



# Never Forgotten

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SPRING – SUMMER 2019

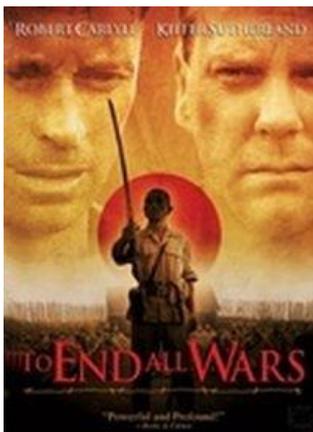
The Official Newsletter of the TAIWAN P.O.W. CAMPS MEMORIAL SOCIETY



*Dr. Benjamin Wheeler's granddaughter and her husband visit Kinkaseki.*



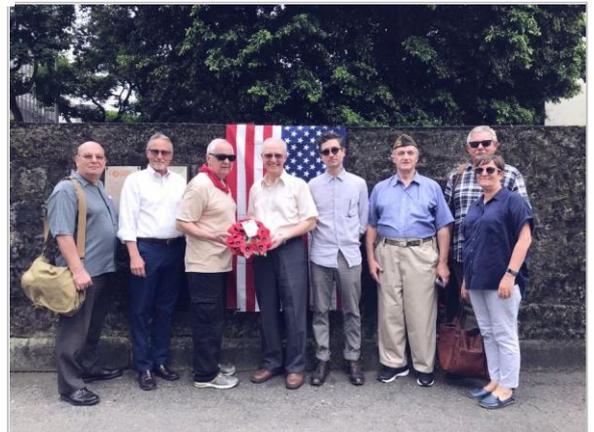
*"Down the mine bonnie laddies" . . . Men working in the dim light of the mine - Diorama in the 5th Tunnel at Kinkaseki.*



*Be sure not to miss this year's FEPOW Day featuring the movie "To End All Wars" on Saturday August 10th.*



*The Society Director with the musicians following the ANZAC Day service. (L - R) Ray Heberer Last Post & Reveille, Caitlin Magee vocalist and Piper Mal Turner.*



*The group gathered by the American Airmen's Memorial on the old Taipei Prison wall on Memorial Day. (Photo Courtesy Claire Kwan)*

## TAIWAN REMEMBRANCE WEEK – NOVEMBER 6 - 13, 2019

Former Taiwan POWs and family members are invited to join with us for the week of November 6th – 13th as we celebrate the 22nd annual *Remembrance Week* event in Taiwan. We feature visits to the former POW camps, memorial services, local sightseeing and a very special Remembrance Day service in the Prisoner of War Memorial Park located on the site of the former Kinkaseki POW Camp on Sunday the 10th. We have a special program prepared for our guests and offer assistance in arranging your visit. For more information, please visit our website at [www.powtaiwan.org](http://www.powtaiwan.org) and contact the Society by email or mail at the address shown on page 2 of the newsletter. Be sure to book early and we hope to have you with us in November!

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in Taiwan

## **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. In the fall of 1998 the returning POWs 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 (Taipei)
15. CHURON Evacuation Camp (Taipei)
16. MARUYAMA Evacuation Camp (Taipei)

*Thought . . .* We lose our friends because we become too busy to keep in contact. As the time lengthens from the last contact, we become embarrassed to write, hesitant to call on the phone or even send a brief e-mail. The longer the interval, the deeper the embarrassment and the friendship soon fades. It's never too late to renew that friendship if we will but take the time and the initiative. Try it!

## FROM THE DIRECTOR. . .

This has been a very busy spring with a large number of visitors for our POW camp tours. Individual POW family members and other overseas visitors, as well as local schools and associations, are learning more about the Taiwan camps. (See pages 9 - 10.)

A special surprise was the visit by Major Ben Wheeler's granddaughter – the first time any member of the Wheeler family has visited Taiwan. It was Dr. Wheeler's story which initiated our work back in 1997 and it was wonderful to finally have a member of his family here. (See story on page 6).

The annual ANZAC Day service, sponsored this year by the New Zealand Commerce and Industry Office in Taipei, was held on April 25th at the Australian Representative's home, and as usual was a great event. Every year the attendance grows as more local folks become involved in remembering the ANZAC's.

