



Never Forgotten

Vol. 23, Number 2

FALL – WINTER 2022

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



ROTC Student group from America exploring the Taiwan POW Memorial Park.



Remember Them!



Memorial Service for the American Airmen at the old Taipei Prison wall - June 19th.



Remembering an American Bomber Aircrew Lost Over Taiwan . . . see pages 8-9.



Some of the FEPOW and military artifacts on display at this year's FEPOW Day event.

THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EFFORT TO REMEMBER THE TAIWAN POWS

2022 commemorates the 25th anniversary of the beginning of this work to research and share with the world the little-known story of the former Japanese POW camps on the island of Taiwan during WWII. Over these many years, much has been accomplished thanks to the efforts of many people and also those who have supported the work. Without your help we could not have achieved what we have done for the former POWs and their families.

For a more detailed and chronological account of "25 Years Honouring and Remembering the Taiwan POWs", please refer to the **Articles and Stories Section** of the website. In addition you can read "The Story of the Taiwan POW Memorials" - also in the **Articles and Stories Section**. May we never forget what those men have done for us!

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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 . . .

Commemoration is more than a tribute to what is over. It is also a moment for reflection on our own time. That is why we must continue to commemorate so that we will never forget.

FROM THE DIRECTOR. . .

2022 commemorates the 25th anniversary of the beginning of this work to unlock the little-known story of the former Japanese POW camps on the island of Taiwan during WWII. Over these many years, much has been accomplished. A detailed report can be accessed on our website homepage.

A service of remembrance was once again held by the wall of the former Taipei Prison for the American airmen who were held as POWs there, and those who were needlessly murdered. (Page 4)

Our 15th FEPOW Day event on August 13th was once again a great success. This year we showed the movie "**Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence**" starring David Bowie and Tim Conti. Our special guests were Representative Sandra Oudkirk and her daughter Olivia from AIT.

After digging in our archives and with some additional research, we are pleased to include in this issue the story of the crew of a B-24 that was shot down over Taiwan on February 18th 1945. The bulk of the story is in the book with some later material added. Let us never forget those gallant aircrews who fought for our freedom. (Pages 8 & 9)

Another meaningful Remembrance Day event was held in the POW Memorial Park in Jinguashi with more than 150 in attendance. It was hoped that this time we might be able to host international visitors, but sadly this was not to be. (Page 5)

The Chinese translation of '**Never Forgotten**' has been completed and the new book edited and formatted. I am pleased with the way it has turned out and efforts are now being made to enable distribution throughout Taiwan prior to the final printing. Announcements should be forthcoming on the website and by direct emails when it is done. Finally people in Taiwan and Chinese readers overseas can learn about the little-known story of the former Taiwan POW camps.

Life is now pretty much normal in Taiwan, which has continued to handle the pandemic well, with high rates of vaccination and daily precautions. This year we were able to run several tours and hopefully in the coming year, as more people overseas get vaccinated and travel to international destinations can open up, we will once more be able to serve FEPOW families who want to follow in their loved ones' footsteps.

Let us continue to remember and honour those to whom we owe so much. Let us remember those fighting in Ukraine to defend their homeland and keep them in our thoughts and prayers. I wish you all a Merry Christmas and good health, happiness and prosperity in the coming year.

With best wishes, *Michael Hurst* MBE

In Memoriam

In April 2022, it was announced that Taiwan's last resident POW had passed away. This was the last former Taiwan POW who was known to the Society and with whom we had prior contact. It seems that there may still be a few American ex-POWs who we are not aware of, and if and when any are revealed to us, we will continue to honor and remember them in this space.

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!

OFFUTT GOBLE

SGT. 17TH ORDNANCE COMPANY, US ARMY
APRIL 24, 2022

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

"We Will Remember Them"

Those we love can never be more than a thought away ...
For as long as there is a memory, they live in our hearts to stay.

WELCOME... NEW TRADE OFFICE DIRECTOR

We are pleased to welcome Mr. Jim Nickel, the new executive director at the Canadian Trade Office in Taiwan, as an ex-officio member to our board.

