

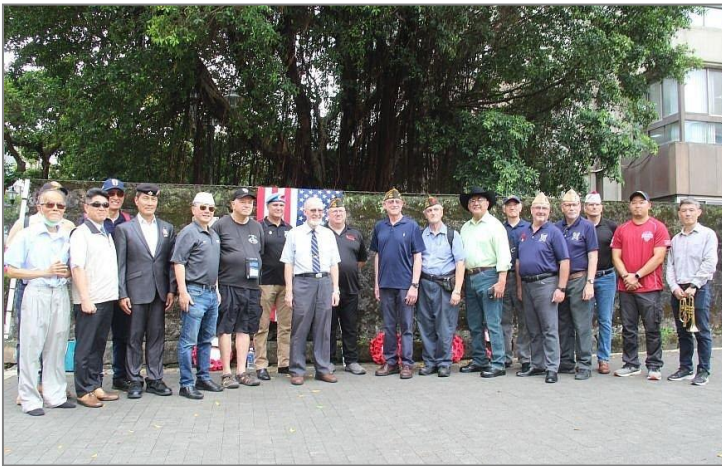


Never Forgotten

Vol. 24, Number 2

FALL – WINTER 2023

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



Airmen's Memorial Service - June 18th.



FEPOW Day celebrated - August 12th.



'Remembrance Week' event resumes following the end of covid restrictions.



Remember Them!



The new Heito POW Camp Memorial dedication service. (See pages 5 - 7)



The Taiwan Hellships Memorial re-visited - December 4th.

The former burial ground for the men who died on the Enoura Maru today.



While telling the story of the sacrifice of so many for future generations, it is so sad to see that sacrifice currently being squandered in our world today.

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SOCIETY - BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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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 the poppy and the
poppy cross are recognised worldwide as symbols
of remembrance to war veterans. Over the years
the returning POWs and their families laid poppy
crosses at all the former campsites they visited.

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

- * to search for the locations of all the former Japanese POW camps on the island of Taiwan. [*completed*]
- * to search for the survivors of the 1942 – 45 Taiwan POW camps.
- * to ensure that the story of the Taiwan POWs is told and they are not forgotten.
- * to help with the organization of and participate in the memorial service for the Taiwan POWs at Jinguashi every November on Remembrance Day.
- * 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.

**LIST OF TAIWAN POW
CAMPS. . . all found !**

1. KINKASEKI #1 (Jinguashi)
2. TAICHU #2 (Taichung)
3. HEITO #3 (PingTung)
4. SHIRAKAWA #4 (Bai He)
5. TAIHOKU #5 MOKSAK (Taipei)
6. TAIHOKU #6 (Taipei)
7. KARENKO (Hualien)
8. TAMAZATO (Yuli)
9. INRIN (Yuanlin)
10. INRIN TEMP. (Yuanlin)
11. TOROKU (Douliu)
12. TAKAO (Kaohsiung)
13. KUKUTSU (Taipei)
14. OKA (Sanxia)
15. CHURON Evacuation Camp (Taipei)
16. MARUYAMA Evacuation Camp (Taipei)

Thought . . .

**THOSE WE LOVE CAN NEVER BE MORE
THAN A THOUGHT AWAY...
FOR AS LONG AS THERE'S A MEMORY
THEY LIVE IN OUR HEARTS TO STAY.**

FROM THE DIRECTOR. . .

As mentioned in the last issue, work has finally finished on the Chinese translation of '**Never Forgotten**', it has all been formatted and ready to print and we are currently working on the arrangements for its publication and distribution.

I am pleased to say that we have finally found a publisher / distributor who is willing to take on the project and I am very confident that in due course it can be done. Having worked in the printing industry in past life I am fairly familiar with the way things have to be done, but once again they seem to be different here in Taiwan. It seems that here different standard paper sizes are used as opposed to that in other countries such as Canada, the UK, USA, Singapore etc., so the book will have to be re-formatted some for the Taiwan market.

