



**Wreaths laid at Grove**



**TBRC helps Caroline**



**Malcolm's payback ploy**



**Whitehall Service & Parade**

COFEPOW Quarterly is a review magazine, informing members of events and opinions expressed over a three-month period. Please visit the COFEPOW website at [www.cofepow.org.uk](http://www.cofepow.org.uk) and our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/cofepow](https://www.facebook.com/cofepow) for regular updates.

# CoFEPOW Quarterly

The official newsletter of the Children, Families and Friends of the Far East Prisoners of War and FEPOW Associations • Issue 104 • January 2024

## A year of commitment and remembrance



As war continued to bedevil the human race in 2023, COFEPOW reaffirmed its unfailing dedication to the memory of those thousands of brave souls, who, by accident of their posting to the Far-East in WWII, were condemned to endure one of the most inhumane and unnecessarily cruel captivities in recorded history.

As members of this special charity, we are deeply aware of the hardship, torture and depravity meted out to our fathers, grandfathers, uncles, brothers and friends. Many of us need no reminder of the after-effects witnessed occasionally during our childhoods, as our fathers adjusted to release from incarceration half a world away

from their homeland, usually in the prime of their lives, in alien climates and conditions and under merciless enemy rule. Many came back broken and suffered life-long trauma. Many struggled to deal with building a career, having been left with overwhelming psychological scars. Too many were haunted by a need to comprehend, and rationalise their treatment, understandably unable to forgive, whilst straining to move on. Many didn't come back at all.

May our remembrance of those servicemen, civilian women and child internees who suffered and those who were lost, remain ever constant into the new year, as we prepare to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the surrender of Japanese forces, in August 2025.



**Cathedral booked for 2025 - VJ80 plans under way**

The imposing cathedral in Lichfield is already booked for the VJ-Day 80th anniversary commemoration service over the weekend of Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th August, 2025.

Anyone who wishes to attend who would like to register their name(s) early are more than welcome. Please email Chris Wills at [chriswills5071@gmail.com](mailto:chriswills5071@gmail.com)

The AGM for 2024 will be held on Sunday 18th August at the NMA's Aspects Conference Centre. See page 9.







## Chair's Notes

### What a year!

This year has been nothing if not intense. Without doubt, the big plus personally was finally getting to visit the Thai/Burma Railway.

Thinking back on it, the most poignant element of the entire tour was whilst we were in 'Hellfire Pass', seeing the notches in the rock face where chisels were driven in by FEPOWs for explosives to be inserted, to cut through the landscape. Many are still visible today, 80 years later.

Elsewhere, whilst on our trip, we could see that the jungle has reclaimed many of the sites, with camps in several locations now covered in agricultural crops. One area where a camp had stood near to where we stayed at the Kwai Bridge, had been used to construct tourist apartments for travellers like us. It's probably very likely, however, that Thai nationals use them as they attempt to escape from the frantic pace of Bangkok and enjoy the now peaceful riverside location.

What would the FEPOWs have made of that situation? Would they reflect that their sacrifice was worthwhile after all. Did they give their today for a better tomorrow in that corner of the world anyway?

Back on the home front, as the new year begins, work has already started on commemorating the 80th anniversary of the surrender of Japan and the end of the war, when those FEPOWs that remained alive could begin to recover enough to make the journey home back to their families. Arrangements for the VJ-80 events in 2025 at the NMA and Lichfield Cathedral are underway already, as well as plans for our regular events at the NMA, the Torquay weekend and so on.

May I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and take this opportunity to wish you a very Happy New Year.

**David Brede**  
COFEPOW Chair.

# 2023 Remembrance Day at the FEPOW Building & Grove, NMA



## Once again, bad weather hampers COFEPOW turn-out

*Chris Wills reports on November's Remembrance Day Service and Parade at the FEPOW Memorial Building, NMA...*



"Alan and I woke up on Sunday morning to rain hammering down and knew that the day was going to be damp and cold.

"Nevertheless, we got to the National Memorial Arboretum just after 10.00 a.m. and there were many people there to pay their respects at the hundreds of individual memorials at the site. We thought the weather might keep visitors away but many persevered as this day means so much to so many.

"We managed to squeeze ourselves under the overhang of the restaurant and actually found a chair for Alan to sit down. Michael Wilson joined us and



I acquired a chair for him as well, then a very nice gentleman offered me his seat. So there we were out of the rain and with a good view of the screen (which is relayed down from the big Memorial).

"The programme started at 10.50 a.m. and amazingly, the rain stopped, followed by a lovely memorial service, after which, we made our way over to the FEPOW Grove.

"Caroline Aston and David Sartin were already there, and after waiting a few minutes for others, Alan, myself, Michael, Caroline and David laid our tributes. Alan, as a former trustee, laid the COFEPOW wreath on behalf of all trustees and members. After a brief chat and our thanks to Caroline, Michael and David for braving the weather, we all made our way home."

**WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.**





# 2023 Whitehall and the Cenotaph Remembrance Day Service and Parade

*COFEPOW Chair, David Brede, reports on the Remembrance Day march and service at the Cenotaph in Whitehall in November...*

"This year was my fifth march and featured a major change from previous years as we mustered at Horse Guards Parade, instead of via the access direct to Whitehall.

"This year, we'd set up a WhatsApp group for attendees to contact each other and pass around information and advice. It was disappointing that some of our attendees could not make it on the day and were unable to backfill the spaces with others who were eager to attend.

"Our numbers were down on last year, so we need to ensure we have a full contingent for next year. However it was good to welcome new marchers, including younger people to share the experience.

"Arriving in London on Saturday, we encountered a lot of attendees of the 'Stop the War' protests happening in the afternoon. They were mainly friendly, so we threaded our way through them to the accommodation. This was also the day of the Lord Mayor's Show, so the authorities were stretched to accommodate all the events and ensure they were completed safely.

"The big day arrived with a damp start and rain fell prior to the big event. We marched from Horse Guards to Whitehall, near to the Memorial to the women of WW2, which was also where Sophie Raworth and the BBC

team were located. She did mingle among us, but mainly to speak with the crowd next to where we stood. I had some sweets to sustain the contingent during the wait and others had thought the same!



"It was a great relief when the bands started to strike up and we knew that the formalities of the ceremony were due to start. Our location again was in line of sight of large TV screens, so we could see the events at the Cenotaph itself. On the completion of the service and wreath-laying by the dignitaries the march commenced. We were in the fourth line so one of the last to leave Whitehall but in due course we set off with a quick march at 100 paces, past the Cenotaph. The wreath was handed over and we proceeded apace to Parliament Square and right into Great George Street and right back to Horse Guards parade ground. This year, it was a bit

'stop start', which didn't help the marching. The salute was taken by HRH The Princess Royal and then we marched back to Horse Guards for stand down and dispersal.

"Many of us regrouped at the Ship and Shovell for well-deserved after-march refreshments and again they came up trumps with their Ploughman's plates with thick doorsteps of ham or cheese with salad and pickles. And, in due course, after much conversation and banter, we made our way home from an eventful day."

**David Brede, COFEPOW Chair.**



*Each year, around Remembrance Day, many thousands of crosses are lovingly pressed into the lawns of the Poppy Field of Remembrance in Westminster. COFEPOW trustees and members are grateful to Pauline Simpson for laying the COFEPOW Cross in November 2023, as pictured above.*



## Remembrance Day Service and Parade Whitehall, 2024

COFEPOW will be asking the Royal British Legion for tickets for the Whitehall Service and Parade in November.

The RBL has reverted to the pre-covid criteria. Anyone related to a FEPOW will be allowed to march, as it is no longer limited to veterans, widows and first generation descendants.

COFEPOW is generally allocated 60 tickets, so if you would like to be considered for one of these, **please register an interest by contacting David Brede, COFEPOW Chair, by post at 3, Blossom Way, Little Billing, Northamptonshire NN3 9ET or by email at [cofepow.chairman@gmail.com](mailto:cofepow.chairman@gmail.com) or by phone on 07930 960241.**

Please include your connection/relationship to the FEPOW you wish to represent in your message, and tickets received will be distributed on a first come, first served basis.

The procession along Whitehall is scheduled for Sunday November 10th. As the event gradually returns to its regular form, please be aware that:

- Those who wish to attend are advised that they must be on Whitehall by 9.00am: extra time is needed to go through security so it is an early start on what could be a cold and wet morning.
- There is a great deal of standing about, from assembly, through the 11.00 Silence and Service and until the final march-off. The parade is usually dismissed at about 12.45.
- Once COFEPOW is able to confirm the number of tickets and allocate them, personal details have to be submitted to the RBL for security checks. Tickets are strictly non-transferable as they are issued to people by name and proof of ID will be required.



*Breakfast before the meeting.*

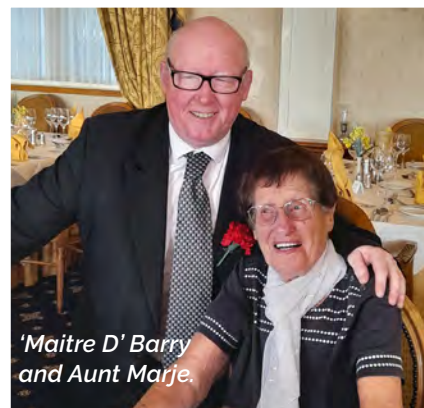
## A personal perspective on the annual COFEPOW reunion weekend in Torquay

*Once again, COFEPOW members keen to meet up with fellow FEPOW families, joined the annual 'Weekend Away' at the Livermead House Hotel in Torquay in the heart of the English Riviera, in Devon.*

*Held over the first weekend of October, the hotel made all guests very welcome as usual.*

*Chris Wills, National Events Co-ordinator, shares some of the pictures she took over the weekend, and approaches the report this year with a more personal view of the event...*

"WOW! What a great weekend! What more could anyone ask - the company and food were great and the weather didn't let us down for the time of year, as it was beautifully hot. We had wall-to-wall sunshine the whole



*'Maitre D' Barry and Aunt Marje.*

weekend and everyone was able to get out and about, under a beautiful blue sky. The Livermead House hotel, with its sea front position, provides a dramatic  
*Continued overleaf...*

(Cont'd.....) and splendid panoramic view of Torbay and Torquay town. Watched over and guided by 'Maitre D' Barry, all meals were served by the very friendly staff, who each year, go out of their way to be helpful.

