



Never Forgotten

Vol. 24, Number 1

SPRING – SUMMER 2023

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

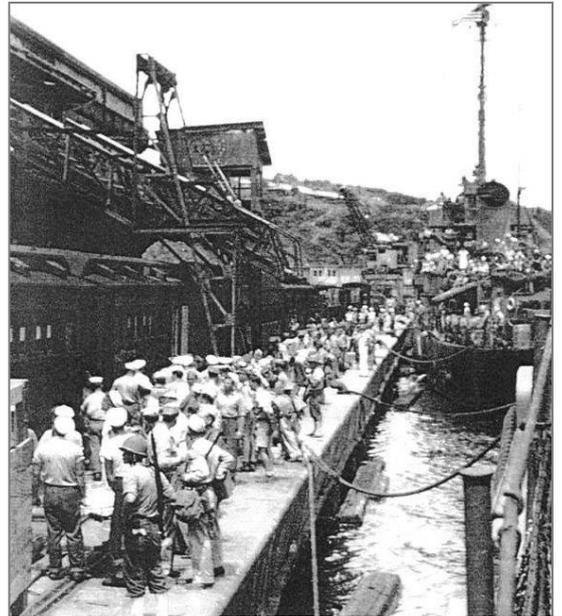


*A Tale of Two Pipers . . .
(See pages 5 - 6)*



*Remember
Them!*

Join us for this year's
FEPOW DAY –
Saturday August 12th,
6 pm – Spot Theatre,
Taipei.



*“POWs boarding the evacuation ships” -
The fates of the Taiwan rescue ships . . .
(See pages 7 - 8)*



ANZAC Day celebrated - April 25th.



Memorial Day Service, Taipei Prison Wall - May 28th.

TAIWAN REMEMBRANCE WEEK – NOVEMBER 8th - 15th, 2023

Now that Taiwan is once more open to international visitors with no restrictions, family members of former Taiwan POWs are invited to join with us for the week of November 8th – 15th as we celebrate the 26th annual *Remembrance Week event* in Taiwan. Featured are 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 12th. 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 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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MEMORIAL SOCIETY**
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Please visit our website at:
www.powtaiwan.org

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

Michael Hurst, MBE - Society Director -
VP and General Mgr., J. Chen Enterprises Taiwan;
Writer; Editor, Historian.

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lecturer, Historian, Screenwriter, Former soldier.

William Wang - Transportation Supervisor, Taipei
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and Industry Office, Taipei

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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. 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 . . .

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.

FROM THE DIRECTOR. . .

Work has finally finished on the Chinese translation of '*Never Forgotten*', and we are currently working on the arrangements for its publication and distribution. I hope 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.

At present we are in the process of looking for a printer / publisher who can also distribute the books in stores all over the island as we feel that this is the best way to get it out. We are having some difficulties in this regard and which are resulting in the delay for the book to come out. Anyone with leads or information that may be helpful in this regard, please kindly contact us as soon as possible so we can get on with the project.

Preparations are being made to hold our 16th FEPOW Day event on August 12th which we hope will once again be a great success. This year we plan on showing the movie "*The Railway Man*" starring Colin Firth and Nicole Kidman, followed by the documentary "*Enemy My Friend*" – a double feature night. (See announcement in next column)

2023 is the 10th anniversary of the dedication of the *Shirakawa POW Camp Memorial* near Bai He. Shirakawa Camp held many of the highest-ranking military officers until they were later moved to Japan and Manchuria in October 1944.

Life has returned pretty much to normal in Taiwan, as it continues to handle the pandemic well, with high rates of vaccination and daily simple precautions. This year, as more people overseas are vaccinated and travel to international destinations resumes, 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 two overseas ones so far this spring.

Plans are also underway for another great Remembrance Week event this year, and now that Taiwan is open again for overseas visitors we already have two overseas POW family members signed up for the event. It is hoped that this time more international visitors will join with us. Just let us know ASAP if you wish to take part.

Let us continue to remember and honour those to who we owe the very lives that we live today in this troubled world. Let us especially remember those fighting in Ukraine to defend their homeland and keep them in our thoughts and prayers. May we emulate their courage as we seek to bring peace to our world.

Best wishes, *Michael Hurst MBE*

UPCOMING EVENT

FEPOW DAY - AUGUST 12th 2023

This year will be the 16th time that *FEPOW Day* is celebrated here in Taiwan. Once again we will meet 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 (台北之家－光點電影院).