The English version of the book was published according to western styles and posed no problem, but with the necessary re-formatting, the Chinese book will take longer to do and hopefully if all goes well, it could come out sometime around the middle of 2024. Let's keep our fingers crossed!

I'm sure it will have a wonderful response when it goes out - here in Taiwan and around the world. Finally people in Taiwan and Chinese readers overseas can learn about the little-known story of the former Taiwan POW camps. This is the sole purpose for the book and one of the main 'aims' of our POW Society.

Our 16th FEPOW Day event on August 12th was once again a great success. This year we had over 30 in attendance for the viewing of "**The Railway Man**" starring Colin Firth and Nicole Kidman, which was followed by the documentary "**Enemy My Friend**" – a double feature night.

We hope we will see more people coming to Taiwan for our POW camp tours. We have already had a number of domestic tours and overseas ones this year and hope for even more next year.

Although the day was marred by rain, we had another great Remembrance Week event this year. We had four overseas POW family members take part and it is hoped that more international visitors will join with us in 2024. Be sure to let us know in advance if you are interested in taking part.

Finally, in this troubled world, let us continue to remember those fighting in Ukraine to defend their homeland and for those suffering in Israel and Gaza - let us keep them in our thoughts and prayers. At this Christmas season let us hope that 'peace on earth and goodwill to men' can soon be achieved and that the many problems plaguing our nations may be resolved. I wish you a very Merry and Blessed Christmas.

Michael Hurst MBE

A JOURNEY OF EXPLORATION

Back in mid-October I received an email from our good friend and fellow POW researcher in Japan, Ms. Fuyuko Nishisato. She mentioned that she was coming to Taiwan in late November and wanted to visit the Karenko and Shirakawa camps in Hualien and Bai-He where the senior Allied officer POWs had been held. She also wanted to visit Kaohsiung to view the harbour area and the place where the men who died in the bombing of the hellship *Enoura Maru* were first buried.

She had enlisted the aid of a photographer friend to come along to document her work and asked if I could accompany her for several days as well. Being very busy I gave them directions for visiting Hualien and Bai-He and agreed to spend one day accompanying her to Kaohsiung.

On Monday December 4th we set off on the High Speed train, arriving around 10 am. I had arranged for our good friend Jeff Kang of the Taiwanese Veterans Association and his partner Betty to meet us and drive us to the various locations which they were very happy to do.

After an initial stop at the harbour to see where the hellships such as the *Tottori Maru* which had carried POWs from the Philippines to Manchuria late in 1942 and many others had landed, and roughly where the *Enoura Maru* had been anchored at the time of the bombing, we moved to the War and Peace Park for a look at the Hellships Memorial and the veterans museum.



We were met there by Dr. Hsu, Chairman of the association, renewed old acquaintances and had a look around the updated museum. After a time of lunch and fellowship we returned to the park and went across the road to view the large grassy field which was once the site of the *Enoura Maru* burials.

Kaohsiung city has changed so much over the years but one thing has remained constant – that old burial site has never been built on – a memorial in itself to this day! We wish Fuyuko well with her research.

Fuyuko standing in the field where the former mass grave was located.



TRIBUTE TO THE AMERICAN AIRMEN AT TAIPEI PRISON

On Sunday June 18th, the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society held a service of remembrance to honour the American airmen who were shot down over Taiwan during raids on the island from October 1944 to May 1945 and held by the Japanese in the Taihoku Prison. We especially remembered those who were needlessly murdered there on June 19th 1945.