"Sunday morning arrived and members assembled at the pre-arranged meeting, where loved ones were remembered and information and stories were exchanged.

"Every year, we take my mother-in-law, Irene, and her sister, Marje, who are 95 and 88 respectively. They always enjoy the COFEPOW weekends, and always say it's the highlight of their year. This year was a little bit challenging as, after last year's weekend away, Aunt Marje returned home and shortly afterwards, suffered from a Stroke and is unable to walk far now. Irene is finding her legs aren't as strong as they used to be and is also unable to walk very far.



'Maitre D' Barry and Irene.



Ever-friendly hotel staff.

"So, this year, we hired wheelchairs from a local mobility outlet, which promised to deliver the chairs for 10.30 a.m. on the Saturday. They were waiting for us when we arrived on Friday afternoon, however, which was excellent. They also arranged to pick them up on the Monday from the hotel.

"The chairs fitted only just into the boot, but having them meant we could take Irene and Marje out and about

Alan and I did offer to have a race, with each of us pushing a wheelchair. I can't understand why, but the offer was declined!

"Irene and Marje enjoy meeting up with all the other members, especially Bill Brommidge and Bill De Lar, who always call them the 'Spice Girls,' and David Hutson, who calls them the 'Girls from Dudley'. Mother-in-law particularly loves to support David with the collections he makes to contribute funds to the 'Homes for the Ghurkas' appeal.

"In fact, on the journey home, we stopped off at a motorway services, where we bumped into three young Ghurka soldiers. Irene was in her element and stopped to chat to them, telling them how much she admired them.

"We all thoroughly enjoyed our weekend at the Livermead and would like to thank the hotel for its service. We all look forward to the weekend away next year (see page 7 for details)." **Chris Wills**

## Please note for 2024...

In these difficult economic times, last minute cancellations are costing the hotel significant amounts of lost revenue. Chris Wills would like to stress that the hotel fully understands the difficulties involved in having to look after someone who is ill, or falling ill yourself, and this cannot be avoided. If cancellations are made close to the date of the weekend, however, it is impossible for the hotel to re-let the rooms or use food already bought.

As part of the contracted agreement with Livermead House, guests in the COFEPOW party who cancel within one calendar month prior to the next weekend (4th October 2024), will be liable to pay the full amount directly to the hotel.

Whether or not you or your partner have any health concerns, it may be beneficial to take out holiday insurance for your stay this year.

Thank you.



## VJ80 call for members' entries into FEPOW Building Book of Remembrance



Laid out and open for visitors to view on a presentation table within the FEPOW Memorial Building at the NMA, is a substantial COFEPOW Book of Remembrance.

Each page of this impressive document is dated and turned over to the next leaf when the FEPOW Building is opened to visitors each morning.

If you haven't yet submitted an entry for your FEPOW to be put into this special volume, but would like to, the cost will be £15 per line, per entry (at time of going to print).

The date of entry is entirely up to you and is generally chosen to be on either the date of birth or the date of death of the FEPOW.

The trustees would like to accumulate as many FEPOW names and include them within the book, before the important services take place for the 80th anniversary of VJ-Day, in August 2025.

If you're interested in commemorating your FEPOW's name in this way, to appear alongside the many that are already honoured here, please contact either Keith Andrews by phone on 01530 450621 or by email at [scubaka@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:scubaka@yahoo.co.uk) or Chris Wills by phone on 0121 244 7263 or by email at [chriswills5071@gmail.com](mailto:chriswills5071@gmail.com)



# Southampton Service

## FEPOW Repatriation Commemoration service on the 18th November 2023

*Walter Tuttlebee has provided the following report on Southampton's annual service which commemorates the repatriation of many FEPOWs after the war. He also wished to use the opportunity to thank all who helped and participated, and to update those who wanted to come but weren't able.....*

"A good number of regulars and some new faces gathered for coffee and conversation from 10.00am at 'The Dancing Man' pub, hosted well by Ellana (as Mandy was away). As folk arrived there was a solid drizzle, but by 10.50am, as we assembled outside to walk to the Memorial, the rain had eased. As we crossed the road to Town Quay Park, it seemed to stop, giving us a dry and warm (for late November) day for the ceremony itself.

"The short parade across to the Memorial was led by a local Standard Bearer from the Royal Marines, and was followed by the Lord Mayor of Southampton, Valerie Laurent, and all our other guests.

"Either side of the memorial plaque, we were greeted by a collection of wreaths made by children from each year group of St John's School and laid by them the previous morning (as this year's event was not on a school day). A couple of us had joined them on Friday and shared something of the FEPOW story.

"Local residents from the Town Quay Park Association (TQPA) had kindly ensured the children's wreaths had been protected from the overnight rain. The plants, flowers, shrubs and trees in the park - which was relatively new 10 years ago when the memorial was dedicated - are now mature and were in beautiful shape, well looked after by the TQPA, who also help us enormously by caring for the Memorial throughout the year.

"After a brief welcome from myself, local historian and radio presenter, David Adcock introduced the proceedings with a brief address and then led us through the usual programme, with the Exhortation, Kohima Epitaph, Last Post, two minutes Silence and Reveille. This



was followed by the laying of wreaths, led by the Lord Mayor, and the planting of crosses by attendees.



"Several regulars who normally attend were prevented from doing so - some at the last minute - by health issues and they sent their apologies. These included FEPOW Chaplain Rev. Pauline Simpson, Mike and Meg Parkes of RFHG and Ann Whiteside, coordinator of the local Dorset COFEPOW group. Our usual standard bearers Nick and Paul, from the West Midlands, are unfortunately not in the best of health and were also unable to join us this year. We were very grateful to Patrick of the Royal Marines, for stepping into the gap.

"Although Bob Hucklesby is no longer with us, it was a pleasure to have his daughter-in-law, Tessa, in attendance. Southampton still has at least one surviving FEPOW, Bert Warne, who unfortu-

nately also felt unable to attend.

"We were very pleased to welcome a few new faces, including FEPOW relatives who had wanted to attend in previous years. These included one man whose father had been repatriated on the same hospital ship as Bob Hucklesby, the *Principessa Giovanna*, which docked in Southampton 78 years ago to the day. Another individual attending for the first time had been a young child civilian internee during the war.

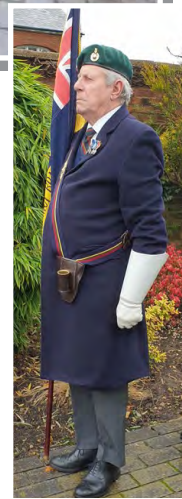
"New connections were made and information exchanged over coffee beforehand and over lunch afterwards in 'The Dancing Man'.



"Please make a note in your diary for next year's event on Monday 18th November 2024. Should you have any photographs

of the event that you'd be willing to share, please email them to [walter@tuttlebee.com](mailto:walter@tuttlebee.com). Thank you."

**Walter Tuttlebee**





Please see page 5 for guidance on payment terms.

# COFEPOW Weekend Break - rebooking for 2024!

The Livermead House Hotel in Torquay is an elegant hotel, built in 1820 on the edge of Cockington Valley on Torquay Sea front, in the heart of the English Riviera, Torbay, Devon.

The hotel offers a traditional flavour, breathtaking sea views, and high standards of service and cuisine with an award-winning chef. The Livermead House is one of three Rew Hotels, a family-owned and managed group of hotels on Torquay's water's edge. There's a pleasant level walk to the town centre, free on-site parking and free Wi-Fi internet access in all public areas. Tea/coffee will be offered on arrival. A full English or continental breakfast will be served each morning and a four-course table d'hôte dinner each evening. On the Saturday, there will be a complimentary drinks reception before dinner with entertainment on Friday and Saturday night and a complimentary meeting room for Sunday.



**The Livermead House Hotel,  
Sea Front, Torquay TQ2 6QJ.  
Friday 4th October to  
Monday 7th of October 2024.**

**Reservations are on a strictly  
first come, first served basis.**

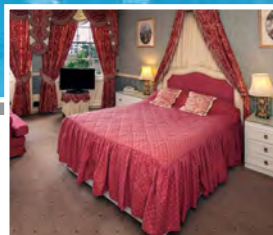
**Two nights' dinner, bed  
and breakfast, just £180  
per person.**

**Three nights' dinner, bed  
and breakfast, just £270 per  
person.**

***Please see note on page 5  
regarding cancellation.***

If you wish to extend your stay, extra nights will be £70 per person for dinner, bed and breakfast, for up to a maximum 7 night stay in total. There is no supplement for the first 6 single rooms (on a first come, first served basis) and any single rooms over will incur a supplement of £15 pppn. Sea view rooms carry a supplement of £10 pppn. ever, constant.

To secure your place, simply send your name, address, email (if you have one), telephone number, the number of people attending, the number of rooms required, the number of nights you wish to stay, the type of room, special requirements, i.e. sea-view, walk-



in shower etc., together with a deposit of £25 per person to: Chris Wills, 74 The Greenway, Sutton Coldfield B73 6SG. Tel: 0121 244 7263. email: chriswills5071@gmail.com Cheques should be made payable to COFEPOW.

**If you live locally, and would just like to come to the Saturday night dinner, we can offer a special price of £30 per head – £9 less than the normal price.**

For more information or to book by phone or email, contact: Chris Wills, telephone: 0121 244 7263, or email: chriswills5071@gmail.com

We look forward to seeing you there later this year!

Name

Address

Post Code

Tel no.

email

No. of people

No. of rooms

No. of nights

Type of room (special requirements)



On Remembrance Sunday, the men of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry were commemorated at the Memorials in the Market Place, Carlisle and at Belhaven Park, Wishaw. Agnes Dougan provided the following report...

"Following the very well attended community-led service at the war memorial in the market place, friends and relatives of the men of the regiment gathered at the nearby Lanarkshire Yeomanry Memorial, for a short service.