This year we are showing 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.



Lomax was a POW on the *Death Railway* in Thailand, and was brutally tortured by the Japanese. His interrogator Takashi Nagase was unceasingly cruel and Lomax vowed that someday he would find him and kill him.

After the war 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 met at the *Bridge on the River Kwai* in 1993. There Nagase apologized and Lomax forgave him and the two men remained friends until Nagase died in 2010. Eric Lomax died in 2012. **Colin Firth, Nicole Kidman** and **Jeremy Irvine** star in the film.

Following the showing of the movie there will be a short break and then the 40-minute documentary "*ENEMY MY FRIEND*" will be shown. This film shows the actual reunion of Eric Lomax and Takashi Nagase. It's a double-feature film night you won't want to miss. The evening should finish at around 10 pm.

There will be a collection of WWII POW and military future museum artifacts on display as usual, and a short memorial service to honour the FEPOWs and civilian internees will take place prior to the movies being shown.

An email notice will be sent out locally prior to the event, everyone is invited, and space is now open once again to a maximum of 50 persons. Reservations are required and please let us know by email if you're planning to attend.

The deadline for reservations is set at 5:00 pm Thursday August 10th. Doors open at 6:00 pm on Saturday and the program will begin at 6:30.

There is no charge for this event, and please note that these films are not suitable for young children and do not have Chinese sub-titles.

We hope to welcome many members and friends – and some new faces too. See you in August!

ANZAC VETERANS HONOURED IN TAIWAN

Once again as in many previous years, ANZAC Day was commemorated here in Taiwan. This year the New Zealand Commerce and Industry Office was in charge of the ceremony with assistance from the Australian Office. The event was held on Tuesday April 25th at the *Taiwan Contemporary Culture Lab* on Jenai Road in downtown Taipei. Participants gathered at 8.45am for the commencement of the service at 9am.

A traditional, Maori welcome ceremony preceded the start of the service. New Zealand Office Director Mark Pearson gave the key address with Australia Representative Jenny Bloomfield sharing some thoughts on ANZAC Day.

Mr. Muhammed Berdibek, the Turkish Trade Representative in Taiwan, read Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's Tribute. The Society was once again honoured to lay a wreath in tribute to the 55 Australians (3 of whom died), and the 2 New Zealanders who suffered as POWs of the Japanese in the prison camps on Taiwan in WW II.

Following the reading of 'In Flanders Fields', the hymn 'Abide With Me' was sung and the Ode of Remembrance was read. The service ended with the playing of Last Post, a minutes silence and then Rouse by Ray Heberer before the national anthems of New Zealand and Australia were sung.

The service was followed by refreshments, and a time of fellowship and remembering was shared by all.



Mark Pearson speaking

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's Tribute

*Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives...
You are now lying in the soul of a friendly country.
Therefore rest in peace.*

*There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets.
To us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours.
You, the mothers, who sent their sons from faraway countries,
wipe away your tears.*

*Your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After
having lost their lives on this land, they have become our sons as
well.*



Muhammed Berdibek's Tribute

MEMORIAL DAY CELEBRATED IN TAIWAN

This year for the second time, the Veterans of Foreign Wars of America, Taipei Post #9957, organized and hosted this annual event to honour and remember all those Americans who gave their lives in all wars for the freedom that America – and all the free world have today.

Post Commander Lt. Col. (Ret) Scott Ellinger US Army led the service, with participation by several of the Post members reading memorial selections. In addition, the POW Society director read the names of the 57 Americans who died in Taiwan's prison camps, and Mr. Eric Hsu played Last Post - and following a minute's silence, Reveille. A recording of the American National Anthem concluded the service. With 20 in attendance it was the largest Memorial Day event in the past several years. Hopefully even more will attend next year.



A TALE OF TWO FAMOUS PIPERS

Many historians and those interested in the famous battles of World War II such as D-Day, are likely familiar with the story of how that in the very early morning hours on D-Day, Major John Howard's 6th Airborne Division forces had landed in Normandy and swiftly captured the famous 'Pegasus Bridge' in the darkness before the first landing action of that famous 'Longest Day'. They were instructed to hold the bridge until relieved and did so under horrific battle conditions and counter-attacks by the Germans.