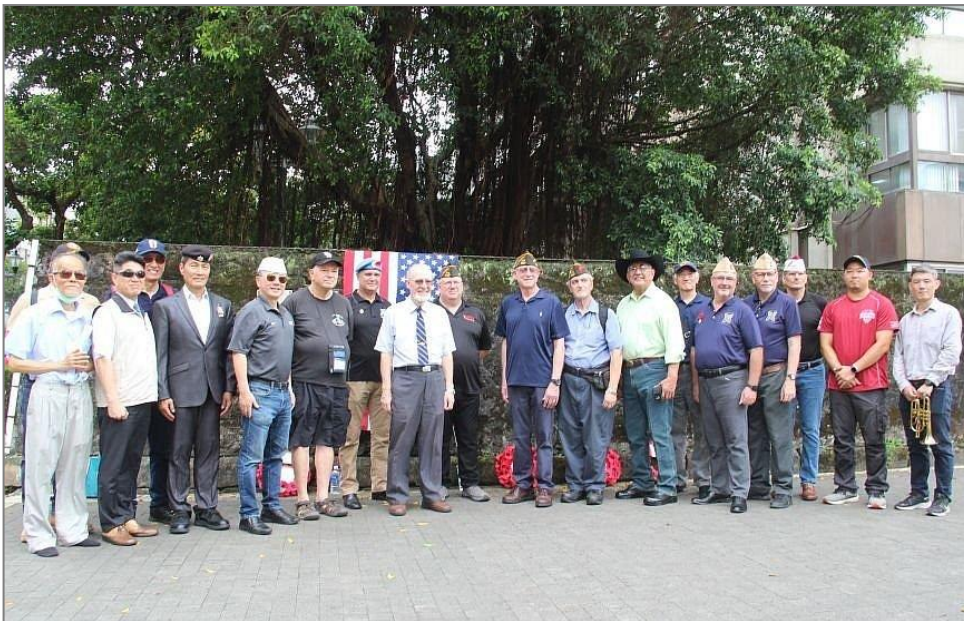
The commemoration service took place by the American Airmen's plaque at the former Taipei Prison wall commencing at 11 am and about 30 people turned out for the event

Emcee Mark Wilkie welcomed all the guests on the sunny, warm morning. The Society director shared the story of the downed airmen, their capture and imprisonment, and particularly the fake trial of 14 of the 25 airmen who had been held captive and their subsequent murder by a Japanese firing squad on June 19th 1945.

Tributes were rendered by Lt. Gen. Chang, Huey-Zon (Ret), former Deputy Commander of the Taiwan Air Force and Col. Felix Wang (Ret), Deputy Director of General Services, ROC Veterans Affairs Council. The names of the 25 airmen who were held in the prison were read by Bernie Moore representing the New Zealand Returned Services Association. Then Tony Hu of the VFW read the poem 'Remember Us'.

Lt/Col. Scott Ellinger (Ret) Commander of the Taipei VFW Post #9957 shared a challenging message and a prayer of remembrance. Finally, wreaths were laid by the wall in honour of the airmen. Taps played by Eric Hsu, a minutes' silence and Reveille rounded out the program after which Steve Daugherty read the Ode of Remembrance.

Interest in our event and the attendance are growing every year, and our thanks to those who attended and those who took part. We look forward to another great event next year.



Scenes from this year's American Airmen's memorial service.



Eric Hsu



HEITO CAMP RE-OPENS AFTER EXTENSIVE RENOVATION

The story of the former Heito POW Camp following its closure in March 1945 is a long and interesting one. It leading us to where we are today in preserving the story of the camp and also the memory of those who have occupied the site for more than 80 years.

In the late 1930's, a work camp was constructed of crude bamboo huts on the broad, treeless, dry plain near the present-day city of Pingtung to house mainly Chinese political prisoners of war who had been brought to Taiwan after capture on the mainland. The Japanese had previously dammed the Ai-Liao River for a hydro-electric project and the remaining river valley, strewn with rocks, boulders and stones, was being cleared to allow for the planting of sugar cane in the rich river bottom soil. The prisoners had to slave in the hot tropical sun at this task under poor conditions until July 1942.



1944 USAAF aerial photo of Heito Camp.

It was at that time – after the Japanese conquests of Malaya, Singapore and the Philippines that it was decided to use allied POWs for this task, so the Chinese workers were moved out to places unknown and the camp was made ready for the captured POWs.