"During the service, Campbell Thomson read an extract from the address given by Rev. Paul Grant at the Lanarkshire Yeomanry Gathering in Newmains in 2008, and a silence was followed by the laying of wreaths and tributes. Gavin Whitefield, the Vice Lord-Lieutenant, placed a wreath on behalf of the Lieutenantancy of Lanarkshire and this was followed by the laying of a wreath on behalf of South Lanarkshire Council, laid by Councillors Eileen Logan and Poppy Corbett.

"A wreath in memory of the men of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry was laid by Bethany Black. Tributes were placed by our friends from the Cameronian Association, in honour of the men of the Cameronians and the Lanarkshire Yeomanry. Both regiments lost many men during both world wars. The service ended with the famous extract from Laurence Binyon's poem, The Fallen.

"They Shall Not Grow Old ..."

"Later in the afternoon, we participated in the well-attended community service at the war memorial in Belhaven Park, Wishaw, which was conducted by Rev. Terry Moran of South Wishaw Church. Following the community ceremony, a short service was held in respect of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry.

"A wreath in memory of the men of the regiment was laid by John Fleming who had himself served in the Queens Own Lowland Yeomanry, the successor to the Lanarkshire Yeomanry."



Some of those who joined us for the Lanarkshire Yeomanry Service.

## Lanarkshire remembers The Lanarkshire Yeomanry Remembrance Day service, 2023

"Tom Donaldson, a good friend and supporter of our group, placed a wreath on behalf of the family of Gunner Harold Coleman of the 156th Lanarkshire Yeomanry Field Regt RA, who had fought in Sicily, Italy and Western Europe. Tributes were laid by the Kelso Family and by Michelle Convery who served in the L.Y. Squadron of the Scottish Yeomanry in Bosnia in the 1990's.

"At this time of Remembrance, it is appropriate for us to remember some of the men of the Lanarkshire Yeomanry who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving with the regiment during the Second World War.

"The following men were among the first to lose their lives, all of whom had joined up before war began:

*James McKenna, one of a detachment of the regiment sent to Liverpool to escort Italian internees and German POWs to Canada. James was one of the British troops who died after the ship was torpedoed and sunk.*

*Thomas D. Moore of Strathaven, was sent to France and was rescued after Dunkirk. Also aboard the above ship, Thomas gave his life-jacket to an Italian*



Above, left to right: Michelle Convery, Campbell and Agnes Thomson, Marion Fellows M.P., Tom Donaldson, Patricia McKibbin and John Fleming. Far left: Wreaths laid at the memorial. Alongside: 'Jim' Johnston, who died at the age of 19.



*who could not swim, but, sadly, did not himself survive.*

*William William James Johnston, (known as Jim) from Wishaw and just 17 on enlistment. Bound for India in 1941, Jim became ill on board, and died aged 19.*

"Our thanks to John Fleming, David Cranstoun, Janet Sheard and Jane Dick for their kind donations towards the purchase of wreaths.

**Agnes Dougan.**



# All members welcome to VJ-Day commemorations and COFEPOW AGM, NMA

## Sunday, August 18th, 2024



COFEPOW will mark the 79th anniversary of VJ-Day on Sunday 18th August this year. This commemoration of the Allied victory over Japanese forces at the end of the second world war, will allow people to come together to remember the heroism and suffering of their forbears, most of whom have now passed out of living memory.

It is important that as many people as possible visit the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas, Staffordshire, to join the Annual General Meeting and meet old and new friends. This will be followed by a wreath-laying at the FEPOW Memorial Building and Grove at 1.00 p.m. and then a Service of Remembrance back at the Aspects Conference Suite at 1.30 p.m. Refreshments will then be served, before everyone makes their journey home.

The Trustees of COFEPOW would be delighted if you can attend this year's commemoration service. The COFEPOW AGM, which will be held in the Aspects Conference Suite (situated where the marquee used to be) is usually very well-attended, as members can listen to progress made within the COFEPOW charity in furthering its aim of establishing and maintaining memorials and promoting educational material.

The Accounts will be reviewed, and attendees will see where donations are allocated and how the charity is run generally. The trustees and other officers of COFEPOW will also be on hand to answer any questions you may have.

Tea/coffee and biscuits will be available after the AGM, when you can

chat and get to know other members.

There will also be a range of COFEPOW branded merchandise on sale at the AGM to help bolster the charity's funds.

### Agenda of the day's events

National Memorial Arboretum,  
Alrewas, Nr. Lichfield, Staffordshire.

- 10.30** - The AGM will commence in the Aspects Conference Suite
- 12.00** - Break for lunch
- 13.00** - Salute at the FEPOW Memorials - The Last Post
- 13.30** - Return to the Aspects Conference Suite to attend the VJ-Day Commemorative Service
- 14.30** - Tea/coffee and biscuits and a chance to gather and meet friends
- 15.00** - Book Fair
- 16.00** - Finish



The AGM will commence at 10.30 a.m., and should terminate at around 12.00 noon.

At around 12.30 p.m., members will be able to make the short walk to join the service at the FEPOW Memorial Building and Grove, whereafter the laying of wreaths will take place.

If you think you would like to attend the AGM and/or the Remembrance Service, it would help us in reserving seating and organising catering, so please reserve your place, as soon as possible, with Chris Wills, COFEPOW Event Organiser, 74 The Greenway, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B73 6SG. Tel: 0121 244 7263 or email [chriswills5071@gmail.com](mailto:chriswills5071@gmail.com)



## Applications for Secretary

Applications are invited for the role of Secretary to the COFEPOW charity. This is a very important post within the charity, which will bring its own satisfaction. You will experience genuine pleasure in helping COFEPOW members, knowing that they will value and appreciate your input. The role involves the following:

- *Supporting the Chairman and trustees*
- *Preparing documents and taking Minutes at the AGM and trustee meetings*
- *Handling correspondence, telephone calls, emails from members and external bodies*
- *Issuing access to the FEPOW database*
- *Maintaining the data protection database.*

Full support and guidance will be offered to the successful candidate. The trustees are a friendly and dedicated bunch of all ages and will welcome anyone who has the best interests of the charity at heart.

The position is a voluntary one and no remuneration is available, as the charity derives its income entirely from memberships and donations. If you are interested in the role, please contact: David Brede in writing, by the end of June 2024, at 3 Blossom Way, Little Billing, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 9ET, or by email at [cofepow.chairman@gmail.com](mailto:cofepow.chairman@gmail.com)

Should you wish to discuss the role first, please call **07930 960241**.

COFEPOW Quarterly is available either as a printed multi-page A4 magazine, or as a PDF, emailed to your online address.

Published in January, April, July and October, it is edited and assembled by Chris Wills and Steve Riley, who are keen to receive all material from members, to contribute towards the content of the newsletter.

Please send all photographs, illustrations, articles, notices and event information to either: [chriswills5071@gmail.com](mailto:chriswills5071@gmail.com) or [sriley.beeches@btinternet.com](mailto:sriley.beeches@btinternet.com) Thank you.



# VJ-Day 80th anniversary

## New lapel pin design children's challenge



Left: the boxed VJ-Day 75th anniversary pin, produced in 2020.

### COFEPOW Lapel Pin Design Competition Entry Form.

Please indicate which category you are entering by circling round the number below...

1

2

3

Name

Address

Postcode

Age

School/Organisation

Please print this form and attach it to your design and email or post your entry to:

Alexandra Metcalfe-Hume  
Breck Farm House, Breck Farm Lane,  
Taverham, Norwich,  
Norfolk NR8 6HL.

Email: [education@cofepow.org.uk](mailto:education@cofepow.org.uk)

*August 15th 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of VJ-Day. As in the past, COFEPOW will be commemorating this next significant anniversary with a special new COFEPOW lapel pin badge design competition for children...*

COFEPOW would like members' help in contacting all secondary schools, cadet groups, scout groups and any youth groups across the country, to invite them to get involved in this new children's competition. Private entries will also be welcomed and we would ask any COFEPOW members who would like to offer help getting the message across, to get in touch. Please encourage your children, grandchildren and even your great grandchildren to get involved - ask them to get thinking of ideas now!

Children can enter in their age category and the top three winners from each will win Amazon vouchers with the overall winner having their design crafted into a beautiful lapel pin badge.

The competition will be divided into three categories:

**Category 1 - Age 11 - 13**

**Category 2 - Age 14 - 16**

**Category 3 - Age 17 - 18**

The nine finalists will have their work exhibited at the COFEPOW Annual General Meeting on 18th August 2024 at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, where they will be voted on by the members of COFEPOW and the winner from each category will go through to the final.

The three winners will then be judged by a COFEPOW trustee panel and the overall winning pin will be manufactured and sold to raise funds for the charity.

The three finalists will be invited to the 80th anniversary commemoration at Lichfield Cathedral in August 2025 and presented with their prizes.

### Prizes.

The three winners from each category will receive Amazon Vouchers:

**1st Prize - £30**

**2nd Prize - £20**

**and 3rd Prize - £10**

### Competition entry rules.

- The closing date for entries is the 30th April 2024.
- Designs must be able to be made into a pin with a width of 1 inch (2.25 cm) so cannot be too detailed.
- Designs must contain the COFEPOW name - and the date - 2025.
- Designs are judged anonymously, so the name of the designer must not appear on the design.
- All designs must be accompanied by a completed entry form (1 design - 1 entry form).
- Designs must be the original work of the entrant.
- Receipt of entries can be confirmed if a stamped self-addressed envelope is included with the entry form, or if entered via email, then a confirmation email will be sent.
- The nine finalists will be informed after 1st August 2024.
- The judges' decision is final.
- Submitted designs may be printed in the media, printed in the COFEPOW Quarterly newsletter and displayed on our website or featured on local radio/TV.
- The overall winner will have their design crafted into the commemorative COFEPOW VJ-Day 80 pin, which will then go on sale as part of the COFEPOW commemorative merchandise collection, with all proceeds going to the charity.

### Entry details.

Please complete and return the form alongside to enter the competition with your pin design, or visit the COFEPOW website at [www.cofepow.org.uk](http://www.cofepow.org.uk) to enter online.

Good luck!