They were finally relieved as promised by Lord Lovatt's 1st Special Service Brigade at 13:10 that afternoon. The first indication of that relief was the sounds of a bagpipe being played at the head of Lord Lovatt's column by Piper Pte. William 'Bill' Millin of the commandos from the Cameron Highlanders Regiment.



Bill Millin playing on Sword Beach, D-Day.

While the story of Bill Millin was one of triumph and subsequent victory, sadly, the same could not be said regarding the story of another Scottish piper half a world away.

Earlier this spring a story came to our attention about POW Pte. James (aka John) McLean, a piper in the 2nd Btn. Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders Regiment. In researching James' story and that of the Argylls, we discovered that James was one of the two pipers who played as the last allied troops retreated over the causeway from Malaya to Singapore before it was blown up by the Royal Engineers.

I was not aware that he was one of the famous pipers who played the Argylls across the causeway, and as he later became a POW in Taiwan, I looked into his story further.

The 2nd Btn. Argyll and Sutherland Highlander Reg't. arrived in Singapore from India in September 1939. They spent a lot of time over the next two years up in Malaya training and were the best and only equipped British unit for jungle warfare when the Japanese finally invaded in December 1941. The regiment became the rear-guard of the retreating 11th Indian Division. In a series of fierce battles down the Malayan peninsula, the regiment was decimated with several hundred men being killed and wounded. The survivors eventually teamed up with those of the sunken battleship HMS *Prince of Wales* to become the 'Plymouth Argylls' and fought bravely on.

As all of the allied units retreated across the causeway to the 'supposed safety' of Singapore Island, the Argylls covered all the retreats. Finally, being the last to cross over, in the true Scottish defiant spirit in the face of the enemy, it was decided that they would 'pipe their way' across. So McLean thumped up his pipes and the two pipers began to play "Highland Laddie" - one of the same tunes played by Bill Millin as he led Lovatt's group to reinforce the Airborne troops at Pegasus Bridge two years later. Both renditions served to inspire the men as they went forth to battle.

*** Also, it may be noted on closer examination of the wartime bridges in both stories, that the Pegasus Bridge and the lift bridge at the end of the Singapore Causeway were of exactly the same type of construction. Coincidences or not!

Canadian borne, Bill Millin was 21 years old as he stormed ashore on Sword beach with the 3rd British Infantry Division around 07:30 on D-Day morning amidst a hail of gunfire from the German defenders. Once on the beach he continued to play to inspire the men forward. Later, after marching six miles, Lovatt's band reached Pegasus Bridge and relieved Major Howard's forces. Millin piped the unit across the famous bridge for the link-up while German snipers shot at the group. Millin was unhurt but later his bagpipes suffered some shrapnel damage. Millin said later that he talked to captured German snipers who claimed they did not shoot at him because they thought he was insane and felt sorry for him. There is a monument to honour Bill Millin and his men on Sword Beach today. He passed away at the age of 88 on August 17, 2010.



The 2nd Btn. Argylls crossing the causeway.

(Cont'd on page 6)

A TALE OF TWO PIPERS

(Cont'd from page 5)

After the surrender and a brief time in Singapore, McLean was sent to Thailand to work on the infamous 'Death Railway'. When that job was completed, he and a number of Argylls and other POWs were sent back to Singapore and put on hellships destined for Japan.

They were first embarked on the hellship *Hofuku Maru* which sailed on July 4th 1944, finally arriving in Manila on the 19th. After languishing in Manila Bay for two months while the ship underwent repairs, they finally sailed again on September 20th. The next day their convoy was discovered by aircraft from the USS *Hornet* and attacked, with all of the ships being sunk. McLean was one of about 200 fortunate ones to survive the ship's sinking - unlike many of his mates.

He was rounded up and taken to Bilibid Prison in Manila temporarily. Then on December 13th, he was put aboard the hellship *Oryoku Maru* and survived the sinking of that ship two days later. He was then loaded onto the *Brazil Maru* for the journey to Japan via Takao, Taiwan - departing on December 27th. The ship arrived in Takao on the 31st and the men spent the next few days confined to the ship in the harbour with little food or water and many died.

