



Honorary Chairman - Mr Ron Mockford

Treasurer - Mrs Margaret Walton

Committee Members - Mr Keith Andrews, Mr James Whiskens

Vice Chairman - Mr Kenneth Coy

Secretary - Mrs Barbara James

BAFEPOW NEWS SHEET OCTOBER 2020 - STILL IN LOCKDOWN!

IMPORTANT NEWS FROM THE BAFEPOW COMMITTEE!

The members of the committee are still in touch with each other on behalf of all of our membership. Sadly we have had to make the decision to cancel the Annual Christmas Lunch because of the possibility that we may still be in some form of lockdown at that time due to a second wave of Covid-19. We have taken this decision after much consideration for the wellbeing of all of our members and also bearing in mind the anxieties that many of us might feel about using public transport to get to the Holiday Inn. We will get together again as soon as it is safe for us to do so and we are still hoping to hold the AGM at the Holiday Inn in July and to commemorate VJ75+1 with a lunch, also at the Holiday Inn, in August. So, we have much to look forward to in 2021 and I will keep you informed plus I do still enjoy hearing from you by phone or email at any time too.

As we won't be together in December on Tuesday the 8th, Tony Truett has come up with what I think is a brilliant idea! We always start our December lunch meeting by remembering our dear FEPOW and recognising the fact that for three Christmases (four for those who were in Hong Kong in 1941) they were in far off lands away from their loved ones and they were possibly wondering if they would ever make it home - and we think we're hard done by just missing our 2020 lunch! Tony has suggested that on the day that we would have all been together in Birmingham that, at either 12.00 or maybe 13.00 (we will confirm the time later), at the time that we would have been starting our lunch, we all toast our FEPOW in our own home while having our own lunch. It can be any drink that you fancy, but let's be united in remembering those who gave so much so that we are able to commemorate them in our own way 'together', usually in Birmingham, in what I consider to be very special company - the members of BAFEPOW!

We recently had some very good news for BAFEPOW. I was contacted by a solicitor acting on behalf of the estate of Mrs Margaret Walters who has sadly passed away. She has left a bequest in her will to BAFEPOW for the very generous amount of £5000. Having received the bequest, I wrote to the solicitor to see if there were any stipulations regarding the use of the bequest and I have now had a letter to say that there are none. I also enquired about Margaret's link to BAFEPOW and Margaret's husband Frank was a member of FEPOW, number 210, so presumably that could be the Federation or Association of FEPOW ? Frank was a member of the Royal Corps of Signals and he arrived in Singapore on the 13th January 1942 where he was soon after taken prisoner. Frank passed away in 1995 and Margaret continued to receive notices and minutes from the FEPOW group . The executors of Margaret's will were very good friends with her and if the bequest is used to restore or establish a memorial the solicitor would pass news of this on to them. They are happy for Margaret and Frank's history to be acknowledged in connection to any memorial that we do set up. I will contact the solicitor and thank her for sending me this information and also to say that it may be some time until we are able to make any plans for the use of the bequest but that we will, hopefully, let her know what use it is put to.

Do any of you know anything about Margaret or her husband, Frank. The FEPOW group that he was a member of must have meant a great deal to them both for them to have made this bequest to BAFEPOW.

THINKING OF OUR HONORARY CHAIRMAN, FEPOW RON MOCKFORD - AN UPDATE

Just a few days ago I rang Maggie to see how Ron was progressing following his fall and was delighted to find that he had returned home and I had a lovely chat with him. I have rung again (09/10/10) and I am delighted to say that he is continuing to make good progress and I was able to have another chat with him - best wishes to you, Ron and Maggie from all of your friends at BAFEPOW xx

THE BURMA STAR MEMORIAL IN BROMSGROVE

A few weeks ago I was contacted by Pam Stubbs and during our conversation she mentioned that the bench in Bromsgrove that is dedicated to Pat De Paeztron, the former president of BAFEPOW, was in need of replacement. I said that I would visit the site which is dedicated to the Burma Star and is situated in the centre of the town and if the bench needed replacing then BAFEPOW would see what could be done. George and I set off to Bromsgrove a few days later and I left him to park the car while I went to find the bench. As I approached the area I noticed a gentleman who walking in the area and I, very cheekily, approached him and asked if he knew which bench was dedicated to Pat De Paeztron. This very kind gentleman said that he knew exactly which bench I was looking for and that he and his neighbours who live very close by had become concerned that it was indeed looking somewhat dilapidated although it was structurally sound. I agreed with him that it is indeed a very solid oak bench and in no way did it need to be replaced. The area around the memorial should be under the care of the Burma Star Association but the people who live just by it also take a great interest in keeping the site tidy, especially as local people do like to come and sit there.

It was such a chance meeting, maybe it was meant to be, but this lovely gentleman offered to undertake some restoration on the bench and would look into what was needed and get in touch with me. Of course there was no obligation and I promised that BAFEPOW would pay for any costs that he incurred. We exchanged details and went our separate ways.