Following the Lanarkshire Yeomanry VJ-Day Remembrance Service report in the October issue of COFEPOW Quarterly, the fascinating article being prepared by Jean Moore is now complete, and is reproduced below. It tells the story of an event two days before Singapore fell, when Lt. Col. Philip Gold, the CO of the regiment, was ordered to form an official escape party to get back to Allied held territory. Jean's father, Jimmy was among the seven men selected. The others were BSM Roadnight, Sergeants Brown, Lindup and Noble, Bdr Smith and Gnr Johnstone - "All hand-picked, tough intelligent men and good instructors".

*It tells the story of unbelievable bravery, and perhaps offers a different perspective on the much-maligned General Percival during the surrender in Singapore, when it turned out he actioned some very forward-thinking tactics....*

"They say that Friday 13th is an unlucky day. February 1942 in Singapore certainly lived up to its name. Things were bad, the Japanese were at the gates and the 'Impregnable Fortress' was ready to fall. General Yamashita had only taken seventy days to get there. Time was running out. Evacuation from the island had been slow and now at the eleventh hour, it was a frenzy. Women, children, nurses, wounded, businessmen - all hurriedly arrived at the docks. Bombs were falling, children were crying, the wounded and dying lay everywhere.

"Through the mayhem, a flotilla of 44 boats left the docks. A catastrophe greater than anything that could be imagined happened. Forever, this would be known as Black Friday. Only two of the 44 boats got through, and the fate of those who survived was to be stranded on tropical islands waiting for the Japanese to capture them.

"At headquarters, things were chaotic. At the last-minute General Percival said it was imperative to get key troops off the island. It had to be kept top secret so that the morale of those left behind was not affected. Seven men were to be chosen from each regiment. My father was one of the men chosen from the Lanarkshire Yeomanry. He became known as 'wee Jock Hamilton', the bodyguard of Colonel Gold. Orders were to assemble at the docks at ten o'clock that night and a naval ship would evacuate them. They waited all night with continual shelling

# Escape from Singapore

## The remarkable story of a Lanarkshire Gunner and his courageous comrades

*The escape party – Gnr Hamilton is extreme left, Lt. Col. Gold is 3rd left. Sgt. Roadnight was ill at this time.*



and no ship arrived. Despondent, they returned to HQ. It became apparent that it was now every regiment for itself in the escape attempt.

"On the evening of the 14th, they stole back to the docks, searching frantically for a boat. Eventually, they found a burned fishing vessel - it had no oars, no sails and leaked continuously - but it was all that could be found. And so, in the early hours, they set off on a perilous two week journey. Through mined waters, with enemy aircraft overhead, a game of cat and mouse ensued. Running through their heads rang the last words they heard

*"Head for Indragiri, find Indragiri".*

"For nine days, they rowed on the open seas eventually coming to the Indragiri River. It was a river they had found, not a town! Upstream they landed at a town called Tembilahan, where they were met by a Naval Officer. An escape route had been set up by the SOE. With the help of several people at staging posts along the route, they travelled by foot, bus, lorry and train to reach their final destination, Pedang, where they boarded a naval vessel and safely reached Ceylon.

"In life, there are heroic and selfless acts which sometimes go unnoticed. To me the 'Indragiri Escape Line' is one. All along this stretch of water, men gave their freedom to help others escape. From Tembilahan, brave men went back and forth to the desert islands to rescue people from the 44 crafts. Others stayed

behind, manning the staging posts, in order for others to escape. In the end, they themselves were captured. In particular, I would like to mention Colonel A. F. Warren (SOE), who remained at Pedang with the 800 men left behind and surrendered to the Japanese. Doctor Coates, who cared for the wounded tirelessly, performing operations under dire circumstances; Captain Ernest Gordon (Miracle on the River Kwai) and Colonel F. J. Dillon, who both managed staging posts along the way and, by doing so, stayed too long, forfeiting their own freedom and getting captured at sea. All these men became POWs who worked on the Thai/Burma Railway.

"General Percival wanted the key personnel out of Singapore to India so that they could become the nucleus for jungle training, in order that they could fight the Japanese another day. From my father's escape group, two became Chindits and were in 'Operation Thursday' and several went to 158th Field Regiment which fought at Imphal. They were all on the Burma Front when the tide turned in the War. Without the help of the brave men above this would not have been possible."

The escapees eventually became part of the Chindits, who fought so effectively in the deadly Burmese Jungle behind the Japanese lines in Burma and led to the eventual defeat of the enemy.

**Jean Moore**  
**Scotland.**



*James Dow, of Hamilton in Lanarkshire, Scotland, has a few stories about his father's "vacation" with the Japanese Imperial Army from February 1942 to September 1945, and has forwarded a sample that COFEPOW members might enjoy....*



"My Dad was a corporal in the Royal Military Police Corps. He was in the Division that landed in Singapore a few days before the surrender. He didn't even see a Japanese, never mind shoot one, until after the Allied surrender.

I grew up in the years following the Second World War, in a home where the words "Japan" and "Japanese" were not specifically banned, but they were certainly discouraged. That was not surprising, considering I was born some 14 months after my father had returned from three and a half years of hell as a Japanese prisoner of war.

On release, he was a 40kg weakling. As a result, I was to some considered a miracle baby - something I never appreciated till much later in life when I too met with the perils that war can impose on a family. The miracle firstly was that my father had survived against the odds, to return to his wife and first born while secondly, he had managed to regain his strength in quick time, to set me on my way.

My father and mother came from caring Scottish Presbyterian families. There was the odd puritan restriction, such as no playing outside on a Sunday and definitely no washing of dirty clothes on that same day - the latter offence being so severe its punishment bordered on excommunication.

My father's philosophy followed the two principal commandments of the Palestinian joiner....

# A proud son's story of Dad's 'payback' time

*"Lou God, yer brither man an better yet yer sister wumin."*

As such, grudges and the like tended to ease off as time passed.

With things Japanese, however, the sanctions lasted much longer. By the time I entered my twenties, Japanese goods had become more and more evident in the shops and market. I thought that our family embargo had virtually disappeared. That was until my father one day announced that he proposed buying a Mazda car to replace his mature Ford Granada. I chuckled rather than burst out laughing.



Malcolm Dow RMPC, 1940

"What's so funny?" growled my Dad.

"It's Japanese, Dad" I carefully retorted.

"No it's not, it's American" came the reply, from a slightly surprised, if not shocked, father.

"OK, have it your way, Dad" was my parting shot.

Next week, Dad went out and bought another Ford Granada. The

embargo was still in place. I didn't have the heart to tell him that Ford and Mazda operated as a joint venture at that time.

I learned a lot from my father. Perhaps the most important lessons were those of patience and humility. The perfect 'ashlar' can only be formed through the worker's skilful, repeated blows of hammer on chisel. Unfortunately, there are many who consider I am not the most patient of men. As I grew from a child to a man, I discovered the fountain from which my father's moral and social tenets flowed. But that's another story.

As I mentioned before, my father had had the pleasant experience of being treated to a three and a half year holiday in Singapore, Malaya, Thailand and Burma, building a railway along with Alex Guinness and the rest of the River Kwai tourists. He never held any grudges against all the Japanese squaddies, believing that it was not the fault of the ordinary Japanese soldier, but that of their poor, misguided, indoctrinated leadership.

My father found the Japanese engineers working on the railway to be decent men who suffered nearly as many hardships as the prisoners. But there were enough hard-case officers and Korean guards ready and willing to subject the unfortunate to their sadistic pleasure. That said, my father was not shy about getting his own back, whenever the opportunity arose.

After the war, he belatedly found himself lucky in that respect. In 1981, Mum and Dad were overjoyed to visit their grandweans, my wife Marilyn and me in Iraq. At that time, I was with the consultant staff, supervising a Japanese contractor building Section 9 of the Iraq Expressway No.1. The overall length of the expressway was in the region of 1200km. It ran from Basra in the south at the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers and was the largest motorway construction ever attempted.

Oil rich Iraq, with its President Saddam Hussein, was certainly ambitious. But such massive projects needed careful planning and in particular an accurate evaluation of material sources and availability. It was the inaccurate assessment of the latter, together with the start of the war with Iran in September 1980, that was to prove the best laid schemes still went 'aft agley.' But then that's another story. *Continued overleaf...*





Malcolm Dow RMPC 1946 with niece, Janet and son, Neil.

(Cont'd...) "It was October when Mum and Dad visited, and the Japanese thought it was an excellent time for a festival; I had learned they needed little excuse to have a drink and enjoy themselves. We were all invited to the party and I mentioned that my parents were visiting and asked if it was OK for them to join the occasion.

"Most certainly, Dow San. We are honoured to have your parents with us," came the reply.

I avoided telling them that my Dad might not be too happy about having fun with the Japanese. He had tried that once before and he still had the scars to prove it.

When I got back to the house, I told Dad about the Japanese invitation and asked if he wanted to attend.

"Aye, of course, no problem" was his instant reply. Little did I appreciate or suspect that he had been waiting patiently for such an invitation.

As ever, the Japanese excelled themselves, showing that when you do something you should do it properly. They really went to town - the large truck and equipment storage park was cleared and replaced by neatly constructed stalls for food, drink and games, that fooled the harshness of the desert that surrounded the camp. There was also a boxing ring where the Thai labour force could display their skills in kick-boxing as well as cross-dressing. By that I mean that instead of the curvaceous blonde strutting round the ring during the intervals holding a placard announcing the next round, they were substituted by curvaceous Thai labourers dressed up as goddesses with intoxicating make-up. I could see some of the woman-deprived spectators virtually drooling. Not a pleasant sight for a Scottish Presbyterian.

After the introduction of my parents to the Japanese management, father turned and strode quickly to a

'hoopla' stall and asked if he could play, holding out some money. The young Japanese engineer looking after the stall took the money and enthusiastically invited him to try his luck.

Dad picked up the hoops and proceeded to ring one bottle of whisky, then another - all the good bottles had been placed at the front to ensure the consultant's staff got their due rewards (corruption - never heard of it!). While my Dad was enjoying himself, I turned to see that the young Japanese was scanning the money, with a puzzled look on his face. Dad finished his game and turned to the young Japanese, asking him in his best West of Scotland voice:

"Do you have a problem?" happily failing to append an affectionate, "Jimmy" or even worse "son".