The first POWs brought to the camp were 26 civilian crewmen off the captured Dutch oil tanker *MS Genota* who arrived on August 2nd 1942. Their task was to set up the camp kitchen and facilities for the men who would follow. Then later that month on August 29th, the first group of 400 actual POWs arrived at the camp. They had come from Singapore on the hellship *England Maru* with the senior officers' group led by Lt. Gen. Arthur Percival and 92 other high-ranking officers of the British, Australian and Dutch forces, along with the governors and civilian officials from Singapore and Malaya.

After about a week, the 93 highest-ranking officers, civilian officials and their aides were moved to Karenko Camp on the East Coast of the island near the present-day city of Hualien. The balance of about 300 men remained behind at Heito to start work on clearing the old river bed.

It was hot, back-breaking work and the POWs were given quotas of work to be accomplished each day. Many times these quotas were impossible to fill on the meagre starvation diet the men were forced to exist on. If they did not fulfill those quotas they were beaten mercilessly after work with bamboo clubs and subjected to various methods of torture. The doctors were not provided with medicines for the men and many died of malaria and other diseases. Heito Camp had the highest in-camp death rate of all of the 14 Japanese-run POW camps in Taiwan.

On February 7th 1945, the camp was bombed by American B-24s and P-38s. 18 POWs and one Japanese guard were killed outright, and because the Japanese would provide no medical care or assistance, 10 more men died in the next few days. More than 80 POWs and several of the guards were injured. Later some of them died as well.

As the camp had suffered so much damage, on March 11th 1945, it was closed and the men moved out to other camps in Taihoku, Toroku and Shirakawa for the remainder of the war. Finally, those who remained were evacuated by the US and British navies in early September 1945 to go back to their home countries again.

The Post-War Era . . .

Not much is known about the site of the Heito Camp immediately after the war. When the Nationalist Chinese first moved to Taiwan late in the fall of 1945 and early 1946, all of the former military bases and POW camps were taken over by the Chinese Army. They were used as accommodation for their troops and to strengthen their island garrison. However Heito, being in such a state of disrepair, was not developed into a base at that time. The bamboo huts finally collapsed and the site lay dormant for a number of years.

Then, although little documented evidence is available from the current Ministry of Defense, it would seem from some reports and comments gathered that the site of the former camp was re-developed in about 1955 with new wooden clapboard buildings being built to accommodate the soldiers and base offices.

(Cont'd on page 6)



POW's drawing of Heito Camp in 1942.

© TPCMS

HEITO CAMP RE-OPENS *(Cont'd from page 5)*

It is also not completely certain what the small base was used for. Once our POW Society re-discovered the site of the camp in 1999 and began making visits, all that could be observed were groups of soldiers marching about on occasion. We enjoyed a welcoming, positive and friendly relationship with the base and its staff whenever we would visit the camp with former POWs and their family members from time to time and hold memorial services there.



Entrance to Ai-Liao Army Base c.2000



Dormitories for the soldiers in good condition.

Finally, in 2006 Ai-Liao Military Base was closed and the premises vacated. The property was taken over by the Pingtung County government who assured the Society that they would continue to take care of and preserve our POW Memorial which had been erected there in 2004 in perpetuity.

As mentioned, the site of the former camp was re-discovered in 1999 with the help of a number of local residents including two of the former Taiwanese camp guards who still lived in the area. In the years that followed, the Society has taken a number of former POWs and their family members back to the site of the former camp for walk around visits and memorial ceremonies laying poppy wreaths on the memorial. This has continued to the present day. The property and area continued to be watched over by the government, but slowly began to fall into disrepair again.



Former Heito POWs Harry Leslie (left) and John Emmett (right) re-united with former Taiwanese camp guards Lin, Chuen-Hsin and Yang, Dun-Chin during their return visits to Heito Camp in 2001 and 2003. A wonderful spirit of reconciliation and friendship ensued. All have since died.



Then in August 2009, Taiwan was hit by typhoon Morakot, the deadliest typhoon to impact Taiwan in recorded history. One of Taiwan's aboriginal mountain tribes suffered greatly when their village was washed down a mountainside leaving the entire community homeless. The county government quickly intervened and moved the entire population into the compound of the former military base to be lodged in the still-habitable dormitories there until a new village could be constructed for them. We had some nice visits with the local inhabitants whenever we would visit the camp with our guests.