Jim replaces Jordan Reeves and like his predecessors, he has pledged his support and that of the Canadian Trade Office to helping our Society in its work of honouring and remembering the former Allied POWs who were held here in WWII.

We express our deepest gratitude to Jordan for the interest and the tireless support that he gave to our Society and our work and events, and we look to working with Jim and the staff in the days ahead to make sure that the former Taiwan POWs from Canada and all the allied countries will never be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO THE AMERICAN AIRMEN AT TAIPEI PRISON

On Sunday June 19th, a memorial service sponsored by the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society was held to honour and remember the 25 American airmen who had been shot down in raids over Taiwan from October 1944 to May 1945 and subsequently held in the old Taihoku (Taipei) Prison. Of those 25 men, 14 were needlessly murdered by the Japanese on June 19th 1945 - just 58 days before the end of the war. The other 11 were released in September to return to their home country.

The ceremony took place by the American Airmen's Memorial plaque on the old prison wall - 77 years to the day after the murder of the airmen. More than 30 people were in attendance.

Guest participants at the ceremony included Gen. Feng, Shih-Kuan (Ret.) Minister of the ROC Veterans Affairs Council; Lt/ Gen. Chang Huey-Zon, Deputy Commander of the Taiwan Air Force (Ret); Colonel Mory Tsai – former ROCAF U-2 Pilot (Ret.); Lt. Col. Nathan Kibby, USAF Liaison Officer, AIT and - Lt/Col., Scott Ellinger, US Army (Ret.) and Commander, US Veterans of Foreign Wars Taiwan Post #9957. Society members and friends John Groot, Rick Wang and Karl Yeh also took part along with Piper Mal Turner. Society Director Michael Hurst told the gathering the story of the airmen and the prison. The names of the 25 airmen held in the prison were read before Lt/Col. Kibby and General Feng brought tributes from their respective organizations.

Memorial poppy wreaths were laid by the wall and Amazing Grace was played on the bagpipes before the program ended with the playing of the American National Anthem. It was a great event and we thank all those who came to remember those young airmen who gave their lives for our freedom.



(L-R) The crowd at the service; VAC Minister Gen. Feng, AIT Rep. Kibby, and Rick Wang speak at the service.



VFW Cmdr. Scott Ellinger message; Piper Mal Turner plays a lament; Wm. Wang, Mory Tsai & Lt/Gen. Chang.

FEPOW DAY - AUGUST 13th 2022

This year was the 15th time that *FEPOW Day* was celebrated here in Taiwan with the award-winning movie "**MERRY CHRISTMAS, MR. LAWRENCE**" being shown. This captivating World War II drama starring David Bowie and Tom Conti, was based on the lives of defiant prisoners of war in a Japanese POW Camp in Java.

There was a collection of WWII POW and military artifacts on display as usual, and a short memorial service to honour the FEPOWs and civilian internees took place prior to the movie being shown. Member Eoghan O'Connell from Hualien read "What is a FEPOW?", followed by Kevin Chang reading "A Time to Remember" and finishing with Sue Babcock bringing the "Tribute to the FEPOWs". Finally, AIT Director Sandra Oudkirk and her daughter Olivia shared the reading of the FEPOW Pledge with the lighting of the FEPOW Candle and the FEPOW Prayer. We welcomed many members and some new friends, and we are looking forward to next year's event. **See some photos of the event on page 7.**

25th ANNUAL REMEMBRANCE DAY IN TAIWAN - 2022

On Sunday November 13th, more than 150 people gathered once again in the *Taiwan Prisoner of War Memorial Park*, located on the site of the infamous former Kinkaseki POW Camp in Jinguashi to remember and honour all those who have suffered and died for freedom in the many wars and conflicts of this century and the last. This is the 25th time the ceremony has been held, and under the Society's direction this year was co-sponsored by the British Office in Taiwan with the initial address given by the BO representative John Dennis.

Taiwan's Minister of Veterans Affairs, (Ret) Gen. Feng, Shih-Kuan spoke, along with (Ret.) Admiral Dong, Xiang-Long, former Commander-in-Chief of the ROC Navy and special advisor to the Veterans Association of the ROC. It is wonderful to have the support of these top ROC veterans and their organizations. A message on remembering was given by the Society director, and this was followed by tributes from various members of the community - Tony Hu, Chris Teunissen, Peggy Brewer, Bernie Moore and Kevin Chang in honour of the veterans. The service concluded with a message on remembrance and a prayer by the Society's chaplain, the Rev, Dr. Herbert Barker.