Copies of the Japanese notes left by my Dad after his death.

The young Japanese turned to me, offering the money.

"Dow, San, I no know what this is."

Taking the money, I discovered that they were notes issued by the Japanese occupational forces in Malaya in 1942-45. The Japanese, being honourable people, had paid the prisoners who had built the Burma railway - at least the few that had survived. My father had waited 36 years to pay them back. He might hold no grudges, but he never wasted an opportunity for a good laugh, nor did he buy a Japanese car or even a Mazda light bulb.

I became very friendly with the Japanese bridge engineers. Later, Kawai San came to me saying that he was a keen collector of coins and paper money. He asked if he could buy the notes my father had so willingly used to pay for his hoopla success. I asked my dad. The reply was no surprise.

"Of course, he can have them, but with no charge". They had earned their escape from the long sojourn in my dad's wallet.

Kawai San was a real gentleman. Pity he had me as his counterpart in the supervision team. I could see that the Japanese system of management was changing. The patronage that had ensured employees worked their life with one company was ending. Many engineers looked to find better opportunities through transferring to other companies.

After the war, many Japanese companies had transformed themselves into American-styled corporations, discarding the earlier title of Gumi - a term synonymous with organised crime gangs. However, such a transformation could not support the cardboard institution of family that had been traditionally maintained and accepted by the Japanese workforce. Times were changing and at a pace many could not have envisaged. I made a lot of good friends with the Japanese in Iraq and went on to make more when I supervised another Japanese contractor on the second crossing between Malaysia and Singapore.

My Dad was right, as was the Bard. It's not the ordinary man that is the problem. It's the pompous, megalomaniac rulers that 'strut an stare, an aw that'. They are the ones who give us the problems. Sad to say, my parents were unable to visit us in Malaysia, having passed away a few years before. It would have been nice to walk around Singapore seeing what was left of the old places before they were pushed aside for the new, modern city. But then that's a story for another time."

**James Sneddon Dow**

Email: jamesssdow@yahoo.co.uk



*COFEPOW is delighted to reproduce a slightly abridged version of Caroline Repton's story of a trip to Thailand, and her report on the help given to her by the TBRC during the tour. Part II will appear in the April edition of COFEPOW Quarterly...*

# Riding the Death Railway

## Caroline's 2-part story of how TBRC assisted her on Thai trip

about our Dad, then known as Sergeant Chris Repton. We knew some dates and place names from a letter Dad wrote to fellow ex-POW, Jack Shuttle in 1997, but we



"When my sister Angela suggested a trip to the 'Death Railway' to follow our father's footsteps during WWII, I agreed, not knowing what we would find. We flew to Bangkok on 29th October, at the tail end of the rainy season, and then had a 3-hour minivan drive west to Kanchanaburi. My husband Chris and I, and Angela and her husband Andrew, who'd joined us from Sydney, admired the mountainous, lush countryside, after passing Nakhon Pathom to enter Kanchanaburi province. We drove straight to the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre (TBRC) in Kanchanaburi City and were greeted like long-lost friends by General Manager, Terry Manttan.

learned some fascinating new information from Terry. The TBRC has researched the war records of over 120,000 servicemen in this area during WWII, and their work continues. Terry confirmed that they are now going through Singaporean and Japanese hospital records.

"Terry's father, Jack, was an 18-year-old sailor in the Australian navy when captured after his ship was sunk off Java. Jack was then shipped to Burma to work on the Thai/Burma railway in October 1942 and returned to Australia after the war, but sadly died from the after-effects of his ordeal, aged 25, when Terry was six months old. After a career in business in Australia, Terry joined the TBRC in 2005, two years after the museum was founded by Rod Beattie MBE. Rod, an engineer from an Australian military family, spent over 20 years living in Thailand, uncovering the abandoned parts of the railway and former POW campsites, collating survivors' stories, mapping the railway and researching personal records and archives. He worked for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, then opened the TBRC opposite Kanchanaburi war cemetery.



"The museum is an informative and moving tribute to the Allied POWs and Asian civilians (called 'Romusha') who laboured on the railway. Terry debriefed us



The museum welcomes visitors from all over the world, whether or not they're related to former POWs.

"After their defeat at the Battle of Midway in June 1942, the Japanese military decided to build a railway from Nong Pladuk in Thailand to Thanbyuzayat in

Burma, to transport supplies to



their army which was fighting the Allies in Burma, thus avoiding the sea route via the Straits of Malacca, where their ships were being bombed. The British had attempted to build a railway linking Burma and Thailand in 1910, but abandoned the project two years later, due to difficult terrain, endemic diseases and heavy monsoon rainfall. We knew Dad was captured at the Fall of Singapore, after retreating under enemy bombardment from Kota Bharu to Singapore with his brigade, and that he'd *Continued overleaf...*





(Cont'd....) then had a gruelling 4-day journey to Thailand in a cargo train in November 1942, to work on the railway. We'd heard he'd caught dysentery and assumed he was unable to work during the so-called 'speedo' or non-stop work period, which coincided with the rainy season of 1943.

"Terry told us that Dad was with Lieutenant-Colonel G.E. Swinton's men in Thailand, and had travelled to Thailand with 'Letter Party N'. On arrival on 8th November 1942 at Ban Pong, he was allocated to Japanese Work Group 2, and sent to Chungkai, the group's Base Camp. From there he went to Wang Lan (Win Lung); then to Tha Kilen in February-March 1943, and then worked in Wang Pho South. Dad wrote that he "must have been there during April '43".

"Jack Shuttle, who was also in Group 2, describes Wang Pho South in his memoir 'Destination Kwai'.

"The cliff, which projected out over the river, was a major obstacle to the direction of the line." The rock had to be blasted away from the top to create a ledge. "A viaduct would then have to be built close into the face, taking the track



around the sharp bend for a distance of a quarter mile. It was a colossal job...."

"He saw thousands of men, "like a colony of ants as they toiled away

silhouetted against the sky-line. High up on the cliff, pairs of men drilled holes one metre deep, one wielding a sledgehammer while his mate held the steel drill (not electric)."

"This went on all day until evening when the engineers dynamited the holes. Group 2 were on the other side of the river, sawing huge tree trunks for erection as the main viaduct supports.

"Elephants then dragged the timbers on a sled to the river, where they floated across to the site. Group 2 were not doing cliff cutting nor the most hazardous task, building the viaduct. After a week of sawing, Jack's hands were blistered, so he was relieved to join a sapling gathering party. "The rains started early that year..."

"Incredibly, the viaduct was completed in just 17 days. However, as a result of the rushed build, when the first train travelled over the bridge, it fell into the river, killing those on board. Similarly, at Hintok, a 27-metre-high trestle bridge was called the 'Pack of Cards Bridge' by the POWs, as it collapsed three times during construction. Terry advised that the railway was not finished until December 1943, although the Japanese officially opened it in October, and commented:

"Trains were falling off the tracks. They put in the golden spike while trains were still falling off all over the place. They brought the Thai railway minister to the opening ceremony and he was killed in an accident." Terry also told us Dad was moved to Tha Sao and from there endured a 10-day forced march up to Tha Khanun, where he was hospitalised soon after arrival from May, until August 1943, suffering from diphtheria. He added that Dad had started with a serious illness, diphtheria, and so his health was depleted. Dad wrote that he was hospitalised with suspected cholera, but it turned out to be amoebic dysentery. Army records show he then contracted

dysentery, so remained in the hospital bay in Tha Khanun until October 1943. Terry also told us the men had to walk 100 km in 10 days. With typical understatement, Dad wrote:

"We had a series of day marches up to Tarkanun, with a brief stopover at Tarsi", not giving a clue about how arduous the march was. April is the hottest month and they started walking in May, when it would have been 35-40 degrees C, and 32 at night.

"Earlier, we'd driven further north to Konyu Cutting, dubbed 'Hellfire Pass' by Aussie POWs, due to the hellish scene of emaciated prisoners toiling by firelight at night. There a deep canyon was carved out of a limestone escarpment by POWs in two-man teams, using only hand tools - the 'hammer and tap' method - with dynamite. They carried the blasted rock in sacks on poles between their shoulders.



"We returned the next day to do a 1½ hour memorial walk. It was sunny and peaceful, with breath-taking views over the valley. One can still see the odd sleeper embedded in the ground, with a few twisted iron nails and man-made drill holes in the rock. Among the memorial plaques is one commemorating Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop OBE (1907-1993) whose ashes are scattered here. We emerged at Hintok with our shoes covered in red, sticky mud...."

**Caroline Repton**  
[www.tbrconline.com](http://www.tbrconline.com)

Photographs: **Page 1** - top left: Angela, Caroline and Chris at Wang Pho lookout. Bottom left: Riding the 'Death Railway'.

Top right: Wang Pho viaduct and mountains. Bottom right: Group photo with Terry at TBRC.

**Page 2** - top left: Weary Dunlop plaque. Bottom left: Hellfire Pass canyon.

Top right: Chris and Caroline on the track.

**TO BE CONTINUED IN APRIL ....**



# Synopsis of performance

The table below is a summary of the accounts of COFEPOW for the year 2021-2022.

The principal financial data from the year-end Management Accounts which appeared within the AGM report in October's edition of COFEPOW Quarterly, has now been encapsulated into chart form for ease of reading for members.

Two distinctive features stand out in the Accounts. Firstly, the £8229.00 loss shown in the 2022 investment income is as a direct result of the revaluation of the assets held within the managed portfolio, which acts on behalf of the charity to return revenue from retained assets carried forward from previous years. The investment company carried out a reassessment of those assets at the end of the year, which showed a small loss in value as a result of market fluctuations and geo-political influences. This is commensurate with the normal performance of stocks and shares in which COFEPOW funds are invested, and is not a cause for concern.

The second distinctive element of the Accounts is the large increase in donations received. This is attributed to very generous and uncommon individual bequests from members who have passed away during the year.