In 2011, their new village in the mountains completed, the people moved out and once again the camp was abandoned. As time went on the buildings started to further deteriorate and the site became very overgrown. The government was still trying to think of ways to use the former site and several proposals were put forth, but none seemed suitable. Then in 2021, working in conjunction with a nearby university's animal rescue and rehabilitation program, it was decided that the site would be turned into an animal rescue and rehab facility. It will be a sanctuary for injured wildlife until they can be released, and also a place where local stray animals can be rescued, rehabilitated and adopted.

Construction began that year, and in the spring of this year, the Society was contacted by the development team regarding the history of the former Heito POW Camp. We worked with them to relocate the POW Memorial stone to a more accessible location on the lawn just outside the new information centre that was being developed to tell the story of the historic venue. The stone has now been mounted into a new permanent concrete base. We were also able to assist the curator of the centre with details of the story of the Heito Camp that features in the display on the site.

(Cont'd on page 7)

HEITO CAMP RE-OPENS *(Cont'd from page 6)*

The new animal rescue facility is scheduled to open officially in early 2024 pending the final completion of some construction, but the exhibition centre has been completed and highlights the history of the former Ai-Liao camps. The Society is pleased to have had a part in developing the display on the POWs' story and has loaned several Japanese wartime artifacts to the hall for display. Now Taiwanese and other visitors to the centre can learn more about the story of the Taiwan POWs and Heito Camp.

The Re-dedication of the Heito POW Camp Memorial

On November 13th, following this year's wonderful Remembrance Day service at Kinkaseki, the Society director escorted our FEPOW family guest Laura Donaghey - whose great-grandfather had been in Heito Camp, down to Pingtung for the re-dedication of the Heito Memorial at the relocated site inside the new Animal Rescue Centre.

The Pingtung County Government has always been a big supporter of our work and we were honoured that the county governor Ms. Chou, Chun-Mi could take the time to join us for the re-dedication ceremony. We also had as special guests alongside Laura, Mr. Michael Guu, former Deputy County Governor who was present with us for the original dedication of the memorial back in 2004 who shared a few words of tribute, and Mr. Pan, An-Chuen and Ms. Lily Yang, family members of the former camp guards Mr. Lin, Chuen-Hsin and Mr. Yang, Dun-Chin. These men and their families were instrumental in helping to document the history of the former POW camp and they would come out to join with us every time that we brought POWs or their family members to visit.

Emcee Mark Wilkie welcomed everyone and introduced the governor who addressed the gathering with a thoughtful message about remembering and the county's pledge to make sure the story of Ai-Liao camp and the POWs is not forgotten. The Society director shared a brief history of the POW camp and the site, and then Mr. Pan and Ms. Yang gave some of their thoughts on the old camp and the memorial. Wreaths were then laid on the memorial and group photos taken. Rev. Maurie Sween brought a fitting message and prayer and finally Laura read 'A Tribute to the POWs'. A moment of silent remembrance closed out the service. A time of fellowship followed with more photos and plenty of warm and friendly conversation. This was truly a memorable event and a fitting conclusion to the story of Heito Camp. Now it - and all the men who passed through it, will never be forgotten.

The Society wishes to thank Ms. Li, Chi-ya, the director of the Animal Rescue Shelter Project and Ms. Lin, Aichen the designer of the exhibition hall for their untiring support for the memorial and help in telling the POWs' story. Now all of the POW Camp Memorials across Taiwan are permanently mounted in concrete bases for posterity. Here are some photos from the day . . .



*(Above) Gov. Chou addressing the group. Mr. Pan & Ms. Yang share memories. Gov. Chou laying a wreath.
(Below) Guests at the memorial. Laura reads 'The Tribute to the POWs'. Group photo after the ceremony.*



FEPOW DAY 2023 – A BIG SUCCESS

FEPOW DAY - AUGUST 12th 2023

This year was the 16th time that *FEPOW Day* was celebrated here in Taiwan. Once again we met at the **SPOT THEATRE** - 18, Zhongshan North Road Sec. 2 (台北市中山北路二段18號) in downtown Taipei near the Zhongshan MRT Station.

