in late August we went out to Jinguashi to the site of the former Kinkaseki POW Camp for the first part and then the next day we completed the second session in the studio.

The programs aired worldwide on September 9th and 16th and it is exciting to think that the POWs' story could be shared with potentially millions of listeners worldwide. We are certainly getting an audience for the POWs' story and thanks to Shih-han and RTI for this wonderful opportunity.

POW Presentation at the Lung Ying-tai Foundation



This summer I was also contacted by the **Lung Ying-tai Foundation** of Taipei and asked to present the story of the Taiwan POW camps to the fall session of their well-known *Taipei Salon* educational programme to be held on October 24th.

It was a real privilege as well as a challenge to try to give at least an overview of the Taiwan POW camps in a couple of hours to the approx. 300 people present at the seminar and I am grateful to Dr. Lung and her foundation for the opportunity to share the Taiwan POWs' story locally with a wide variety of scholars, students and interested listeners.



2009 TAIWAN POW REUNION

Sept. 25 - 28 – Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK

Once again this fall - thanks to wonderful organization by Mrs. Eileen Bacon and her daughter Clare Towns, another Taiwan POW Reunion was held in the UK.

We gathered again for the second time at the Sea Hotel in South Shields, a suburb of Newcastle Upon Tyne, from Friday September 25th through Monday the 28th. Our POW numbers were down to seven from the thirteen who were present last year, but with more family members, there were still over forty in attendance at this year's event.

The reunion got off to a great start on Friday night with the opening dinner and program. Saturday morning we were treated to a reception at the South Tyneside Town Hall hosted by Mayor John Anglin and his wife Christine. The mayor conducted a tour of the beautiful old building and we posed for group photos in the reception room.



Former Taiwan POWs and POW sons and daughters pose with Mayor John Anglin in the reception hall.

Then it was back to the hotel for a traditional Fish & Chip lunch before heading off by coach to the lovely city of Durham. We had a couple of hours to basically do what we wanted and explore this lovely ancient city with its castle (unfortunately closed for a special function) and majestic cathedral. Everyone had an enjoyable afternoon outing.

Saturday evening saw us gathered at the Hebburn Buffs Club for a great buffet dinner and entertainment featuring music from the 40's, 50's and 60's. A raffle was also held with the proceeds being donated to the Society and its work.



On Sunday morning at 11:00am we held a special Service of Remembrance in Hebburn Park. This year we were joined by veterans of the Durham Light Infantry along with members of Branch 1329 of the Royal British Legion and both units provided a standard in honour of the veterans. The Cadets of the Javelin Bn. Parachute Reg't. TA once again provided

the honour guard at the cenotaph. Cliff Phillips, son of former Taiwan POW Arthur Phillips was the MC for the service and Major Henry Silcock of the Salvation Army, son-in-law of former POW Arthur Robinson, officiated at the ceremony. Poems were read and tributes were brought by the former POWs and their family members, the mayor and city councilors, the Royal British Legion and the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society.



During the laying of the wreaths the Northeast Concert Band played the hymn "Abide With Me". After Last Post, two minutes silence and Reveille – played by Ian Watson, the FEPOW Prayer was read by all those present and the service concluded. This was followed by lunch and a time of fellowship at the Hebburn Branch of the British Legion.



The former POWs at the Hebburn Cenotaph

The closing dinner was held Sunday night with a sumptuous banquet of traditional English fare put on by the hotel. It was a wonderful conclusion to a great reunion and we were all sad to have to say goodbye to old and new friends on Monday. *Next year?*



More scenes from the reunion



NOTE: Following the reunion I spent a further two weeks travelling in Scotland - to Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Stirling.

(See page 10 for details)



2009 REMEMBRANCE WEEK

This year twenty-two overseas guests came to Taiwan for our Remembrance Week event. Included were six former POWs – the most we have had for several years. Three - Jack Fowler, George Reynolds and Stan Vickerstaff had been here before, and three – Ken Pett, William Roy and Stan Wood were here for the first time. Also present were Peter Bowkett and Andrew Popple and their wives, representing their fathers who were POWs here but have since passed on.



Jack & Ken remember

On Thursday we visited the former Kinkaseki Camp and the Gold Ecological Park and Museum. The visitors went inside the No. 5 mine tunnel and while the memories flooded back for the POWs, their family members were able to see a little of the conditions they endured as well.

A meaningful time was spent in the POW Park and on the hill overlooking the former mine entrance. On the way back to Taipei we made a stop at the Keelung Harbour dock where the POWs arrived and departed over 60 years ago.