On the 6th of January, he and the remaining POWs on the *Brazil Maru* were transferred to the *Enoura Maru* and then on the 8th, he was one of the 24 British POWs who were taken off and sent to Heito Camp. On the morning of January 9th, the *Enoura Maru* was bombed with the loss of more than 300 lives. Finally on January 14th 1945, he and 18 other British POWs were sent back to Takao and put aboard the *Melbourne Maru* for transport to Fuk-17 Camp on Kyushu Island, Japan, where he finished out the war.

Both men survived the war, and while Bill Millin had many interesting stories to tell his family, McLean never spoke of his ordeal to anyone. He lived in Scotland for a while after returning home and later moved down to Crawley in Sussex County in the south of England. There he lived alone and not much is known about his life after that. He died quietly alone in his home in 1984 and was buried in the Snell Hatch Cemetery there. He was interred in a common grave with no headstone or marker – an unknown veteran!

That is until 2021 when his granddaughter Serena Gear began searching for information on him after her mother's death. She wanted to find out what had happened to him and where he now was. Through diligent research and perseverance, she finally traced him to the cemetery in Crawley. Then working with the helpful cemetery staff and the Argyll's Regimental Association, she organized for a gravestone to be obtained and erected at the previously un-marked grave. A wonderful memorial service took place on Monday April 17th with several members of the Argyll Regiment, three standard-bearers, a piper and a bugler, plus the Mayor of Crawley, several city councilors, representatives of the Royal British Legion

and a number of friends in attendance. At long last this former POW will be honoured and remembered, and as well, will now have his special place in history.

The Society was honoured to place a poppy wreath beneath the panel on the Taiwan POW Memorial Wall containing James's name on the day of the ceremony. May he rest in peace.



Members of the Argyll & Sutherland Highlander Regiment from Scotland pay tribute to a comrade.



Piper James McLean's new gravestone – he will now not be forgotten!



Wreath by James McLean's name on the Taiwan POW wall.

In Memoriam

The following former Taiwan POW has 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!

PAUL KERCHUM

CPL. 31ST INFANTRY, US ARMY
DECEMBER 14, 2022

“Let those who come after see to it that their names be not forgotten.”

“We Will Remember Them”

Fates of the American Ships that Evacuated the POWs from Taiwan

USS Block Island CVE-106

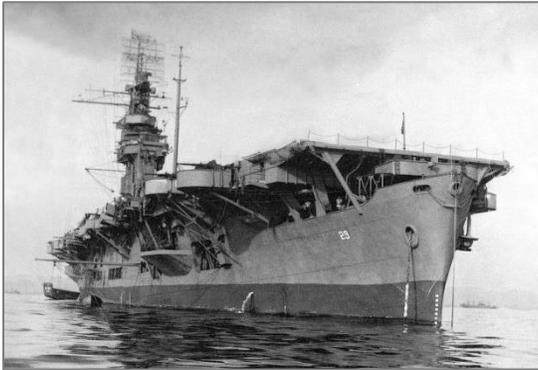
Following the rescue of the POWs from Taiwan in early September 1945, the **USS Block Island** stayed in the Far East until October 14th, and then returned to the US, arriving at San Diego on December 11th 1945. She left San Diego on January 6th 1946, transited the Panama Canal and reached Norfolk, Virginia on the US East Coast on the 20th. She was placed in reserve on May 28th 1946.

She was then attached to the Naval Academy and served as a training ship. This duty was terminated on October 3rd 1950, and *Block Island* was transferred to the Atlantic Reserve Fleet. The vessel was re-commissioned on April 28th 1951 and reported to the Atlantic Fleet, serving from June 1951 - November 1953.

On January 15th 1954, she was placed in reserve at Philadelphia. On December 22nd, 1957, she was re-designated as an LPH-1 in anticipation of conversion to an amphibious assault ship, but those plans were cancelled in June of 1958. *Block Island* was stricken from the Naval Vessel Register on July 1st 1959, and later that year was sold to a Japanese company for scrapping.



USS Santee CVE-29



After the evacuation of the prisoners of war from Taiwan, the **USS Santee** remained in the Pacific area and then late in the autumn of 1945 was part of 'Operation Magic Carpet' returning servicemen to the United States.

On February 27th 1946, *Santee* departed San Diego and arrived at Boston Harbour on March 25th, via the Panama Canal. The CVE was placed in reserve on October 21st. The *Santee* was reclassified on June 12th 1955 as an escort helicopter aircraft carrier, CVHE-29, and served until struck from the Navy list on March 1st 1959. On December 5th 1959, she was sold to the Master Metals Co. for scrapping.