Following this, wreaths were laid on the memorial, and Last Post, Silence and Rouse were rendered by Matteo O'Malley, a Grade 10 student at Taipei American School. The service concluded with the Ode of Remembrance. Unfortunately our piper was not able to be with us this year. Here are a few photos of the event:



Autumn POW Tree



Rev. Herb Barker



Minister Feng – VAC



The crowd of more than 150 in attendance.



Adm. Dong – VAROC



Tony Hu – VFW



Chris Teunissen



Peggy Brewer



Bernie Moore

LEST WE FORGET!



Veterans and serving members honouring their comrades.



British Office Director John Dennis laying Allies wreath.

Act of Remembrance carried out – Last Post / Rouse Matteo O'Malley.

POW wreath, laid by Jinguashi seniors and Li-Tzang Chang, In-Jie.



A TALE OF TWO GREAT UNCLES

Nearly every day I receive emails from family members of the former Taiwan POWs asking for information on their relatives, as details about their time as POWs are so scarce. The following is an example of just one case where a young man was looking for information on a great uncle who died as a POW in Taiwan, and another great uncle who survived the war in Japan. He wrote...*"I am trying to find out more information about my great uncles. One's name was Ray Fred Taylor and he was in the United States Marine Corps, sent to a POW camp in Taiwan and died there from beri-beri. Also I know this is probably a big ask, but I was just wondering if his body was ever found? His brother Ralph Taylor was also in the Marines and captured, but he made it out. My family never knew what really happened to either of them and I'm just trying to find out more information. Thank you."*

OUR REPLY. . .

Being in the 4th Marines, your great uncles would have been transferred to the Philippines from China a few weeks before the outbreak of war in December 1941. They were stationed on Corregidor to help defend the island fortress and fought bravely until the surrender on May 6th 1942. (They did not take part in the infamous Bataan Death March.)

They would have remained on the island for several weeks and then were moved first to Manila, and shortly after that to Cabanatuan POW Camp in north-central Luzon. They either stayed there or were sent to other nearby areas on work parties clearing up bomb damage or building roads or airfields for the Japanese. Later they were sent out from the Philippines - Ralph to Japan, and Ray to Taiwan.

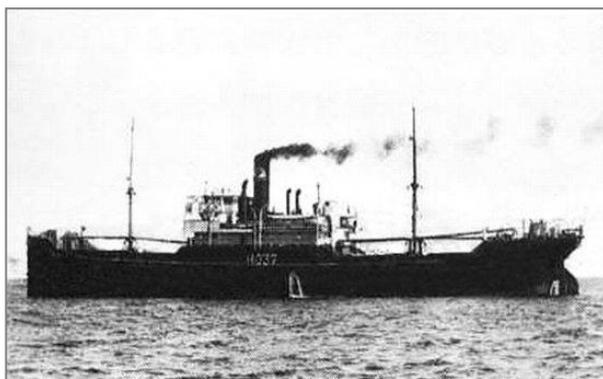
Ralph left first in a group of 500 POWs being sent to Japan on the hellship *'Clyde Maru'*. The ship departed Manila on July 23rd 1943 and arrived in Moji on the southern island of Kyushu on August 9th. The men were the first group of POWs sent to Omuta, Kyushu to Fukuoka Camp #17 and were forced to slave in the Mitsui Coal Mining Company's coal mine and zinc smelter. Later a lot more British, Australian, Dutch and a few other nationalities' POWs worked there. At war's end there were more than 1,700 POW survivors in the camp, including your great uncle Ralph. After release from the camp, he and the others were first taken to Manila for medical care and treatment before starting out on their homeward journey to the US.