A few days later I received a message about the bench and then came through the photographs that I have attached here. What does one say? The bench looked like new, it's amazing, such a difference! So, on behalf of BAFEPOW. for Pam Stubbs, for Pat De Paezton's family, for the Burma Star -

MANY, MANY THANKS TO YOU, ROB WARD, A FANTASTIC JOB!

Rob, we really wish to thank you for the transformation to this memorial bench. It is dedicated to a very special man, a family man and a FEPOW, a founding member and former President of BAFE-POW - therefore one of many special men who we will always remember and commemorate.



Rob has adamantly refused to accept any expenses for his work or to cover the cost of preservative etc. He doesn't have a direct connection to the FEPOW but I would like to feel that he does have that now, as he listened to me trying to explain within a few short minutes on the day that we met who the FE-POW were and why they deserve to be recognised. I told him about the FEPOW Hut at the NMA and I do hope that he will visit that very special place and see it for himself. Maybe, if we make a visit as a group in the future, Rob could be our guest and join us there.

So, once more Rob, we all really appreciate the work that you have done on the bench. I have sent photographs of it to Pam Stubbs who had requested that the bench possibly needed replacing and she is delighted as the original bench means so much more than any replacement could do. I have also contacted the family of Pat and I am sure that they would wish me to add their thanks to you as well.

On behalf of my fellow committee members and all BAFEPOW members I would like to keep in touch with you by way of thanking you and will look upon you as an honorary member - if that's OK with you.

It says on the plaque " Yasume' a Japanese word that the FEPOW did not hear often during their captivity and enslavement especially on the Railway where it was more often "Speedo" that was shouted at them!



REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY AND ARMISTICE DAY

It will be strange this year as the pandemic will cause restrictions on the usual way that we commemorate these very special days. The Royal British Legion has changed the way it traditionally sells the poppies that we all like to purchase as it would be unwise to have people out on the streets in the usual way. You will, however, still be able to go online and buy a variety of items to show support.

If you are able to attend a Remembrance Service and would like to lay a wreath on behalf of BAFEPOW, please contact myself or Margaret Walton (Tel: 01564 730210) and we will arrange to have one sent to you.

FACEBOOK VJ Day GALLERY OF 1,000 HEROES

The Facebook page for the gallery of FEPOW photos has now just reached 800 and is well on the way to the target of 1000 pictures. If you haven't submitted a photograph of your FEPOW for inclusion and you would like to, please open Facebook and search for 'VJ Day Gallery of Heroes'. You must join the site to begin with and then submit the FEPOW photograph along with his/her name, service number if known, rank and regiment + basic details of their captivity. If you don't have a photograph, don't worry because they can just go on with their details over the place where the photo would have been. If you aren't a Facebook follower, please send me a photo + info by email or messenger and I will try to get it put on for you.

This is copied from Facebook:-

We are wondering if you would please help us with a tribute we are hoping to put together by Remembrance Day 2020.

The recent VJ Day 75 commemorations were the inspiration for an idea to create a very special tribute to those who served in the Far East in WW2. This was the war that didn't end on VE Day - the war that saw thousands facing a very different enemy in the jungles of Burma and elsewhere across South East Asia, and thousands more subjected to brutality and starvation in Japanese PoW camps. Many

never made it home, and the majority of those who did were left mentally and physically scarred by the experience. They deserve our thanks and our respect – and they deserve this very special tribute, which we would like to complete in readiness for Remembrance Day 2020. But we need some help please to make it happen!

Our aim is to collect a thousand photos of those who were involved in the war in the Far East – one thousand photos to symbolise the many thousands overall who sacrificed so much in the service of their country. We are asking those who have a relative who served in the Far East in WW2 to please allow us to include a photo of them in our ‘Gallery of Heroes’. So far we have collected just over 500 photos of these brave men (and a few women too!).

Please help us to achieve our target of 1000 photos by November by making more people aware of this idea so that more relatives of those involved in the war in the Far East are able to participate in this tribute by submitting their photos. We only need one photo of each person, preferably on their own, (preferably in uniform though this isn’t essential), together with a few brief details of their service, if known.

Photos can be submitted either by emailing us at galleryofheroes@outlook.com or by joining our facebook group VJ Day Gallery of Heroes