Coming up - we are planning a wonderful event for FEPOW Day in August, and we hope that more local folks will join us in remembering those who were POWs and civilian internees in the Far East. We are also looking forward to another great Remembrance Week event in November.

The work on the book is still ongoing and is progressing well. The exact date of publication is unknown right now, but it is hoped that it will be finished and out by the end of the year.

It has been 22 years since this work was begun and it is so good to see the increasing support from so many of our members and friends worldwide. Thank you again for having a part with us in remembering the Taiwan POWs.

Sincerely,

*Michael Hurst* MBE

## MEMORIAL DAY 2019

On May 27th a Memorial Day service, hosted by the Society, was held by the American Airmen's Memorial plaque on the wall of the old Taipei Prison.

Emcee Jerry Keating led off by reading President Truman's pledge to always remember those who gave their lives for freedom. Then Deryk Walker read "What is a Veteran". The director gave a short history of the old prison wall and the American airmen who were interned there and those who died. Jason Cole Mager then read the list of the 57 Americans who died as prisoners of war in Taiwan.

Rev. David Homer reflected on how the location was more than just a wall, but a place of remembrance so that we would never forget the wars and the sacrifices made. The service concluded with veteran Warren Brewer reading "May We Never Forget", followed by the laying of the wreath, Taps, Silence and Reveille. Everyone who was present felt it was a very special occasion, and our thanks to all who turned out.

## UPCOMING EVENT

### FEPOW DAY - AUGUST 10, 2019

This year will be the 12th time that FEPOW Day is celebrated here in Taiwan. Once again we will meet at the **Spot Theatre – # 18, Zhongshan North Road Sec. 2** in downtown Taipei, **Saturday evening August 10th.**

There will be a display of WWII POW and military artifacts; we will have a short memorial service to honour the FEPOWs and then the movie "**To End All Wars**" will be shown.

Starring Golden Globe winner Kiefer Sutherland, Robert Carlyle and Ciaran McMenamin as WWII POW Ernest Gordon, this powerful movie is based on the true story by prisoner of war survivor, Ernest Gordon (author of *Miracle On the River Kwai*). It is about four Allied POWs in Thailand, who endure brutal, inhumane treatment at the hands of their Japanese captors during World War II while being forced to build a railroad through the jungle, and trying to survive the living hell of their POW camp. Ultimately they find true freedom which comes prior to their release from prison, by witnessing sacrifices made by their fellow soldiers, and by learning to forgive their internal rivals, as well as their brutal captors.

You won't want to miss this great movie. While it does contain the usual Hollywood stuff in places, several former POWs that I have spoken with say that it is very realistic in the portrayal of what conditions were like in the camps, and the actions by the Japanese guards are especially real.

Everyone is invited to our event, but space is limited to a maximum of 70 persons, so please kindly let us know **by email** if you're planning to attend so we can reserve a seat for you. We hope and expect to have a large turnout and **reservations are a must.**

**The deadline for reservations is set at 5 pm Wednesday August 7th. Doors open at 6:00 pm and the program will begin promptly at 6:30.**

**There is no charge for this event, and coffee and fruit drinks will be available.**

**NOTE: This film is not suitable for young children and there are no Chinese sub-titles on the film.**

An email will be sent out locally as a reminder prior to the event and we look forward to seeing many of our friends and supporters once again.

We invite you to come and spend an evening to learn more of the story of the Far East prisoners of war (FEPOWs) and their service and sacrifice. Hope to see you in August.



# 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!*

## **GEORGE HENRY REYNOLDS**

BDR., 5TH FIELD REG'T., R.A.  
FEBRUARY 20, 2019

## **KENNETH E. (KEN) PETT**

GNR., 80TH ANTI-TANK REG'T. RA  
APRIL 12, 2019

## **ROLAND A.H. HOLLIS**

GNR., 148TH FIELD REG'T., R.A.  
APRIL 26, 2019

*"We Will Remember Them"*

## TAIWAN'S OLDEST POW HAS PASSED AWAY



Bdr. George Reynolds of the 5th Field Reg't. Royal Artillery and formerly a POW at Taihoku Camp 6, Kinkaseki and Shirakawa, passed away peacefully in hospital in Newport Wales, on Wednesday February 20th from pneumonia.