On a general note, it can be seen that membership income has reduced during the year, which is largely thought to be attributed to the changeover from manual to digital systems introduced to make the membership process simpler and more accurate. This reduction is seen as temporary, but it must also be taken into account that former FEPOWs as members are now very low in numbers, through the passing of time. The trustees are embarking on measures to attempt to increase the recruitment of new members and retain those who have joined the charity previously and may now have lapsed.

In the overhead, significant savings have been seen during the year, as the maintenance of the FEPOW Memorial Building no longer includes the cost of recreating and manufacturing the Globe feature within the museum display, the final costs having been settled in the previous year.

It is also thought that the lingering effects of the Covid pandemic are still impacting on revenue, with reduced visitor numbers to both Memorials and Services around the country and, although still proving to be very popular, attendance to organised reunion weekends has also reduced marginally.

In conclusion, the trustees of COFEPOW are satisfied that the performance of the charity is in line with its original aims and objectives, and is in a sound financial position to continue its activities. The charity has already begun its work towards commemorating the 80th anniversary of VJ-Day in August 2025, details of which will be made available in coming issues and on the website at [www.cofepow.org.uk](http://www.cofepow.org.uk)

## Profit and loss account £

Income	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Donations	3,363	8,018	1,349	3,567	95,201
Membership fees	19,330	19,417	19,317	28,251	12,932
Merchandise/Book sales	1,717	3,815	11,130	3,063	4,577
Investment income	7,649	3,537	1,341	13,226	(8,229*)
Memorial weekends	-	-	4,519	5,328	944
Gift Aid	343	395	425	640	800
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,402</b>	<b>35,182</b>	<b>38,081</b>	<b>54,075</b>	<b>106,225</b>

## Profit and loss account £

Expenditure	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Cost of merchandise	1,414	783	4,947	569	120
Newsletter printing	3,765	246	0	5,613	1,735
Memorial events/weekend	2,240	2,115	570	8,668	2,325
Wreaths/poppies	46	237	73	220	205
Burma railway	-	-	-	10,205	-
Sundry expenses	57	410	-	320	-
AGM/Room hire	1,840	1,810	-	3,756	3,410
FEPOW Building maintenance	1,521	2,295	10,867	16,086	-
Postage and Stationery	3,175	2,911	8,538	2,543	3,277
NMA	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Software licences/website	12,906	4,220	5,340	5,474	5,027
Bank charges	-	-	-	30	-
Committee meetings	158	246	-	128	57
Accountancy	400	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,522</b>	<b>18,273</b>	<b>33,335</b>	<b>51,512</b>	<b>19,156</b>

## Operating Surplus/(Asset reduction) £

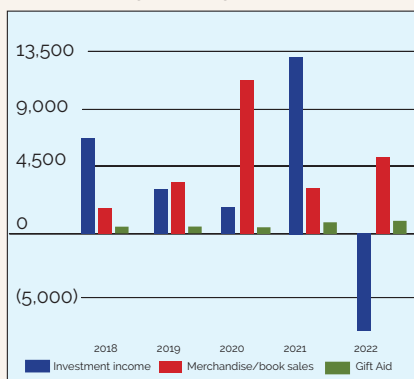
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Surplus/(Asset reduction)	1,880	16,909	4,746	2,563	87,069

## Balance Sheet £

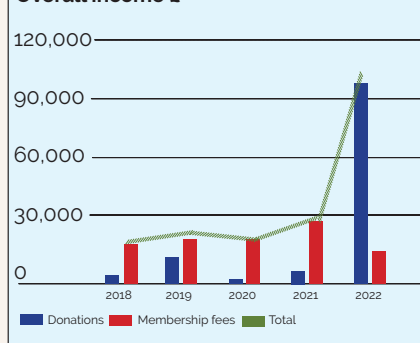
Total Net Assets £	Assets £	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
2018	305,000					
2019	295,000					
2020	285,000					
2021	275,000					
2022	265,000					
	255,000					
	245,000					
	235,000					
	225,000					
	215,000					
	205,000					
	195,000					
	185,000					
	175,000					

\* Revaluation of investment fund in which assets held.

## Activities for generating funds £



## Overall income £





# The challenges now facing the charity...

## 25 years since the foundation of COFEPOW, the trustees must reconsider the future

A quarter of a century ago, when the 'Children of Far-East POWs' charity was formed, many thousands of former FEPOWs were still alive and prospering. Their children, too, were generally middle-aged and acutely aware of their forbears' experiences during the war. Inevitably, however, as time has moved on, the majority of FEPOWs have now passed out of living memory. As a consequence, their memory, albeit slowly, has begun to have less of an imperative.

Add this fundamental event to modern day influences, such as the cost of living crisis, the ageing of 'children' members, the difficulties of travelling to memorial services, the impact of covid, and the teething troubles following the introduction of a digital membership application and retention system still in its infancy, and the number of members of the charity has begun to decline. Similarly, the original manual system of membership fee submission was very often accompanied by additional donations given at the time of joining. These have almost disappeared as the new facility does not encourage their inclusion.

As a result and projecting into the future, it is plain to see that if the membership continues to decline, the charity will not be able to meet its original commitment to maintain the FEPOW Memorial Building and Grove at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA). More money is constantly needed for maintenance and improvement to the FEPOW Building and other FEPOW memorials at the NMA. These are becoming increasingly difficult to afford, but must be met to sustain our charity into the future. We have reserves, as can be seen in the financial synopsis on the previous page, but the cost of maintenance and insurance is rising, and will continue to do so into the future.

Whatever the cause of the



decline in membership fees and donations, it is incumbent on the trustees to develop new methods of raising funds to perpetuate the charity's work. This means that we must enter into a renewed revenue-raising drive, developing new routes to encourage donations from existing, new and potential future members and the general public alike.

We would ask that members using the online tool to renew, extend their generosity and continue to provide additional donations over and above their renewal fee, by making a bank transfer or posting a cheque, for however small the amount, to the address shown on the back page of this newsletter.

As income from the sale of merchandise has also been modest for the last few years, we would encourage you to purchase a small memento of your support (see the merchandise page in this newsletter).

Indeed, if you have any thoughts on merchandising - which items would you like to see us sell or additional items that you think would help raise money if included in the range - please let us know. We have not raised the subscription fees for many years, and would prefer not to do so. We have to ask how would an increase be received?

There is also a concern that the current trustee group is getting older and some will retire within the next few years. Inevitably, therefore, we will need new people to take up the mantle of trusteeship in the future. Having undergone several changes within the trustee board in recent years, we still need to encourage new trustees to help take the charity beyond 2025.

The 80th anniversary of VJ-Day arrives next year, which may be one of the last commemorative services the charity can underwrite, unless we can increase our income.

The current trustees are now



hard at work as part of their voluntary commitment to the charity, to conceive and expand ways and improve existing means of enlarging the charity. To help address the issues we face, we would be delighted to be contacted by members who read this newsletter and wish to contribute constructive suggestions. Whilst we are looking at more promotional activity on social media to raise awareness of the charity and what we do, if you feel encouraged to help in this respect, please feel free to let us know.

Other changes we are considering include modifying the annual weekend event to Torquay. Currently, it is run at a neutral cost, where merchandise is sold and money is raised for the FEPOW Building from the raffle. A question we ask ourselves is should this become more of a fund-raising event in the future, or should we have another event which would make money for us? Would members also be interested in events and trips further afield?

These are just a few of the immediate steps under review and in the inbox of every trustee and officer of COFEPOW. We see this initiative as a renewed commitment to maintaining the work of the charity and confirming the finance base to meet the charity's objectives, which are as important today as they were 25 years ago. Whilst there are few surviving FEPOWs as we go into this new year, nevertheless the charity's purpose is to ensure they are not forgotten and that the public is educated to understand their suffering and ensure it is never repeated.

Change will be gradual, of course, but essential, and so we hope you can be inspired to participate in the work and fund-raising of the charity. Please be assured that whatever contribution you make to COFEPOW, large or small, financial or, even better, with an idea or two you might have from your professional life that might be a valued contribution to our debate on ways forward, please contact David Brede, COFEPOW Chair at [cofepow.chairman@gmail.com](mailto:cofepow.chairman@gmail.com). Thank you.

**David Brede**

*On behalf of the trustees and officers of COFEPOW.*



## Would you like to start organising COFEPOW events in your area?

As well as the large national events that are and will be organised by Chris Wills, the National Events Co-ordinator, several local meetings, functions, talks and trips are initiated and managed by our many Area Co-ordinators, listed by region on the back page of this newsletter.

If you would like to help by arranging events in your part of the country, which are not covered in the existing list, please visit the COFEPOW website at: <https://www.cofepow.org.uk/cofepow-events> and fill in the form, giving us as much information as you can which you think is relevant to taking on one of the posts. We'll bring you up to speed on the things you can do to help local members and provide as much material, information on venues and the types of small events other Area Co-ordinators manage across the country.

The voluntary work of the Area Co-ordinators is now being reviewed and, as a result of the Chair's article on the previous page, and the need to initiate additional fund-raising schemes, the trustees of COFEPOW would like to invite all co-ordinators to submit any thoughts, enterprises, drives, meetings or personal approaches, so as to be part of a forum. These contributions can then be exchanged and discussed across the area co-ordination network by email, so that those in more difficult areas of the country and overseas can benefit from others' know-how and successes. Please email David Brede with your submissions at: [cofepow.chairman@gmail.com](mailto:cofepow.chairman@gmail.com)

## Greater Manchester and/or East Cheshire Co-ordinator required

As a result of a recent retirement, COFEPOW needs to recruit a new volunteer! Please see page 20 and the back page of this issue for details of the excellent work of our many Area Co-ordinators. If you would specifically like to help in the north west of England, either across the whole region, or just a small local area, please contact COFEPOW Chair, David Brede at [cofepow.chairman@gmail.com](mailto:cofepow.chairman@gmail.com) and he will outline what's involved.