USS Thomas J. Gary (DE/DER-326)

USS Thomas J. Gary was an Edsall-class destroyer escort. The ship was originally named *USS Gary* on first entering service and was later renamed *USS Thomas J. Gary* on January 1st 1945. After spending time in Atlantic convoy protection she transferred to the Pacific in July 1945.

After her WWII service she was converted to a radar picket ship (DER) in 1956 and while serving in the Atlantic she also took part in the ill-fated search for the lost American submarine *USS Thresher*. Later service saw her based in the Caribbean, the Pacific again, and also the Mediterranean until 1973.

In September 1973, she was transferred to the Tunisian government. On October 12th, she set out across the Atlantic, arriving at Bizerte on October 21st. The next day, *Thomas J. Gary* was decommissioned in ceremonies at the Quai d'Honneur, Bizerte; and moments later, the ship was commissioned by the Tunisian Navy as the *President Bourgiba*. Her name was struck from the US Navy list that same day. The *USS Thomas J. Gary / President Bourgiba* served as the flagship of the Tunisian Navy from 1973 to 1992 when she was severely damaged by fire on April 16th while in dry dock undergoing an overhaul. She was beyond repair and was subsequently scrapped. Her mast is still preserved and on display at the Bizerte Naval Station in Tunisia.



(Cont'd on page 8)

USS Brister (DE/DER-327)



The **USS Brister** was an Edsall-class destroyer escort of the United States Navy. Between June 1944 and June 1945, *Brister* made two successful trans-Atlantic escort crossings to Italy and five to the United Kingdom. On June 8th 1945 she departed New York City for the Pacific, arriving there in September. She carried out patrol and escort duties in the East China Sea. After helping with the evacuation of the POWs from Taiwan, she supported the occupation of Japan and Korea until April 1946.

After the war *Brister* was placed in reserve until she was converted to a radar picket ship (DER) in 1956, and then served with the Atlantic fleet. She later saw service in the Vietnam War.

Brister was finally decommissioned on September 21st 1968 and struck from the Navy listing on September 23rd that year. She was sold for scrap to Chi Shun Hua Steel Co., Kaohsiung, Taiwan on November 3rd 1971.

USS Finch (DE/DER-328)

The **USS Finch** was also an Edsall-class destroyer escort in the service of the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946 and from 1956 to 1969. From 1951 to 1954, she was loaned to the United States Coast Guard and served as USCGC *Finch* (WDE-428). On October 3rd 1969, *Finch* was de-commissioned at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.



After decommissioning, the USS *Finch* DER328 shared some limelight in the blockbuster movie *Tora!*

Tora! Tora! - the epic story of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. A key element in the story is the attack on a Japanese midget submarine by the World War I destroyer USS *Ward* two hours before enemy aircraft dropped the first bombs. As no vintage destroyers remained to portray the *Ward*, destroyer escorts were called upon to play the role and the USS *Finch* was used for the exterior shots. She was finally stricken off strength on February 1st 1974, and sold for scrap on August 16th that year.

USS Kretchmer (DE/DER-329)



The **USS Kretchmer** was another Edsall-class destroyer escort built for the U.S. Navy during World War II. She served in both the Atlantic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, providing destroyer escort protection against submarines and air attack for Navy vessels and convoys.

Unlike many of the other WWII DE's, *Kretchmer* had an illustrious post-war career. In addition to regular Atlantic patrols in the post-war years, she was involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and later

was in service with the 7th fleet during the Vietnam War from 1965-69. She was once again connected to Taiwan as part of that time she patrolled the Taiwan Straits and her men enjoyed a number of R&R (rest and recreation) leaves in Kaohsiung and Keelung.

In 1970 she was returned to the Atlantic Fleet for service off Florida. She was decommissioned at Key West, Florida on October 1st 1973 and stricken off navy strength on September 30th 1973. She was sold for scrapping May 14th 1974.

Let us never forget the courage, sacrifice and service of the men on these ships!

POW CAMP TOURS

Once again, post-covid, it is now possible for the Society to host local tours and overseas POW guests, and the year got off to a great start with a number of tours beginning in April.

Morrison Academy, Taichung – Grade 11’s – April 13th



The enthusiastic group outside the mine tunnel entrance.



Exploring inside the mine.