His son-in-law Peter Hackling said in an email that three of his daughters were with him all the time in the hospital during his last 11 days, and he was never in any pain, having been well cared for by the hospital staff.

He was our oldest living Taiwan POW, having celebrated his 100th birthday on July 21st this past year.

George was very well known in Taiwan POW circles. He visited Taiwan seven times over the years between 2000 and 2014 to take part in our annual Remembrance Week events. After his second visit in 2001 he called me up in 2004 and said that he wanted to come again. I asked him why since we did pretty well the exact same program every year, and he quietly said it was "for the fellowship". He so enjoyed meeting his former mates again and also to have the opportunity of sharing his story with others - and more particularly with the children and grandchildren and family

members of the men who had passed on without ever having told their stories to their families.

He also attended many POW reunions, gatherings and events in the UK over the past 20 years. He had a great sense of humour and zest for life, and was admired and respected by all who had the privilege to come to know him.

He was a wonderful, kind, caring man and a great friend to all. As Peter said, "A gentle giant of a man has gone out of our world". He will be sorely missed but never forgotten!

*George showing how the chunkle was used in the mine on his last visit to Taiwan in 2014.*



## ROLAND (RON) HOLLIS

Ron came to Taiwan in November 1942 on the hellship *Dainichi Maru* from Singapore. He was first sent to Heito Camp where he worked at clearing the river valley for the planting of sugar cane. He was injured when the camp was bombed in February 1945 and was transferred to Shirakawa Camp and stayed there until the war ended. He then moved to the Maruyama Evacuation Camp in Taihoku until the US and British Navy came to evacuate the men. He went on the carrier *USS Block Island* to Manila and there he was given medical care and treatment before being sent on his way home. He was a cheery man who enjoyed life and rarely ever spoke about his POW days, and with all the other Taiwan POWs he will be remembered.

## UPDATING E-MAILING LIST

We are updating the e-mailing list for our **Never Forgotten** newsletter and announcements of our various events and activities, as it is necessary to make sure that we have everyone's correct details. Also, if for whatever reason you no longer need or wish to receive our emails, we need to know this so we can remove you from the mailing list.

If you are receiving our emails alright and everything is fine, then you do not need to respond, but if there are any changes, or you no longer wish to receive our info, then please let us know ASAP.

May we remind you that if you change email addresses, please let us know, otherwise emails that bounce back to us will be dropped from the list.

Thanks so much for your help in this matter. Your cooperation is needed and appreciated.

# THE LAST OF THE FEW HAS GONE HOME. . .

The last of the original 523 men who went into Kinkaseki Camp in November 1942 and stayed for the whole time at that camp and Kukutsu - and a very dear friend, has passed on. Gnr. Kenneth E. 'Ken' Pett of the 80th Anti-Tank Reg't. Royal Artillery was called home to his eternal rest on Friday April 12th 2019. He was 98 and just one week short of his 99th birthday on April 19th.

He passed away peacefully of complications from pneumonia resulting in heart failure with his family by his side. He had been in good health in his last few years, still living and caring for himself in the home he shared with his beloved wife Peggy who predeceased him in 2015. He had a thriving vegetable garden in the backyard which he tended and he still got about his hometown of Petersfield Hants. on an electric scooter after he was no longer able to drive his car. He was never one to slow down and with such a strong spirit and will, nothing was ever too much trouble for him.

Ken was a great friend and staunch supporter of our POW Society and our work to make sure that the men of Kinkaseki - and all the former Taiwan POWs, were remembered. He shared so much of his story and donated several articles to our collection. He and Peggy were also great personal friends to Tina and I, and the love and support they shared will always remain in our hearts.

Ken and Peggy came to the first big Kinkaseki Reunion held in the UK in 1999 and after that, never missed another one. They were there to support the Society director on the presentation of his MBE and the reunion that followed in 2002. Over the next sixteen years Ken attended many reunions including the ones held in Newcastle-on-Tyne several years running. He was always the one honoured by his hometown to lay the memorial wreath for the FEPOWs on Remembrance Day, and he took part in many other FEPOW events over the years as well.