As always there was a collection of WWII POW and military artifacts on display, and a short memorial service to honour the FEPOWs and civilian internees was held prior to the movies being shown.

Peggy Brewer began the service by reading 'What is a FEPOW?' followed by James Spencer's rendition of 'A Time to Remember'. Felix Wang from the ROC Veterans Affairs Council brought the 'Tribute to the POWs'. Finally Canadian Trade Office in Taipei Deputy Director Ed Jager read the Pledge as the FEPOW candle was lit and a moment's silence was observed for all those who suffered and those who died as POWs.



This year we showed the award-winning movie **"THE RAILWAY MAN"**. This much-acclaimed film tells the story of former POW Eric Lomax and is based on the true story from a book of the same name written by him in 1995.

Second Lieutenant Lomax was captured in Singapore and forced to work as a POW on the *Death Railway* in Thailand. After a secret radio was discovered in the camp he was brutally tortured by the Kempetai interrogator Takashi Nagase and after the war Lomax vowed that someday he would find Nagase and kill him.

Over the years Lomax continued to suffer terribly from the memory of his experiences and finally after finding out that Nagase was still alive and with the help of his wife Patti, the two former enemies arranged to meet at the *Bridge on the River Kwai* in 1993. There Nagase sincerely apologized and Lomax forgave him and the two men remained friends until Nagase died in 2010. Eric Lomax died in 2012 just before the film was released. **Colin Firth, Nicole Kidman** and **Jeremy Irvine** starred in the film.

Following the showing of the main movie, there was a short break and then the 40-minute documentary **"ENEMY MY FRIEND"** was shown. This film showed the actual reunion of Eric Lomax and Takashi Nagase. It was a great double-feature film night. The evening finished about 10 pm. and this was followed by a time of fellowship.

This year as always, there was a good crowd of more than 30 people, many of whom come year after year and so these FEPOW Day gatherings are kind of like a mini reunion of friends and supporters and a warm spirit always fills the room. We hope to welcome our many members and friends – and some new faces again too next year. See you in 2024! Some photos from the evening . . .



REMEMBRANCE WEEK RESUMES IN 2023

For the first time in three years since the outbreak of the covid pandemic in 2019 we have finally been able to resume our annual Remembrance Week event. Over these past years we have still held the annual Remembrance Day service, but with no overseas POW guests present. This year that all changed with four POW family members – Steve Witte, Laura Donaghey and Mandy and Phil Rees - all from the UK, joining us.

The week's activity got underway on Thursday November 9th with an all-day visit to Kinkaseki and Keelung Harbour. Since all of our guests this year had POW relatives in both Kinkaseki and Kukutsu camps, the visit to the harbour allowed them to see where the men came in to Taiwan and later left from at the end of their captivity.

Friday was spent in sightseeing around Taipei, a walk through the historical old district, lunch at the majestic Grand Hotel and a visit to a night market. On Saturday morning the group travelled to the site of the former Kukutsu Camp for a look at that area and held a brief service to remember the men in that camp. This was followed by a lovely lunch hosted by Executive Director Jim Nickel and the Canadian Trade Office in Taiwan, our co-host for this year's event.

Once again the annual Remembrance Day service was held on Sunday November 12th in the *Taiwan POW Memorial Park* in Jinguashi – the site of the former Kinkaseki POW Camp. The attendance just keeps growing every year with more than 150 people joining the service this time. Once again, as happens too often, we were deluged by the rain, but that did not dampen the spirits of those who came to pay their respect and honour the veterans and those who gave their lives for our freedom.

The service commenced with an address by Jim Nickel of the Canadian Trade Office, followed by messages from the minister of the ROC Veterans Affairs Council, (Ret.) General Feng, Shih-Kuan and (Ret.) Air Force General Liao, Rong-Xin of the Veterans Association of the ROC. The family members of the POWs brought messages and tributes to their relatives and all the POWs and veterans we were remembering on the day.

