

*Toroku P.O.W. Camp
Memorial Dedication
Ceremony*



*Gou-Ba Elementary School
June 6, 2009*

The Toroku Camp Survivors

The following men are surviving prisoners of war of the Toroku Camp from November 1944 to March 1945 and are with us here in spirit today.

AMERICAN

BENINI, ALCIDES.	PFC	31 ST INFANTRY, US ARMY
BRODSKY, PHILIP	SGT.	U.S. ARMY MEDICAL CORPS
DAVIDSON, ADRIAN C.	SGT.	4 TH US MARINES
HARPER, RAYMOND J.	YIC	US NAVY
KRUPA, BENNIE	RMIC	US NAVY
ORTEGA, ABEL F.	PVT.	192 ND TANK BTN., US ARMY
PASURKA, CARL A.	SGT.	515 TH COAST ARTILLERY, US ARMY
PAULSEN, FREDERICK G.	CPL.	4 TH US MARINES
PRESLAR, LYNDEL B.	PFC.	4 TH US MARINES
SILVA, DUANE J.	PVT.	59 TH COAST ARTILLERY, US ARMY
WRIGHT, GUY G.	PVT.	31 ST INFANTRY, US ARMY

BRITISH

ASHBY, FRANCIS D.	SGMN.	9/11 TH INDIAN DIVISION SIGNALS
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The inscription on the memorial reads:

1944 - 1945

IN MEMORY OF ALL THE MEN
WHO WERE INTERNED
BY THE JAPANESE DURING WORLD WAR II
IN THE TOROKU PRISONER OF WAR CAMP,
FORMERLY LOCATED ON THIS SITE.

“WE WILL REMEMBER THEM”

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This memorial was erected by
The TAIWAN POW CAMPS MEMORIAL SOCIETY
with contributions from our supporters
and the former prisoners of war and their families.

We would like to thank Mr. Hsu Ching Hsuen (徐慶勳), Principal of Gou-Ba Elementary School and Mr. Liu Mao Shen (劉茂盛) Deputy Chairman of the Parents' Association, for their assistance in erecting the memorial stone, and also to the people of Gou-Ba Community for their support and help in making this memorial possible.

Assistance from Rev. Diane Wong and
the ROC Veterans Affairs Commission is gratefully appreciated.

Order of Service

WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS

JEROME KEATING Ph.D, MASTER OF CEREMONIES

OPENING PRAYER

REV. DIANE WONG

INTRODUCTION OF THE TOROKU POW MEMORIAL

MICHAEL HURST MBE,

DIRECTOR, TAIWAN POW CAMPS MEMORIAL SOCIETY

THE STORY OF THE TOROKU POW CAMP

STUDENTS FROM GOU-BA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MESSAGE FROM GOU-BA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HSU, CHING HSUEN (徐慶勳), PRINCIPAL

MESSAGE FROM GOU-BA PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

WU, MING HSI (吳明錫), CHAIRMAN

GREETINGS FROM THE YUNLIN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

MS. SSU CHIH FEN (蘇治芬), MAYOR

TRIBUTE FROM THE ROC VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMISSION

LT./GEN. (Ret.) PANG, YU TUNG (備役中將龐豫銅)

READING OF THE POEM "FORGOTTEN HISTORY"

HUANG, YU WEN (黃玉雯), TEACHER, GOU-BA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

WORDS FROM THE FORMER TOROKU PRISONERS OF WAR

READING OF THE POEM "WHO WILL REMEMBER?"

MARK WILKIE

PRAYER FOR THE POWS AND THE BLESSING OF THE MEMORIAL

REV. DIANE WONG

THE LAYING OF THE WREATHS

ACCOMPANIED BY "AMAZING GRACE"

"THE FEPOW PRAYER"

MARK WILKIE

LAST POST, TWO MINUTE'S SILENCE, REVEILLE

READING OF THE "TRIBUTE TO THE POWS"

REBECCA DAY

CLOSING REMARKS

Story of the Toroku POW Memorial

On November 8th 1944, 1100 American prisoners of war who were being transferred from the Philippines to Japan landed at Takao Harbor after a horrifying 39 day voyage on the hellship *Hokusen Maru*. They were in terrible physical and mental condition after their ordeal, so the Japanese decided to send them to several camps in Taiwan to recuperate. On November 9th, 294 of these men came to Toroku POW Camp which was located in what is now the Gou-ba Elementary School. It was a Japanese school at that time and the POWs called it 'The Schoolhouse Camp'.

The students were moved out of the school and the POWs were housed in the one-story classroom buildings. The men were divided into nine groups or 'squads', and since they were in such terrible physical condition they were not required to do 'slave work' as such, but were engaged in various jobs in and around the camp. Some were engaged in farming and growing vegetables, some worked in the camp cutting wood and doing maintenance and some of the more fit men worked in the nearby sugar mill. The men were treated better than they had experienced since becoming POWs, and many said that this was the best camp they were ever in. However, it was not to last.

In mid-January 1945, most of the men in the camp were sent to Takao or Keelung and loaded onto ships for their journey onward to Japan. They were joined by most of the other *Hokusen Maru* POWs from the other camps. One American POW died at this time and was buried in the village cemetery.

Some of the men were too sick and weak to go to Japan so they stayed in the camp and in early March they were joined by British POWs from Inrin Camp. They all remained there until April 11th - during which time four more men died, and then they were moved to Shirakawa and the camp was closed.

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The location of the former Toroku POW Camp was confirmed in September 2000, when a team from the Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society visited the school and talked with local area residents.

Several years later in September 2003 the site was visited again and more history of the camp was documented and photos were taken. Then sadly, in November of that year, the old Japanese school building that had housed the prisoners and had remained there for 58 years was torn down.

In 2005 and 2008 applications were made by the POW Society to erect a historical marker and memorial at the school to honour the men who were in the Toroku Camp. In December 2008 permission was granted.

This permanent memorial, which was constructed with the approval and help of the local county government and Gou-Ba Elementary School, will be a lasting memorial to the men who were interned in this prisoner of war camp in World War II. May we never forget the sacrifice that was made for our freedom! Our thanks to all those who have had a part in its construction.