Ken was captured at the surrender of Singapore in February 1942, and after spending eight months labouring for the Japanese there, he was sent to Taiwan on the hellship *England Maru* in November of that year. On arrival his regiment was sent to the infamous Kinkaseki Camp and he was put to work in the unsafe copper mine where temperatures in the working areas often reached over 40C (100F). Not being a big man, it is surprising that he survived the rigours of the mine, but he stayed at Kinkaseki right to the end and then was moved to the Kukutsu 'jungle' Camp in May 1945. It was there that he collapsed from starvation and exhaustion and almost died. When the war ended he had to be carried by his mates on a stretcher back to Taipei where he was evacuated on the carrier *USS Santee* to Manila for medical care before finally returning home in November 1945.



*Ken beside the Taiwan POW Memorial in 2015*

Ken re-visited Taiwan on three occasions, first in 2009 and then again in 2011, the year the second and final phase of the Taiwan POW Memorial Park was completed and dedicated. He felt so strongly that there should be a POW present at the dedication of the Memorial Wall and he was determined to be that POW. He would have come again in 2014, but ill health forced him to cancel at the last minute. Undeterred though, he came back again for the last time in 2015 - he is the last former Taiwan POW to return to Taiwan - one of so many that we have had over the past 20 years.

Ken made many friends on his trips to Taiwan. His infectious smile and gentle personality endeared him to all those he met, including so many of the Taiwanese people with whom he came in contact. He and daughter Lynn and son-in-law Mike Heather were especially touched by the friendship which the local folks at Kukutsu showed to them. In recent years, inquiries were made by those folks every year as to whether 'Mr. Ken' was coming that year, so it is certain that he will never be forgotten by them either.

One of the greatest rewards one could ever have in doing this POW work over all these years, is the friendship of the POWs themselves. With the passing of every one, the memories of our good times shared come back again. There is no greater honour than having the love and respect of so many wonderful men - heroes all, and Ken was truly one of those heroes. Rest in peace my friend.

Ken's funeral was held on April 29th 2019. His casket was draped with the UK / FEPOW flag provided by the Java FEPOW Club of which he was a member. He is with his beloved Peggy and all his former mates in a place that is "fairer than day" as the old hymn goes. He is gone from us now but he won't ever be forgotten. Our sincerest condolences go out to all his family.

# A WHEELER FAMILY MEMBER VISITS KINKASEKI

Every year we continue to get more and more folks from overseas - and also people and organizations within Taiwan, requesting tours of the former POW camps their loved ones were held in, or simply for more knowledge of the history of the Taiwan POW Camps. In our newsletters we usually feature snippets of their visits with photos to show who is visiting and also as an encouragement to others to 'follow in the footsteps' of a loved one or to learn more about this little-known aspect of Taiwan's history.

Having been in contact with the family of Major Ben Wheeler, the famous Canadian doctor of Kinkaseki right from the beginning of our work, it was always my desire to have one or more of the family members visit Taiwan for our Remembrance Week event in November - not only for them to see the places where Dr. Wheeler had been, but also for people here in Taiwan to meet them as they have done for so many of the former POWs who came back from year to year. Sadly due to work and life commitments none of the family was ever able to make the journey to Taiwan.

That all changed this year however when I was contacted by Susan Wheeler, the daughter of Ben Wheeler's son Alan, asking for help in visiting Kinkaseki. She and her husband Chris Johnston were planning to stop over in Taiwan as part of an Asian trip during the Chinese New Year holiday and wanted to see where her grandfather had once been. Of course I was delighted to have them and show them around.

So on Friday February 9th we met, and right away I remarked how much she looked like her aunt Anne, Dr. Wheeler's daughter - the resemblance is remarkable. We took the train to Ruifang, or Zeiho as the town had been called back in wartime, just as her grandfather had done when he left Taihoku Camp 6 on his journey to Kinkaseki on August 10th 1943. From Ruifang we took a taxi to Jinguashi, following the same basic route that the prisoners of this third group into Kinkaseki took up the long, winding, ever-climbing road to the prison camp.