## John energises bringing local Derbyshire members together



*John Rutherford, Area Co-ordinator for the Derbyshire and Derby City branch of COFEPOW, has been beaver away at getting a local Derbyshire group off the ground, simply by contacting people who are listed as new members in the newsletter over the past 5 years.*

*His efforts came to fruition as they had their first meeting in December and will be meeting again in the Erewash Museum, Ilkeston in March.*

*John takes up the story...*

"I hope this article in the newsletter, reporting on our first meeting and our plans for the future, will attract more Derbyshire members to attend the next meet. There are many local members, but they are not known to me because they are not recent joiners. So I took it upon myself to trawl the COFEPOW Quarterly newsletters and the website and I am excited to report that we as a group, had our first meeting in the delightful Book Café in Belper on the 5th December, 2023.

"It arose from an informal meeting between myself, as Area Co-ordinator, and COFEPOW member Vicki Allison, who wanted to learn more about our organisation and how she could find out about her father's FEPOW experience. It was such a lovely and informative meeting for both of us that we agreed there should be more opportunities like this, open to all COFEPOW members in our region.

"So, we set about contacting as many local members as we could, finding their details from the new members' lists in COFEPOW newsletters going back as far as we could. We quickly gained another four members keen to help us establish our regional branch; Keith Oseman, Ian Bailey, Donna Dakin and her father, Richard James.

"In our first meeting, we soon broke the ice and got chatting like old

friends. Keith beautifully demonstrated the benefits of a local group by sharing with us his research into the letters of Mrs Hope Robinson who lived in Ilkeston. These were the 2200 letters she received from loved ones of FEPOW after she published a pamphlet setting out what she knew about conditions for POWs.

"She got her information from two POWs who returned home in November 1944, having been rescued when their Japanese 'Hell Ship' was torpedoed by an American submarine. We learned so much from Keith about this very significant local story. It prompted a considerable sharing of knowledge from all members about the horrible FEPOW experience for the families back home and the difficult times they faced when their loved ones returned and struggled to re-adjust to family life.

"In the course of the conversation, we also learned a lot from each other about where we might find more information about our family members' time as FEPOW. We all left with a list of books to read, places to visit and websites to search.

"One particularly interesting source was the FEPOW mementoes we might have found and kept. For example, Ian showed us a photograph of a handkerchief signed by a number of FEPOWs, including his father. This was one of the many handkerchiefs that were part of an airborne aid drop over the Kaorin POW camp prior to liberation. POWs hastily wrote and drew on them, before leaving, to remind them of their time as prisoners.

"We really felt that we got off to a great start as a regional group with lots of very interesting sharing of information in a very friendly context. I'm sure there's much more we can do to enhance local members' experience of COFEPOW and we would love more people from the region to get involved. This obviously includes those whose names we didn't manage to find in recent newsletters.

"Our next meeting will be in March 2024 in Ilkeston. The exact date and venue are yet to be decided, but if you are interested in joining the group or attending our second meeting, and you'd like to receive more information about our activities, please contact me on email: [joruth27@gmail.com](mailto:joruth27@gmail.com) or telephone: 07454 121447."

**John Rutherford**  
Area Co-ordinator, Derbyshire.





## David complements 'Letters of Hope' play with introduction to FEPOW story

*COFEPOW Chair, David Brede, reports on his invitation to a Derbyshire theatre to see the Hope Robinson drama...*

"One of the amazing things that happen to you as Chair of this organisation, is how you can be blown away by something that is quite unexpected.

"On Monday the 27th November, I attended the 'Letters of Hope' play being performed at the Duchess Theatre in Long Eaton, Derbyshire. My role in the play was to present a short introduction about the COFEPOW charity and to give a concise history of the FEPOWs and what they endured, without giving away the plot of the play. The advantage of this was that prior to this play, we did not have a slide presentation about the charity. Now we have one for future events.

"The presentation was well-received by the audience and following a short interval, the play commenced.

"The story of Hope Robinson is well-known within FEPOW circles and describes how Mrs Robinson's husband had been captured at Singapore. With little communication from authorities, she was naturally concerned about his welfare, especially in view of limited broadcast and media news items at the time.

"In due course, she met two FEPOWs who had escaped from captivity in the Far-East. The description of events in the war they gave, left her with a slightly clearer impression of how life in captivity was for the men held as POWs by the Japanese.

"As a result, she wrote letters to national newspapers, consequently receiving a tremendous response from

other wives and the general public.

"Whilst I watched the play, I was fascinated to see that Palang Productions had managed to encapsulate the story into around 30 minutes and so full credit to them, particularly Lily Taylor-Ward, Vicki Whittaker-Stokes and Angie Pollard, who performed the main roles. Credit should also be given to Keith Oseman who carried out the research, Janet Buxton who adapted the story for the stage and Johnny Sheehan, who assisted in so many ways and gave an initial introduction to the event.

"Stage performances are generally inspirational in bringing history to life and especially so with the subject matter being as meaningful as it was. It will be encouraging if this play is seen more widely and helps to inspire the development of other similar productions.

"After the event, it was lovely to meet the cast and get some sense of how they reacted to the subject matter performing the play, whilst also chatting to members of the audience afterwards for their thoughts.

"It was great to meet Andrew Nicklin, an attendee, who is quite unusual in that both his father and grandfather were held as FEPOWs on the Thai/Burma Railway.

"Perhaps more surprisingly was discovering that he is a music composer and has adapted the Kohima Epitaph and FEPOW prayer! How amazing is that and how good it would be for this to be sung at the VJ-80 event next year?"

**David Brede**  
**COFEPOW Chair.**



## The website at work...

To show how the new interactive website is working and how useful it can be to members seeking information about FEPOWs, Gail Johnson has given permission to reproduce her recent experience with the system.

Below is an exact copy of the system structure when you make an enquiry as a member and Gail's comments!

**Taken from the website enquiry facility....**

**You just got a form submission!**

**Form**

Contact Form

**Site**

cofepow

**Submitted content**

**Name (Contact Form):** Gail Johnson

**Telephone (Contact Form):** 000000000

**Email (Contact Form):** gail@archit.co.uk

**Message (Contact Form):**

'Dear all, the most extraordinary thing has just happened. I signed up to your site as my father was a "guest of the Japanese". And I found his form, which your wonderful researchers must have photocopied from Kew. Not only that but filled in, in his own handwriting. Such a fabulous moment. He made it sound like he was in Changi for a few weeks. Actually it was 9 months. I'm wittering on. Apologies. But please thank everyone for all their hard work. It's really appreciated.'

Gail Johnson.

**Number of submissions received**

00/0000 this month

October 8th – November 7th

*The editors of COFEPOW Quarterly wish to clarify that the opinions, stories, features and information reproduced in this newsletter are generally submitted by contributors and do not reflect or otherwise, the opinions of the trustees of the charity.*

*Whilst every effort is made to verify factual accuracy and content of material published, the trustees accept no responsibility for errors or beliefs printed here.*





## How to get involved in the work of COFEPOW

Since the foundation of COFEPOW in 1997 by Carol Cooper, unswerving efforts have been made by the charity's volunteer trustees, officers and members, to help build this remarkable association of families and friends: in doing so, the charity continues to fulfil its original aim of ensuring those servicemen, women and civilian internees who were incarcerated by brutal military forces of Imperial Japan in the Far-East during WWII - both those who suffered and died there and those who returned to the corners of the Commonwealth to continue sometimes difficult lives - are forever honoured and remembered.

The work entailed in generating funds to help pay for the maintenance of the FEPOW Memorial Building at the NMA is significant. The site requires constant rejuvenation, and annual costs run to many thousands of pounds. On top of this, there remains the need to generate additional monies to pay for other Memorials and Services of Remembrance around the country, at various times of the year.

The current trustees would like to ask for your help. Is anything happening in your area relating to FEPOWs? Do you have an interesting story about your FEPOW? We would love to include them in COFEPOW Quarterly. Also, if you think there's anything you can do to assist in organising local meetings of members, maintaining in-situ memorials, establishing community groups, dinners, lectures and memory-sharing, amongst others, even down to sparing a couple of hours on Sundays to act as a guide to the many visitors who arrive at the FEPOW Building each year, then please contact Chris Wills by phone **0121 244 7263** or by email at: **chriswills5071@gmail.com.co.uk**.

Solid training, support and encouragement will be given and although all work of the charity is unpaid, there is a tremendous sense of satisfaction to be gained in knowing that your work will honour the memory of your family FEPOW.



## Liverpool's FEPOW memorial reaches funding target

### Successful funding appeal



### Repatriation Memorial will now be replaced

Meg Parkes, of the Researching Far East Prisoner of War (FEPOW) History Group, (RFHG) at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, is delighted to announce that the appeal for donations towards the cost of replacing the badly weather-worn FEPOW and Civilian Internee Repatriation Memorial on Liverpool's Pier Head has reached its target.

Working in partnership with COFEPOW, MVG, Birmingham FEPOW Association, Java Club, NFFWRA - all FEPOW groups in the UK which represent the descendants of FEPOWs and internees held captive under the Japanese during WWII - the target of £6500 has now been donated.

The RFHG established the memorial in Liverpool after a national fundraising campaign in 2010-11. (two years later a similar memorial was unveiled in Southampton).

Over time, rain and seawater spray has caused irreversible staining and discolouration to the stone. The black lettering has degraded and is now difficult to read.

The RFHG will now replace the memorial with a bronze plaque bearing the same inscription and ships' lists as the original.

On behalf of the fundraising appeal, Meg Parkes has sent a message of thanks to all concerned:

"I'm delighted to inform you that within the first four weeks of the appeal we have reached our additional target of £2,000, having already raised £4,500.

"In addition to a number of individual donations (by cheque), amounting to just under £400, we also received three individual offers of £1,000 and one of £2,000. We asked these four donors to wait a few weeks to give others the chance to make donations.

"We have contacted each of these donors to ask if they would be willing to split the balance between them. If this is acceptable we will close the online appeal shortly and confirm with you all that this has happened.

"A big thank you to all those that have supported the appeal. Should we receive any further donations, we will suggest that they consider instead donating to the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine's LSTM125 Campaign, marking the 125th anniversary of its foundation, (see <https://www.lstmed.ac.uk/125-campaign-0>).

"These donations to LSTM125 Campaign would be in recognition of the contribution LSTM has made over almost 80 years to the health and welfare of FEPOWs, and latterly supporting descendants and academic researchers attending the RFHG history conferences.