Clyde Maru

Now your great uncle Ray had most likely been separated from his brother by the time Ralph left for Japan. I am not sure where Ray was at the time or after. He could have still been at Cabanatuan, but was most likely in another camp working on some slave project. At any rate in late September 1944, he and about 1,100 other POWs were moved to Manila to Bilibid Prison temporarily and on October 1st were loaded aboard the tiny 2,256-ton hellship the *'Hokusen Maru'* (aka Haro Maru / Benjo Maru) for the journey to Japan.

The ship was not big enough to carry that many men with adequate space, so they were crammed down into the holds with little room to move, let alone sit or lie down. Add to this the extreme heat inside the iron ship and with little water or food, men started going mad. The ship languished in the harbour for two days and then set off on October 3rd.



Hokusen (aka Haro / Benjo) Maru

American submarines were now prevalent in all the waters around the Philippines and the South China Sea so the convoy did everything possible to avoid being detected. That failed however, and a number of ships were sunk. So the *Hokusen* made a run for Hong Kong where it took refuge for 10 days with men continuing to die. Finally it set off for Taiwan and arrived at the port of Takao (now Kaohsiung) on November 8th. It had taken 39 days for the ship to go from Manila to Taiwan's southern port, and during that time 36 men had died. As so many of the men were in such bad condition, and with so many very sick, the Japanese decided to off-load the POWs to various camps temporarily for them to get rested and fed so as to regain their strength before finally setting out for Japan.

One of the camps that the men were sent to was Toroku Camp which was located in a vacated primary school in the village of Gouba near the present city of Douliou in south-central Taiwan. 294 men were sent to this camp and were divided into nine squads based on their health and capability of work. Squads 1 and 2 were fairly fit men and the ratio decreased as the list went on. Your great uncle Ray was in Squad # 9 - the sickest men, so it appears that he may have already been quite ill from the hellship voyage - or prior slave labour in the Philippines, when he arrived at the camp.

(Cont'd on page 7)

A TALE OF TWO GREAT UNCLES *(Cont'd from page 6)*

The men in this camp did not have to work hard and had extra food to eat and soon began to regain their strength again. Many have told me in interviews that Toroku was the best camp they were ever in and hoped they could finish the war there. However, this was not to be and in mid-January 1945, the men were moved out of their temporary quarters and sent back either to Takao, or north to the port of Keelung and put on two ships for the journey onward to Japan. The men from Toroku were in this latter group.

The men at Toroku Camp were moved out on January 19th and went to Japan on the 'Enoshima Maru'. Sadly, Ray did not join them as he died from beri-beri on the 16th just as the men were getting ready to leave. He was the only POW to die at Toroku up to that time. Later, after other POWs were brought into the camp in the spring of 1945, four more men died there.

Regarding his burial, he was buried with full honours by his mates in the Gouba Village Cemetery, with one of the POWs who was a Christian - Ray Harper USN, reading a passage from the Bible and offering a prayer for him.

After the war, in the spring of 1946, the American Graves Recovery Team came to Taiwan and exhumed the remains of all the Americans buried in the Taiwan camp cemeteries and they were sent to Shanghai for registration and dispersal. America had a policy that remains could be returned home if requested by the families and Ray's were brought back to the States and he now rests in Ft. McPherson National Cemetery, Maxwell, Nebraska in plot F-1119.



Old Gouba Cemetery - now abandoned.



It is hoped that this information was helpful to the family in knowing more about Ray and Ralph, and that it might help to give closure and peace to their previously unknown stories. I hope they might be able to visit Ray's grave sometime to pay tribute to him.

Ray Taylor's Grave in Nebraska, USA.

Now that the former Taiwan POWs have all passed on, helping people know more about their FEPOW relative is the biggest part of our work. Those wanting to know more about a former POW relative please feel free to get in touch with the Society and we will do all we can to help.

FEPOW DAY - AUGUST 13th 2022 *(Con't. from page 4)*



Mark Wilkie emcee, Eoghan O'Connell, Kevin Chang, Sue Babcock and Sandra Oudkirk with daughter Olivia take part.



(Left) A Moment of silence for the FEPOWs.



(Right) Friends gather after the service.