I had informed the Gold Museum of Susan's visit and they asked if we could stop in at the office so they could welcome her, as they well know that it was the discovery of Major Wheeler's story back 1996 that had led to the effort to tell the Taiwan POWs' story and the ultimate placing by the Society of a permanent POW exhibit in the Gold Museum when it first opened in 2004. We were met by Ms. Luo, Shu-Jung the Chief of the Museum Education and Research Section. After a short and pleasant visit we moved on to tour the museum and the nearby mine tunnel, the area where the POWs worked in the mine, and finally the POW Memorial Park.



*(L-R) Susan and Chris with Ms. Luo, at the museum POW display and outside the mine tunnel.*

The weather that day was as usual - very typical Kinkaseki weather with overcast skies and intermittent rain, but as often was stated by the returning POWs, this is what they remembered, and Susan said that now she could feel and appreciate more what her grandfather had had to endure for a lot of his time in the camp.

After lunch we proceeded to the POW Memorial Park and it was here that Susan remarked how close she felt to her grandfather, especially when she was able to touch his name on the Memorial Wall. It was a precious experience to share that moment with her.

It was wonderful to finally have a member of the Wheeler family return to Taiwan, and I am still hoping that other members of the family might yet come too. The story on Major Wheeler titled "**A Man Sent From God**" can be found in the [Articles and Stories Section](#) of our website.



## TOSHIO KOJIMA – THE STORY OF THE COMMANDANT OF THE HEITO, TAICHU, INRIN, TOROKU AND SHIRAKAWA CAMPS.

In 2015 I was totally unprepared for an email which I received from a very unexpected source. It was from the granddaughter of Captain Toshio Kojima, the former camp commandant of the Heito, Taichu, Inrin, Toroku and Shirakawa POW camps from 1942 - 1945.

She had found our website and read the stories of the cruelties the Japanese inflicted on the prisoners of war in Taiwan in the various camps, and she wanted to find out more about her grandfather and his life in World War II. The grandfather she had known was a kindly, gentle man, but she knew there could be another side to his story, and she asked for my help in finding out more about him and his time in Taiwan.

This was probably one of the most difficult email requests I have ever had to answer. How do you tell a nice young lady that from what I knew, under her grandfather's administration many men had been starved and beaten and many had died? I struggled to answer her as openly and honestly as possible.

Then she told me that in her family's possession was a letter that the POWs at Inrin Camp had given to her grandfather at the end of the war, telling of the kindnesses he had shown to them during their time in the camps at Taichu, Inrin and Toroku, and that he should be given leniency if arrested for war crimes. She sent me copies of the letter and other things her grandfather had from the war.

On investigating this further over the past several years, I discovered that it was 1st Lt. Kozi Tamaki who had really carried out the reign of terror at Heito Camp where so many men died. According to wartime records and testimonies at the war crimes trials, I learned that in most of the POW camps across Asia, while the commandants were in charge of the administration, it was a lower rank officer or NCO (Sgt.) that was actually in charge of discipline and the control of the prisoners. Like the 'Bird' at Omori Camp in Japan, or the 'Bull' at Mukden in China, Tamaki was the most dreaded guard in Taiwan. In addition, when Capt. Kojima left Heito, Tamaki was Commandant for the next two years until March 1945, and it was during this time that so many of the POWs died.

Capt. Kojima had been the first commandant at Heito for eight months and then he left for Karenko and Tamazato in March 1943. Following a brief time there he went to Taichu in June 1943, and in their diaries the prisoners noted that *"things improved greatly in the camp after the arrival of the new commandant"*. After Taichu Camp closed in July 1944, Kojima moved with the sickest men to the new camp at Inrin where he tried to do all he could for them. There was a swimming pool in the camp which had formerly been a hotel, and he allowed the men to swim. He set up a volleyball court so they could play and exercise when they were not doing the camp farm work. It was later when the camp closed and the men were transferred

to Toroku that he was given the letter signed by the remaining 43 men in the camp. After Toroku Camp closed a month later, he and the men moved to Shirakawa for the remainder of the war.