Our chaplain, the Rev. Dr. Herbert Barker, himself a veteran - who served in the Vietnam era as well as later in Korea and is retiring this year after serving the Society for the past thirteen years, gave a heartfelt message and also led the veterans in laying their wreath on the memorial this time. We thank Herbert for his long and dedicated service.

Following the wreath-laying Matteo O'Malley once again played the Last Post and Rouse to conclude the service. After the service, photos were taken around the memorial and then those in attendance gathered together for a picnic lunch in the community center. Out thanks to the staff of the CTOT for their great support this year, and thanks to all those who came out to remember and honour those to whom we owe a debt that can never be repaid.

Finally, on Monday November 13th, the Society director and Laura Donaghey, whose great-grandfather had been held in Heito Camp before going to Kinkaseki, made the journey to Pingtung and the site of the former POW camp for the dedication of the newly re-located Heito POW Memorial stone. **See the story on page 7** for more details.

The last two days were spent in local sightseeing and all said how much they enjoyed their visit - what they got out of it and how it drew them closer to their POW relative. We hope others will join us for next year's event.



Please Note: Registrations for next year's Remembrance Week Event which will take place from November 7th – 14th 2024, will open in the spring. Please watch the website for more information.

POW CAMP TOURS

Klose – Sartore Tour – June 22, 2023



Mike Sartore (l) and Jeff Klose about to explore the #5 mine tunnel.

On a beautiful warm June day, Jeff Klose, an expat living in Korea, and his good friend Mike Sartore who lives in Okinawa, embarked on a journey of discovery into the story of the former Allied POWs held by the Japanese in Taiwan in WWII. Both are military enthusiasts who wanted to learn first-hand about the little-known Taiwan camps.

Taking the train to Ruifang and then following the route that the POWs were forced to march to Kinkaseki Camp, gave the men an early glimpse into the hardships faced by the captives. This was followed up further as they explored the museum and mine tunnel, getting to feel what life must have been like in the camp and down the mine, coupled with the ordeal they faced just going to and from the work in the mine every day.

Later, time spent in the former POW camp further added to their knowledge. The fellowship we enjoyed together that day will stay in our memories for a long time to come.

Anglo-Chinese Junior College, Singapore, tour to Kinkaseki – November 30, 2023

The Anglo-Chinese Junior College in Singapore came to Taiwan for a tour to Taipei from November 26th to December 1st and were interested in joining our camp tour during their visit. The 30th of November was scheduled for a visit to Jinguashi to learn about the former POW camp and the POWs who slaved and suffered there from 1942 – 45.

Steven Tan, one of the teachers in the group wrote after the tour, 'I just wanted to say that I thoroughly enjoyed the tour of the POW camp and I really admire your dedication and hard work. The effort that you've put in for these prisoners to be remembered really shines through, and the fact that you had a personal connection with them made the experience extra special. I'm so thankful that we had you as our guide, as I don't think the experience would have been as intimate and fruitful had it not been for you. I just want to let you know that your work has really touched the hearts of each and every student present that day and we will be sure to continue raising awareness about these POWs to ensure that they will never be forgotten!



VAC – American Legion Tour - December 2, 2023

Once again as usual, the ROC Veterans Affairs Council enlisted the aid of the society director to provide a tour for the American Legion National Commander Daniel Seehafer, his aide James "Mike" Rohan and his staff consisting of National Security Director, Mario Marquez and National Security Analyst, Alyson Stapleton to visit Jinguashi, the Gold Museum and mine tunnel exhibit, and finishing off in the POW camp. Felix Wang, Counsellor, Veterans Affairs Council and Kai Chang, Executive Officer, Veterans Affairs Council represented the VAC. Following the tour a lovely lunch was enjoyed in nearby Jiufen.

National Security Director, Mario Marquez stated afterward "Thank you for the amazing tour and background regarding the Taiwan POW camps... specifically, the Kinkaseki. Camp"

** For more information on the POW camp tours, please see the **POW Camp Tours** page on our website.