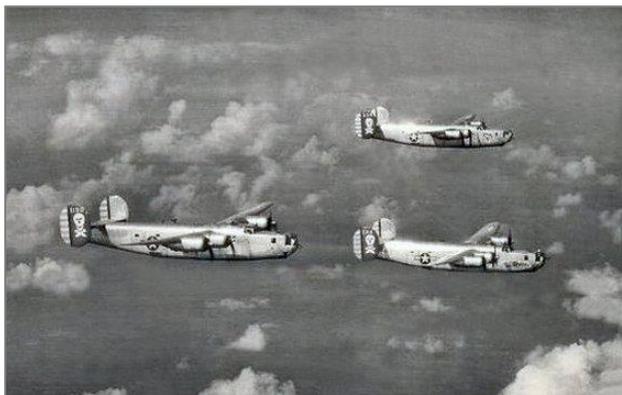
The Story of B-24 #44-49432, 319th BS, 90th BG, USAAF 'Jolly Rogers' Aircrew - Shot Down over Taiwan on February 18th 1945.

In January 1945 the famous 90th Bomb Group, US Army Air Force, moved to Mindoro in the Philippines from Australia. It served in support of the troops fighting on Luzon, and it also played a more traditional strategic role, attacking Japanese industries, railways, harbours and airfields on Taiwan and the Chinese mainland. During this period, the group had a number of aircraft equipped with H2X navigational radar. These were used for night missions, especially over Taiwan, and as pathfinders on day missions.

On February 18th 1945, B-24L2 #44-49432 of the 319th Bomb Squadron, 90th Bomb Group the 'Jolly Rogers', set off to lead twenty other aircraft on a bombing mission to southern Taiwan. The primary target was to be Okayama Airfield north of Takao (Kaohsiung). If that was obscured by cloud, then Heito, and finally the aluminum plant in Takao, were alternative targets.



319th Bomb Sqdn Patch



*319th Bomb Sqdn., 90th Bomb Group B-24Ls
on a mission to Taiwan. (Note: B-24L's had no
turret in the belly.)* (90th Bomb Grp - NARA)

Finding both Okayama and Heito overcast, the group moved on to Takao for its bomb run. On approaching the target, this lead plane piloted by Major Milton J. Porter, the CO of the 319th Bomb Squadron, and comprising 1st Lt. Kenneth J. Stoltenberg's crew, encountered heavy flak over the target and sustained damage to the left engine. This resulted in an explosion tearing the wing from the plane and causing it to spiral and crash in flames, exploding on impact. A crewmember of another B-24 in the flight took several photos of the stricken bomber.

The pilots of several P-38 fighters from the 44th Fighter Squadron escorting the bomber reported seeing five men fall from the plane and noted that one parachute failed to open. The plane crashed in a factory area south of Choshu, not far from the Kato Airfield. The four men who parachuted to safety - 2nd Lt. Michael C. Sherdon, S/Sgt. Bobby L. Lawrence - 22, S/Sgt. Merlin W. Riggs - 25 and S/Sgt. Harry J. Spivey - 23, were immediately taken prisoner and sent to Taihoku and held in the prison. Sherdon stayed in the jail for two weeks and then, being the most senior, was sent off to the Ofuna Camp in Japan for interrogation. He was liberated there at the end of the war. The other three were part of the group of 14 airmen who were murdered at Taihoku Prison on June 19th 1945.



*B-24 - possibly the Stoltenberg one, with its
left wing being blown off and beginning its
spiral to earth. There were only four
survivors from the 13 man crew.* (NARA)

(Con't on page 9.)

The Story of B-24 #44-49432 Over Taiwan *(Con't. from page 8.)*

The survivors: 2nd Lieutenant Michael C. Sherdon, S/Sgt. Bobby L. Lawrence, S/Sgt. Merlin W. Riggs and S/Sgt. Harry J. Spivey:



Michael Sherdon



Bobby Lawrence



Merlin Riggs



Harry Spivey



Photo of the 13-man Stoltenberg crew at Mindoro, early in 1945.