His granddaughter told me more of his life and I would like to share what she related about him. . . *"My grandfather's hometown was the central area of Hiroshima. He was an English teacher before the war. His photos before the war disappeared by the atomic bomb. His first daughter died from it. His mother and wife were hurt badly. When he came back to Hiroshima, after the war my mother was born. He continued to work as a teacher and died in 1998.*

*When I heard his English for the first time, I could not believe he had been an English teacher. His pronunciation was very bad. However, I believe he could have better communications with the men than other Japanese commandants. Also, when he was in college, he was a volleyball player. That was why the men played volleyball at Inrin Camp.*

*His first conscription was from November 1937 to October 1940. He was sent to China. His second one was from July 1941 to August 1945 in Taiwan.*

*He often talked about the men in camp who saved his life, but he never talked about the terrible camps. In my memory, he said he felt guilty for the POWs and said that he was prepared for death in Hong Kong."*

At war's end, Capt. Kojima was arrested as a suspected war criminal. He was first sent to Shanghai and then to Hong Kong to be tried. At that time, all his property was confiscated by the authorities. In a later account of his time he said, *"When the war ended I was the Camp #4 commander in Kagi [Chiayi] County, and whoever was associated with the POW camps were accused of being suspected war criminals. At the surrender of Japan, the people involved were under detention in the Hong Kong Trial."*

In Shanghai, before going to Hong Kong, Capt. Kojima was a witness at the trials of Col. Nakano, Col. Sazawa and Major Uete, commanders of the Taiwan camps. Like many others from Taiwan, he was sent to Hong Kong and held in Stanley Prison there awaiting trial from 1946 to 1948, but was never indicted himself.

He talked about the struggles and bitterness he had suffered in Hong Kong. *"The condition was awful in Stanley Prison whose chief-director was a Portuguese. I was asked to imitate the way a pig walked, and was even asked to run till I was exhausted."*

He told of how he was spared, *"I was exempted from the charge of war criminal in this prison. When the captives were about to leave Taiwan for their home countries, they said, 'This may help,' and handed me a letter. It was a petition signed by 43 captives about the good deeds I had done when I was the camp leader.*

*(Cont'd on page 8)*

## TOSHIO KOJIMA *cont'd*

*On the cover it wrote 'To Captain Kojima Toshio.' I thought it was a useless document so I didn't submit it to the authority, but the prosecutors found this letter and surprisingly, it totally changed their minds. It was the petition that saved my life."*

This is the letter the POWs gave him. . .

*"To Captain Kojima Toshio,*

*We, the remaining 43 men from No. 2 Camp, feel that we cannot leave without giving you a testimony of our good feeling towards you. We would all like to thank you for the keen interest which you took in us whilst we were at Indin, both in sport and in the well-being and comfort of the 100 men in the camp.*

*There is no doubt that you have made yourself very popular with the men, and we shall remember you in our conversations for years to come.*

*We know exactly the position in which you find yourself at the present time, but we sincerely hope that this will not make the slightest difference to you, and that you may carry on your successful life to gain the highest honours possible.*

*And so we say goodbye now and embark on a new life entirely, and we are sure you are very pleased for us too. So we wish you goodbye and every success in all your undertakings from now on.*

*Goodbye and good luck from all the boys at Indin,  
[Signatures of 43 POWs]"*

Capt. Kojima commented, *"These captives knew very well that people that were engaged in this camp would all become war criminals, receiving serious penalty, so that was the reason why the English soldiers would write down those sincere words."*

So this clearly shows that there **are** more and very different sides to the story of the Taiwan POWs and the camps. I am so grateful to the Kojima family for sharing these things with me, and their desire that the truth be known as well, has now been fulfilled.

Today, Capt. Toshio Kojima's granddaughter is a medical doctor living and working in the Tokyo area.

During these past few years the correspondence and friendship with Capt. Kojima's granddaughter and her family has continued, and plans are underway for us to meet here in Taiwan in the coming months.