Friday was taken up with local sightseeing around Taipei, which our guests thoroughly enjoyed. It gave them a chance to see some of the local Chinese culture, not to mention the noon buffet they enjoyed at the Grand Hotel!



Former Taihoku Camp 6 POWs

Included was a stop at the former Taihoku No. 6 Camp.

Saturday morning the group went to the Kukutsu “jungle” Camp in the hills south of Hsintien for a special memorial service with our Taiwanese friends there. Mrs. Lai, the district chairman’s wife had arranged for several of the older folk who live in the area and who actually saw and remembered the POWs being there, to take part in the ceremony and a wonderful time of fellowship followed. We had a great time and many of the guests said that this was one of the most memorable parts of their visit.



“Old” friends at Kukutsu Camp

Saturday evening featured our annual POW Banquet at the Imperial Hotel, and once again local supporters and friends were able to meet the former POWs and hear stories

about their time in Taiwan.

The weather for the Remembrance Day service on Sunday was much improved over the past couple of years

and around 100 people turned out for the service in the POW Park in Jinguashi.

Piper Mal Turner began the ceremony, 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. Then David Campbell, Director-General of the British Trade and Cultural Office in Taipei brought a message of tribute on behalf of the Commonwealth and Allied representatives.

Poems were read and tributes were brought by the former POWs and their family members, and then POW Society board member Mark Wilkie, 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 piper played *Amazing Grace* and this was followed by the Last Post, two minute’s silence and Reveille rendered by trumpeter Andrew Tsao from TAS.

Everyone then joined together in reciting the “Ode of Remembrance” and 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 in the nearby community center.



POWs & family members at the POW memorial

On Monday we took Bill Roy back to the Taipei Railway Repair Shops where he worked as a POW while in Taihoku Camp # 6 in 1944 – 45. Mr. Wendell Lou, former vice-director of the facility was our guide for the tour. It brought back a lot of memories for Bill and we thank the TRA for the opportunity to visit the site once more.



Bill visits the Railway Shops

Once again it was a great weekend and a wonderful week for our POW guests, and we hope to have more POWs and their family members coming to join us in 2010 – the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II.

A visit to Scotland . . .

After the POW reunion in Newcastle I travelled up to Scotland for two weeks to learn more about the FEPOWs. I first went to Aberdeen where I had the pleasure to finally meet fellow researcher and friend Stewart Mitchell, who does volunteer work for the Gordon Highlanders Museum and with whom I have worked for the past year sorting out the men of that regiment who were in Taiwan. Of the three days I spent there, one was at the GH Museum which has a nice display on the FEPOWs and has asked for my help in arranging a special display on the FEPOWs for next spring. I look forward to working with Stewart and the museum in the future. Stewart also arranged some self-guided walking tours through the area for me so I was able to explore Aberdeen and its history and sights. I really enjoyed the time I had there and hope to return again in the future.

Stewart was also kind enough to accompany me to Dundee to visit our mutual friend and ex-POW Alistair Urquhart of the Gordon Highlanders. Alistair was not a POW on Taiwan but was in the same convoy of hellships as my two Australian cousins who were torpedoed by American subs on the way from Singapore to Japan in September 1944. He was on the Kachidoki Maru and they were on the Rakuyo Maru. Alistair was rescued, but sadly my cousins were both lost at sea. It was good to finally meet him after corresponding for many years, and we spent a nice few hours together.

The next seven days were spent in Edinburgh and on one of those days I took a train out to Stirling – the site of many famous battles and events in Scottish history, in addition to the famous castle there. The castle is home to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Regiment and while there I met and visited with Archie Wilson of the museum staff who kindly showed me around the museum. I had also been working with Curator Rod Mackenzie in past months to establish the Argyll's who had been POWs on Taiwan and it was good to see their display on the FEPOWs as well.

Back in Edinburgh, I thoroughly enjoyed my time exploring the wonderful city with all its historic sites and Scottish culture. Being connected to the Thompson clan I was also able to explore a little of my roots and as well, re-live long ago memories of a little dog from Edinburgh that touched the hearts of the world – Greyfriars Bobby! I also had the pleasure of visiting one evening with Mrs. Elizabeth Keith, widow of Taiwan POW John Keith whom I have known almost since I began this work many years ago. It was a fantastic trip and I hope that I can return to Scotland again sometime in the future.



Photos (l-r) Gordon's Museum FEPOW Display Argyll's Museum 2nd Btn. FEPOW Display Greyfriars Bobby

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 - for detailed questions and answers

Download the application form at:

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!