



THE ADDITIONAL BAFEPOW NEWS SHEET FOR DECEMBER 2021

MERRY CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO YOU ALL!

It's difficult to truly appreciate how our FEPOW must have felt as time went on and they were faced with yet another Christmas in captivity. Yet they somehow managed to put together concerts in some of the camps which undoubtedly raised their morale and helped to overcome the longing to be home.



A concert programme for Christmas 1944 by Will Wilder

In 1944 the POWs in Nong Pladuk were able to put on a Christmas show and it must have been an enormous boost to their morale to have some entertainment to take their minds off their situation. Nong Pladuk was one of the larger base and administration camps on the Thai-Burma railway and it was initially built to house up to 2000 prisoners but, as time went by, the number increased to around 8,000 and the camp was split in two and numbered No.1 and No.2. British, Australian and American prisoners were held in Camp 1, while prisoners from the Netherlands were held in No.2 camp. If you would like to know more about entertainment in this camp just copy the details below and enter it into your search engine:-

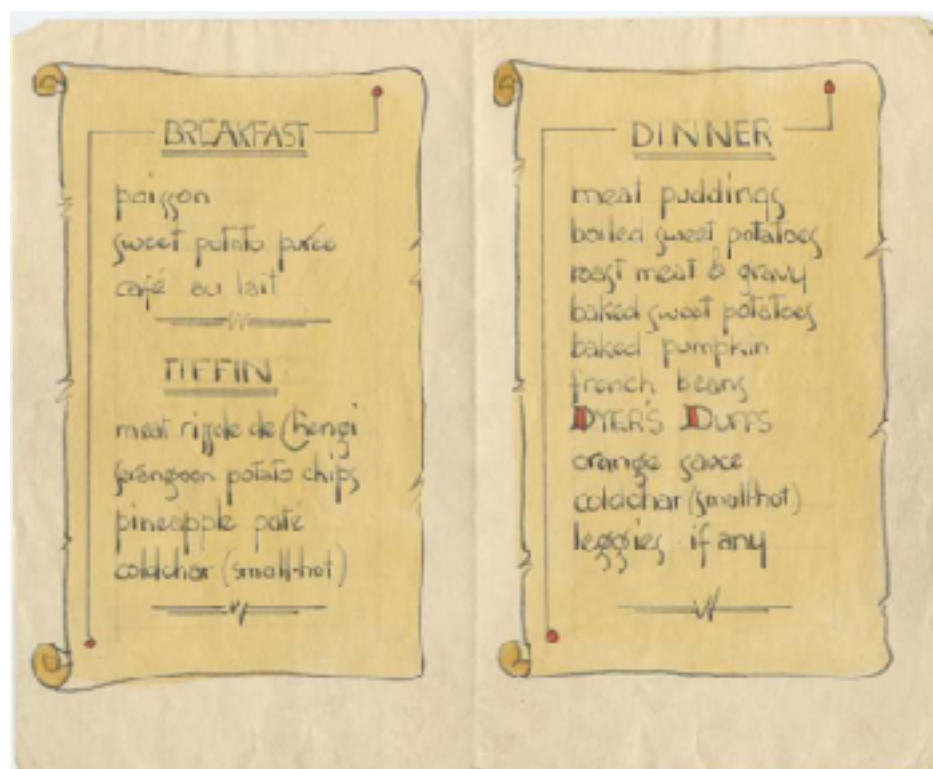
Chapter 7. "The Show Must Go On": Nong Pladuk Relocation Camp Sears Eldredge



A drawing of Private Robert 'Honey' Pereira starring as Princess Lotus Blossom in Aladdin.
Sham Shui Po, December 1943

Sham Shui Po is a district in Hong Kong and it was used by the IJA during WWII as a prison camp for British, Indian and Canadian soldiers. Many prisoners died here especially during an outbreak of diphtheria in 1942, so it's good to see that here too they were able to organise and put on entertainment for the POWs.

And so, now we are approaching Christmas 2021 and, as FEPOW descendants, we will be thinking of what the festive season must have been like for our loved ones. Keith Bettany has very kindly sent me a link to a menu that his father, Des, had designed for that very first Christmas that they spent in captivity in 1942. What a miserable, frightening, uncertain and lonely time that must have been for them in the various camps that they were held in across the Far East! In many countries around the globe they were being missed and worried about by their families and loved ones who were often still unsure of their loved one's fate and even where they were or if they were safe - as we share our Christmas lunch together at our December meeting, let's take a few moments to think of them and to remember how different it was for them - We Will Remember Them!



As Christmas comes and goes we look forward on to 2022 and we are still facing the uncertainty for the future as the Covid Pandemic still keeps a grip on the world's population. So, on behalf of the BAFEPOW Committee, I would like to wish everyone, everywhere a Happy New Year and hope that we all stay safe and keep well, also that we will keep in touch and remember our FEPOW together. We look forward to marking the 80th Anniversary on 15/02/2022 of the Fall of Singapore and we should also remember that many became FEPOW on 25/12/1941 when Hong Kong was captured which followed on shortly after the surprise attack on 07/12/41 on Pearl Harbour which forced the USA to finally enter the war. There will be various services of remembrance to mark the 80th Anniversary and I hope that we will be able to meet up and acknowledge those awful days when our troops, the civilians and local populations became POWs, Internees and Romusha too!

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, the Java Club by email:- margaretmartin1944@sky.com

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

(The BAFEPOW Additional News Sheet contains general items that we would like to share more widely in addition to the BAFEPOW News Sheet which is only sent to our members. It is put together by the association secretary, Barbara James, and, hopefully, it contains items of interest to those who share our interest in all things FEPOW. You are very welcome to suggest future topics or to submit items for future inclusion, you can contact me by email :- bmjames142@yahoo.co.uk)