The rest of the crew of B-24L2 #44-49432 - 319th Bomb Squadron, 90th Bomb Group, US Army Air Force:

Major Milton J. Porter, CO 319th Bomb Squadron, 90th Bomb Group - Pilot. - Mission Leader

1st Lieutenant Kenneth J. Stoltenberg - Flight Crew Leader

2nd Lieutenant Carroll E. Justice - Co-Pilot

2nd Lieutenant James A. Roberts - Radar Operator

2nd Lieutenant Monte B. Murray - Bombardier

T/Sgt. Frederick 'Fred' Richardson - Radio Operator / Gunner

T/Sgt. Norman A. Ruddock - Engineer / Gunner

S/Sgt. Harold L. Gregory - Tail-gunner

S/Sgt. Ernest Guerette - Gunner

Memorial Stone to the deceased crew of B-24L2 #44-49432 of the 319th Bomb Squadron, 90th Bomb Group, USAAF, lost on a mission over Taiwan on February 18th 1945 and have no known graves. The memorial stone is located in Section D Site 135, Keokuk Natl. Cemetery, Keokuk, Iowa, USA.

We will remember them!



POW CAMP TOURS

ROTC SUMMER CAMP TOUR – JULY 16, 2022

This summer I was privileged to guide a group of US ROTC cadets and Navy midshipmen as part of a 'Project GO Study Abroad' program who were interested in visiting the Kinkaseki POW camp to learn about the former POWs.

There were 20 cadets / midshipmen – led by Jeff Kendrick, mostly from Virginia Military Institute in Lexington, Virginia, but as this is a DoD funded program, participants came from other ROTC units across the US as well.

Our first stop on arrival was the Gold Museum and a lot of time was spent sharing the POWs' story in the coolness of the gallery. The students listened intently and asked a number of questions as we viewed the mining displays and the POW exhibit. Then some further exploration took place outside as we walked the areas where the POWs went to work every day. It was a beautiful, sunny, *hot* 38C (100F) day under a cloudless sky and the scenery overlooking the valley and the sea below was breathtaking.

After a relaxing lunch break at the Chiyangi Temple we made our way down to the POW camp site where I explained more of the POWs' story. Following a meaningful time at the Memorial Wall we made our way to the memorial for a short service of remembrance before heading back uphill to the comfort of the air-conditioned bus.

They were a great bunch of young people and I really enjoyed conducting the tour for them. It is important that more of the younger generations get to know the stories of those who gave themselves for our freedom.

ALCOCK TOUR – NOVEMBER 28, 2022

Our very **first tour for overseas guests** following the termination of covid inbound tourist restrictions on October 13th was for Janet and Steve Alcock from the UK in the last days of November. They were visiting their son and his partner in Taipei who I had previously taken on a tour and they recommended it to their parents. We had a great day – the weather was perfect – sunny and 30C.

We began the tour at the Gold Museum viewing the large POW display and then moved to the nearby #5 mine tunnel exhibit which had just re-opened after being closed for more than a year for upgrading regarding safety issues. Here they were able to grasp the feeling of what it was like to slave down the mine.

Next we walked around the valley to the overlook where the POWs went to work every day – usually under cloudy, rainy, gloomy skies. This was followed by lunch near the temple and then it was down to the POW Park, the site of the former Kinkaseki Camp. There I shared more of the POWs' story and we spent time by the Memorial Wall reflecting on the men who had suffered and those who died in the Taiwan camps. After paying tribute with a spray of poppies and a moment's silence we concluded the tour and made our way back to the city by bus. It was an enjoyable day and I am thrilled that now once more we are able to offer tours for our overseas guests – POW family members and friends.

For more information about Taiwan POW camp tours now that covid is under control, please see the POW CAMP TOURS page on the website and contact the Society well in advance so we have time to set things up.



The group by the old Kinkaseki Camp gatepost.



Steve and Janet lay a poppy spray on the memorial.



Never Forgotten. . . The story of the Japanese Prisoner of War Camps in Taiwan during World War II

'**NEVER FORGOTTEN**' tells the story of all the Japanese prisoner of war camps on the island of Taiwan (Formosa) in the Second World War. It is the only book ever written that provides the complete story of all the camps and the men who were interned in them.

More information on the book is posted on the '**BOOK**' page in the website menu. It is only available by ordering directly from the Society. The book has done well, the first run is almost sold out and there are just a few copies left. Those wishing a copy should contact the Society from overseas or locally in Taiwan to place an order. Thank you.