**NOTE.** There are no photos of Capt. Kojima or the names of his family in this article in respect for their privacy, as the internet search engines scanning websites would post them on the open net. They have scanned and uploaded many articles and photos from our website - without our permission of course, but that is just what they do, and indirectly it has helped a lot of people worldwide to find our site and hence learn more about the Taiwan POWs' story. This in itself is good, but one still needs to be very careful what they put on their websites, blogs and Facebook pages.

## ANZAC DAY 2019

A very successful ANZAC Day service took place in the garden of the Australian Office representative on April 25th. It was a beautiful sunny and hot day with about 70 people present. Following the service those in attendance enjoyed a good time of fellowship around a 'gunfire breakfast'. As usual, the Society Director laid a wreath on behalf of the Australians and New Zealanders who were POWs in Taiwan. Here are a few photos from the day courtesy Peter Yu, of the Australian Office. . .



**Top: The attendance grows larger every year.  
Bottom: Piper Mal Turner plays Amazing Grace.**



**Top: The Australia & New Zealand reps lay wreaths.  
Bottom: The RSL & POW Society reps lay a wreath.**



**LEST WE FORGET!**

# POW CAMP TOURS – SPRING 2019

## Olofsson Tour - January 31, 2019



Late last year Mrs. Agneta Olofsson from Taipei contacted the Society to see if a tour to Kinkaseki could be arranged for her family and a couple of other local Dutch families. She had taken part in the Community Services Center tour earlier that year and wanted her family and friends to learn more of the little-known story of the Taiwan POWs.

So with her husband and two boys aged 8 and 10, and the members of the other families, we set out on a bright sunny day. It was a treat not to be in Jinguashi in the rain!

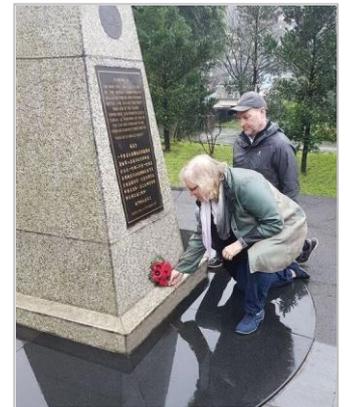
It was an enjoyable day spent touring the museum and the mine tunnel and even the boys enjoyed themselves on this different kind of family outing. The stories related in the POW Memorial Park made everyone appreciate once again what the POWs suffered.

## Johnston-Wheeler Tour - February 8, 2019

As mentioned in the article on page 6, it was a real honour to have the granddaughter of the famous Major Ben Wheeler as our guest during the Chinese New Year holiday. Susan Wheeler, daughter of Alan Wheeler, and her husband Chris Johnston were on their way back to Canada after an Asian tour and remarked how wonderful it was to be in the very place where her grandfather lived and worked for those 3 ½ terrible years.

To stand nearby where his hospital hut had been located in the camp, and to view the old medicine bottles in the POW display in the Gold Museum, knowing that her father and Capt. Seed, the other camp doctor, must have handled them at some point was very moving for her. She told me that she could not wait to share her experience with the other members of the Wheeler family when she got back home.

*Susan lays a spray of poppies on the memorial in remembrance.*



## Dolan-Pepperell Tour - February 9, 2019



At 9 am on the day after the Wheeler tour, Jane and John Dolan from the UK landed at Keelung Harbour as part of an Asian cruise, and rather than take the regular Taipei City tour, they wanted to go to Jinguashi to see the POW Park and Memorial Wall. Her grandfather, Gnr. Edgar Pepperrell of the 5th Field Reg't., was a POW for all his time in Taiwan in the Taihoku #6 Camp, so luckily he never had to go to Kinkaseki as many of his regiment mates did.

Picking Jane and John up at the terminal I explained that their ship had docked at the very same pier where her grandfather had landed when he came from Singapore in November 1942 and where he departed from at the end of the war. We made our way to Jinguashi along the same route the other prisoners took and after the tour through the museum and mine tunnel made our way to the POW Park where we spent a good long time in remembering her grandfather there. When we dropped them off at Keelung after a wonderful day Jane said, "I am so pleased to be able to represent our family and pay tribute to my granddad and the other POW's. Thank you so much."