THE DOUBLE 10TH AND BISHOP LEONARD WILSON

The Birmingham Association of FEPOW was so fortunate to have such an excellent. founding group of ex prisoners of the Japanese. They had been held in various camps across the Far East. We, as their descendants and friends continue to keep the association going in their memory and to commemorate all FEPOW, whether they sadly died as a result of their captivity or for those who survived their awful ordeal and who returned bearing the mental and physical scars throughout the remainder of their lives. One of the founding members of the Birmingham group was Bishop Leonard Wilson who had been appointed to our diocese in 1953 and who understood the challenges facing the FEPOW as they readjusted to civilian life. He was an amazing human being and gave many prisoners in Singapore the strength to carry on when they were in the most dire circumstances and were desperately clinging on to their physical well being as much as their mental ability to survive. Bishop Leonard suffered horrendous torture in the hands of the infamous Japanese Kempeitai and knew first hand what cruelty their captors were capable of inflicting upon the unfortunate prisoners. There is a beautiful tiled commemoration laid into the floor a short distance from the altar of St Phillip’s Cathedral in our city centre. While looking up more info on the Double Tenth, I came across the information that I have included below and while I am sending out the news sheet by email, this makes it possible for you to click on the links that are in blue which will take you onto more detail from Wikipedia. This is just an experiment and I do hope that you like it. *If you click on the blue titles it should take you to a link on Wikipedia to find more information - hope it works for you!*

Service in Singapore

After serving as Dean of Hong Kong, Wilson became Bishop of Singapore in 1941. At the time of the fall of Singapore in February 1942, Wilson, assisted by the Reverend Reginald Keith Sorby Adams of Saint Andrew's School, Singapore, and John Hayter, ministered unstintingly to the people of Singapore. Subsequently they were able to continue their ministry for a year, thanks mainly to the help of a Christian Japanese officer Andrew Ogawa. However the growing popularity of the cathedral and the use of English was regarded by the Japanese authorities as a threat and in 1943 they were interned in Changi prison.



Battle of Singapore – Lieutenant-General Arthur Ernest Percival (right)... • View of the blown up causeway, with the gap visible.



The St Andrew's Village now.



Changi Prison – The Prison Link Centre of the C

The discovery of some notes by Wilson about T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) raised suspicions of plans to stir up the local population to revolt. In the prison they worked hard to maintain morale. Wilson was then one of 57 civilians who were



T. E. Lawrence – Lawrence in 1918 • Lawrence's birthplace, Gorphwysfa,



Tremadog, Carnarvonshire Wales



Torture – A variety of real and fictitious

tortured by the Japanese authorities in the "Double Tenth Incident", so-called because it started with a raid on the Changi internment facility on 10 October 1943; the Japanese were seeking evidence that the internees had assisted in Operation Jaywick, in which Australian and British commandos operating from Australia sank several Japanese warships in Singapore's Keppel Harbour on 26 September 1943.



Double Tenth incident – The display of POWs'



Operation Jaywick – The MV K



Keppel Harbour – Keppel Harbour, with the island of Sentosa in the... • Pano

Wilson was one of those who gave evidence of the nature of the torture to the investigation commission set up by the authorities of the Sime Road Internment Camp following the Japanese surrender in August 1945. By the end of the war he had made several conversions to Christianity, including some of the Japanese captors.

Later career

From 1949 to 1953, Wilson was Dean of Manchester and, from 1953 to 1969, Bishop of Birmingham. During this time he also lead the Festival of Remembrance service at the Albert Hall In London.

ROLL OF HONOUR

BOOCOCK Robert (Bob) Peacefully at his home in Escrick on September 7th, aged 101. Bob's service number was 985975 and he was a POW at Fukuoka Camp 8.

NAYLOR, Maurice, Gnr 135th Field Artillery, clerk. Born 20/12/1920, sadly passed away on 30/09/2020.

Captured in Singapore and held in Changi, Bukit Timah, Changi Post Office, Sime Road, Ban Pong, Tamarkan, Nong Pladuk II, Nong Pladuk I, Nakon Pathom Hospital camp, River Chao Phraya Bangkok, Ubon

Repatriated: Bangkok to Rangoon, sailed on SS Orbita to Liverpool

Maurice was well known to many of us for his involvement with the Researching FEPOW History Group in Liverpool and he took part in many FEPOW events including the service at the dedication of the Repatriation Ships memorial at the Pier Head in Liverpool on 11/10/2010 where I was fortunate to be present with my family.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM!

Are you aware of the Roll of Honour that is on the FEPOW Family site or the COFEPOW files that have been restarted? If you haven't seen the site that Ronnie Taylor set up, then take a look at it on:- www.roll-of-honour.org.uk or why not consider creating a FEPOW file that can go on to the COFEPOW site so that your FEPOW's story will be remembered and seen by future generations - you don't have to be a member!

The BAFEPOW News Sheet is collated and distributed by Barbara James.

Secretary to BAFEPOW:- Barbara James, 142, Winchester Gardens, Northfield, Birmingham, B31 2QB Tel: 0121 258 4300 or 07954104857 Email: bmjames142@yahoo.co.uk.

WELFARE GRANTS FOR FEPOW, WIVES AND WIDOWS

If you need help with a grant towards hospital stays, Nursing Home Costs, alterations to the home, mobility aids etc, then please get in touch with:-

Mrs Margaret Martin of the Java Club:- enquiries@thejavafepowclub42.org

Pauline Simpson, NFFWRA:- enquiries@nationalfepowfellowship.org.uk