Late last year we were contacted by the campuses of Morrison Academy in Taichung and Taipei with regards to running tours for their students. The first of those took place on Thursday April 13th when 35 students, two teachers and a parent from the Taichung campus came to Jinguashi for the day. Met at the entrance to the Gold Museum Park by the society director, the first major stop was the Gold Museum where considerable time was spent at the POW display learning about the POWs, how they had come to Kinkaseki and their life and work in the camp and down the terrible copper mine. This was followed by a time inside the #5 Tunnel and the cramped conditions allowed the students to get a feeling for how the POWs slaved there.

We moved on to the overlook to view the area where the POWs went to work, not being allowed to use the tramway but having to struggle up and down the mountain to work at the mine every day. Following a lunch break and rest, the group moved on to the POW Park to see and learn more of the POWs’ story. A very meaningful time was spent at the memorial wall hearing the individual stories of some of the POWs and also what it means to make sure that they have their story told and are never forgotten. This was followed by a short service of remembrance by the memorial before the group boarded their bus for the return to Taichung. The teachers were very pleased with what the students experienced and learned, and plans will soon be underway to make this an annual trip. It is great to see the POWs’ story spreading to the students in other schools across Taiwan.

Veteran Affairs Commission – AMVETS Commander-in-Chief’s Visit – April 26th

This year it was once again possible for the AMVETS national commander Don McLean and his wife Peggy to pay a visit to Taiwan. The ROC Veterans Affairs Council hosts these guests and always arranges for them to visit Kinkaseki, learn something of the POWs’ story and place flowers as a tribute on the memorial.

It was our honour once again to accompany them on the day and share that story with them during the afternoon of April 26th. We arrived at Jinguashi around 3pm and began a somewhat whirlwind tour of the museum and overlook before going down to the former POW camp to view the memorials and what has been done to honour and remember those men who suffered so much in this camp, down the terrible copper mine and also in the other camps in Taiwan.



Visiting the museum POW display, the memorial wall, with the VAC hosts and paying tribute at the memorial.

POW CAMP TOURS *(Cont'd from page 9.)*

Valor Tours Extension Tour to Taiwan – May 1st

On May 1st we once again partnered with Valor Tours Ltd. of San Diego California in hosting three of their guests who were part of a group from the Taiwan extension of their annual spring Philippines and Okinawa battlefield tours. The group arrived on April 28th and spent two days in local sightseeing before the day trip to Kinkaseki. On May 1st Keith Kurko, his daughter Kate and Mark Armstrong met the Society director for the tour. Another guest, Robert Canepa, was scheduled to go as well, but had to drop out due to not feeling well the day before.

The weather was perfect on the day and the group followed the usual route for the tour learning as they went the story of the Kinkaseki and Taiwan POWs. It has been our honor to work with Valor over the years and we look forward to working with them again to share more of the Taiwan POWs' story with our Americans visitors.



Taipei Community Services Center Annual Spring Tour – May 4th

As usual, another very successful spring tour for participants of Taipei's Community Services Center was carried out with seven taking part in the annual tour this year.

Lucy Torres, the new Services Center events and activities co-ordinator, came along to familiarize herself with the tour and what there is to see and do, and so is now able to promote the tours more thoroughly and which she said she is certainly going to do. We always have a great time on the CSC tours and encourage others to join.



Morrison Academy, Linkou - Grade 11's – May 17th

The second group from Morrison Academy, this time from their campus situated in the Taipei suburb of Linkou, paid a visit to the museum and POW Park on Wednesday May 17th. Arriving early allowed more time to be spent in the museum and mine tunnel and the lovely spring weather provided for an enjoyable walk around the area to view where the POWs went to work with its amazing sea views and also the whole valley of Jinguashi.

After a relaxing lunch and some more sharing of the POWs' story, the group moved on to the former POW camp and spent some time seeing first hand where the POWs lived and viewing the various memorials. The tour finished with time spent by the memorial wall and laying poppies on the memorial with a moment of silence. The teachers were very pleased with the tour and pledged to make it an annual event.



Taipei European International School – May 19th

Two days after the Morrison Academy tour, we hosted the annual visit of students from the Taipei European International School. Once again as in previous years, the students were able to visit the places where the POWs lived and walked and worked down the terrible copper mine. The day was overcast with intermittent rain and fog, but that did not dampen the enthusiastic spirit of the group. We look forward to another successful event next year.

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