## Bedwell-Mawdsley Tour - February 22 – 27, 2019

Gnr. Francis (Frank) Mawdsley of the 148th Field Reg't. RA was a POW at Heito Camp in PingTung and Kinkaseki before finally being moved to Japan in February 1945. His daughter Sylvia and her husband Jim Bedwell had wanted to visit Taiwan for the past several years and this year everything came together for them. Their plan was to tour several countries in Asia and on the final leg to stop in Taiwan to see the places where her father had been.

The first couple of days on the weekend were spent with some local sightseeing around Taipei and then on Monday we visited Kinkaseki where Frank had been interned from November 1943 til he left for Japan. Once again being in the place where her father had been and touching his name on the wall was a moving experience for Sylvia.

Frank had come to Taiwan in November 1942 on the hellship *Dainichi Maru* and was sent to Heito Camp, so on Tuesday we boarded the High Speed Rail for the trip down to the south of the island.

*(Cont'd on Page 10)*

## POW CAMP TOURS *(cont'd from page 9)*

On arriving at PingTung we were met by our long-time member and good friend Rev. Maurie Sween who took us on a visit to the old Taiwan Sugar Factory and then the POW camp. Walking around the former Heito Camp was another enriching experience for them and the fulfilment of a wish come true for Sylvia.

Wednesday was spent in more sightseeing around Taipei, and after returning home on the Thursday, Jim told me in an email, *"Our time in Taiwan was the highlight of our trip to Asia, and I cannot thank you enough for the time you spent with us to make our trip come alive"*. It is always our pleasure to help folks all we can to remember and re-connect with their loved ones.

*At the Heito POW Camp Memorial*

### Kane Tour - March 15 – 18, 2019

John Kane Jr. and his wife Elaine from Essex in the UK also came to Taiwan as a part of an Asian trip to visit family in Australia and New Zealand. His father, Gnr. John Kane of the 155th Field Reg't. RA, was in Kinkaseki and Kukutsu camps and we planned to visit both during their brief time here.

The visit to Kinkaseki took place on Saturday and John was moved as he saw the camp and the mine tunnel where his father had been, and touched his father's name on the Memorial Wall.

Sunday was spent in local sightseeing and then on Monday morning we drove out to Kukutsu in the hills south of Taipei and met with the family who now own the property on what was once the camp. We held a short service by the memorial before returning to the city in time for them to go to the airport for their flight home. As with all our guests we struck up a good friendship which will last for years to come.



### Ferstl Tour - April 12, 2019



We first had contact with Tom Ferstl, a retired US Air Force veteran and military historian, while working to place the Enoura Maru Memorial Stone on the Walk of Remembrance at the Punchbowl Cemetery in Hawaii. Tom and his Taiwanese wife Hui-Mei visit Taiwan every year or so and while planning their visit this spring he wrote and asked about a tour to Kinkaseki.

They arrived in Taiwan early in the month and spent some time touring around the island, and then on the appointed day we embarked on the tour along with Hui-Mei's sister Jessie. Tom is very knowledgeable about the war in the Pacific and we were both able to share info and learn from each other. It is a little different hosting a military researcher rather than a POW family member and also very rewarding. Hui-Mei and Jessie said they really enjoyed it too. We look

*Jessie, Hui-Mei & Tom by the POW Sculpture.* forward to keeping in touch and to seeing each other again.

### Community Service Center Annual Spring Tour - May 2, 2019

Ten people joined the annual Taipei Community Services Center tour to Jinguashi this year and yes, it rained again as usual, but it was not so bad that it kept everyone from having a good time and learning about the POWs.

It is always a delight for me to share the POWs' story with members of the community from all walks of life, and who invariably share that story with others they know, and for me to make some new friends as well.

*(Courtesy Heather Gatley)*



### Taipei European Intl. School Tour - May 17, 2019

Once again this spring it was my pleasure to give a lecture on the POWs to the Grade 9 students at the Taipei European School and then accompany them on a tour to Jinguashi. It is great to see their enthusiasm in being able to learn history first-hand through the experience of visiting a real former POW camp, rather than just studying WWII from a textbook in the classroom.

*The students ready to go into the mine tunnel.* *(Courtesy Ian Stewart)*