"The company making the bronze plaque have confirmed that their quote stands and we shall place the order without delay. I'm in discussions with Liverpool City Council about arrangements for the removal of the old one prior to installation of the new.

"We will be in touch with you all to discuss plans for a service of dedication and unveiling of the plaque early in the year. Thank you and your members for your donations.

"Please contact me if you have questions.

With thanks and best wishes."

Meg



# COFEPOW to trial new advertising spaces



The trustees have launched a new initiative via the COFEPOW Quarterly newsletter, offering advertising space in the magazine to members. The newsletter, which is sent out to all members every three months and has a circulation of around 1500 families, will offer a very traditional advertising service, based on small print ads for such items as members' flats, caravans or houses for holiday rentals; hotels which often provide accommodation for COFEPOW gatherings and events; discounts on special relevant services or attractions; even perhaps memorabilia or small artefacts linked to the charity. New books which are submitted would remain individually featured at launch and would not incur a charge.

## Cottage to let South Cornwall

July 1st to July 14th 2024

As long-standing members we wish to rent out our beautiful two bedroom cottage in Looe this summer. Beautiful location, all facilities, parking and free wi-fi. Call Mary on 01234 567891 or email [mary@maryllooe.co.uk](mailto:mary@maryllooe.co.uk)

*Sample 5cm x 1 column display, which would cost £10 per quarter, or £36 per year.*

As the pressure increases on the charity to raise ever more funds and find new options to increase revenue, new routes to generating that additional income have to be found. Currently the charity is financed entirely by membership fees and donations.

As with many similar newsletters to ours, we feel that there is scope to provide members with the facility to place



## MINIBUS AND DRIVER FOR HIRE FOR SMALL GROUPS - DISCOUNTS FOR CHARITIES

12-seater luxury minibus available for hire at John's Coaches. Established 2006, numerous referrals and testimonials. Advanced Test Driver, all comforts on board, available for daily or multi day rental, within 50 mile radius of Lichfield.

Disabled facilities and can collect.

Call John on 01234 567891 or email [john@johnbushire.co.uk](mailto:john@johnbushire.co.uk)

*Sample 10cm x 1 column display which would cost £20 per quarter, or £72 per year.*

small advertisements in the newsletter for a small fee, dependent on the size of the space taken to promote the item/ service. This will be no more than 10cm deep by 1 column wide as a maximum, 5cm x 1 column or, as a minimum, with lineage (as in general classified ads). As the organisation lacks the size and sophistication to produce a Rate Card, we would invoice members at the time of booking and submission of copy, to be cleared and paid prior to the appearance of the ad. Payment initially can be made to the editorial team, at this stage via a cheque made out to 'COFEPOW'.

So, for example, a 5cm x 1 column ad. (a column is 58 mm wide) would be charged at £10, a 10cm x 1 col at £20 and a classified (depending on the amount of space required) at £1 a line, run over one column.

The ads would appear at random throughout the newsletter, unless demand necessitated a page or so to be devoted to the facility at a later date.

Naturally, all content will be at the discretion of the editorial team and must comply with all ASA regulations and Trade Description Act measures.

Artwork may be supplied finished to the advertiser's specification as a reproduction quality Word document, eps or pdf, or the editorial team will convert your written copy into a standard ad., suitable for publication. All ads must include the advertiser's contact details. If you would like to consider placing a small promotional message for whatever service you feel would be relevant to the charity and would help other members, please contact the editorial team at [chriswills5071@gmail.com](mailto:chriswills5071@gmail.com) or [sriley.beeches@btinternet.com](mailto:sriley.beeches@btinternet.com) before the April 1st 2024 issue deadline of March 1st 2024. All ads booked and placed will run for a minimum of one quarter and can be repeated multiple times for a fee equivalent to the original booking fee per quarter over how many quarters it appears, less 10%.

Happy selling!

**Cottage to let South Cornwall - July 1st to July 14th 2024. Two bedrooms, all facilities, located near Looe.** Call Mary on 01234 567891 or email [mary@maryllooe.co.uk](mailto:mary@maryllooe.co.uk)

*Sample classified x 1 column advertisement which would cost £5 per quarter, or £18 per year. The size of these would be limited to a maximum 20mm depth and will be less if copy supplied is shorter.*



## Invitation to submit material for Album Pages

Many members may recollect the problems experienced by the trustees a little while ago with regard to the FEPOW Album Pages, problems which have now happily been resolved.

This comprehensive collection of individual facts about each FEPOW's incarceration and service is written by their immediate relative, collated by COFEPOW and, once having obtained the appropriate permission from the family, is now recorded on the COFEPOW website. This will help keep the memory of our FEPOWs alive and ensure they will never be forgotten again. You can view the link on <https://www.cofepow.org.uk/fepow-photo-album>

Chris Wills would like to remind members that anyone who contributed previously whose father/uncle/brother is not there and would like them to be included again, or those new to COFEPOW who would like a page produced for their FEPOW relative, to contact her at [chriswills5071@gmail.com](mailto:chriswills5071@gmail.com)



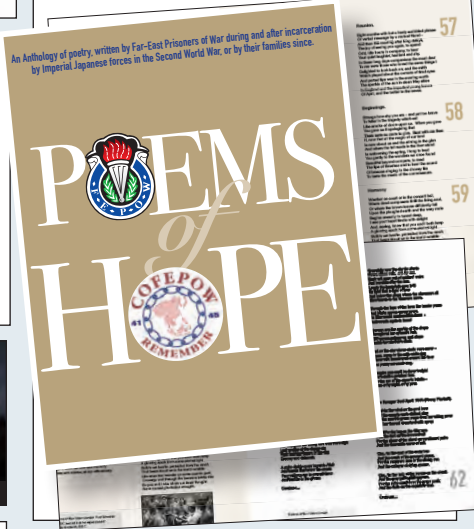
# Perfect gifts and fitting mementoes

A comprehensive selection of quality COFEPOW branded merchandise, priced competitively to help the charity.

1. Blue pen with logo



2. 'Poems of Hope' - an anthology of over 80 poems written by FEPOWs both whilst in POW camps or once home, or by family members since.



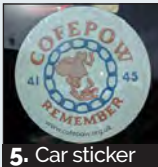
3. 30mm diameter 75th anniversary of VJ Day commemorative enamel pin badge in blue velvet presentation box.



4. VJ70 mug



5. Car sticker



6. Tie clip



7. Lapel badge



8. Badge



9. Badge



11. Trolley coin



10. Key ring



14. Cloth shopping bag 37cm (14½") x 47cm (16")



12. VJ70 Medallion



13. Tie



16. Polo Shirt



16. Polo Shirt



17. Range of books at COFEPOW prices!



15. Notelets



The range of COFEPOW branded merchandise is shown alongside. Through your generosity, a substantial quantity of this merchandise is being sold every year to help COFEPOW funds.

Merchandising Officers, Sylvie and Nick Bullen-Bell, would like to thank all members who have purchased COFEPOW merchandise, to wear or use with pride, and to all those who have made additional donations to the charity (however big or small), when merchandise purchases are made through the year.

Details of ordering/payment methods for all items, including Paypal and overseas postage costs, can be obtained by emailing Nick or Sylvie at: [tickles.sbb@gmail.com](mailto:tickles.sbb@gmail.com), or telephone 01245 222 604/mobile 07721 067501.

Information is also available on the COFEPOW website at [www.cofepow.org.uk](http://www.cofepow.org.uk)

For general information, or if you would like to submit ideas for merchandise which we are always happy to receive, please also email us.

Items shown are not to scale.

## Revised merchandise price list

ITEM		Price	P&P
1.	Blue pen with logo and website	£1.00	£1.55
2.	FEPOW Poetry Anthology book	£11.99	£3.49
3.	Special VJ Day 75 pin badge	£4.00	£3.49
4.	VJ 70 Mugs	£8.50	£3.49
5.	Car Sticker	£1.00	£0.75
6.	Tie clip	£3.00	£1.55
7.	Lapel Pin Badge	£2.00	£1.55
8.	Woven COFEPOW Badge	£3.50	£0.75
9.	Poppy Woven Badge	£2.50	£0.75
10.	Key ring, fob	£3.50	£1.55
11.	Trolley coin	£3.25	£1.55
12.	VJ70 Medallion	£7.50	£3.49
13.	Tie	£12.99	£1.55
14.	Cloth Shopping bag 14.5" x 16"	£2.50	£1.55
15.	Pack of 10 Notelets, inc. envelopes	£2.50	£1.55
16.	Unisex Polo shirts (B/W) M, L, XL.	£16.00	£3.49
17.	<b>BOOKS - Title</b>	<b>List Price</b>	<b>COFEPOW</b>
	'Conjurer on the Kwai'	£9.99	£3.50
	'Surviving the Japanese Onslaught'	£19.99	£6.50
	'Escape from the Japanese'	£19.99	£6.50
	'When You Go Home'	£5.00	£3.49
	'Nagasaki'	£20.00	£3.49
	'In the Shadow of the Rising Sun'	£9.00	£3.49
	'Under the Heel of the Bushido'	£10.00	£3.49
	'Fighting Back'	£10.00	£3.49
	'Unsung Heroes of the RAF'	£10.00	£3.49
	'Unsung Heroes of the British Army'	£10.00	£3.49
	'Unsung Heroes of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines'	£7.50	£3.49

\*P&P in Europe £6.00, elsewhere £10.00.

**New books in the merchandise range include:** 'Nagasaki' by John Willis, 'In the Shadow of the Rising Sun' by Olga Henderson (limited stocks, all signed), 'Under the heel of the Bushido' and 'Fighting Back' both by Martin Sugarman, 'Unsung Heroes of the RAF' by Pam and Les Stubbs, 'Unsung Heroes of the British Army' and 'Unsung Heroes of the Royal Navy/Royal Marines' by Pam Stubbs.



## Submissions invited for second 'Poems of Hope'

In 2019, the trustees of COFEPOW initiated a drive to collate as many poems written by FEPOWs and their families as possible, to create an anthology of poetry. The collection featured over 80 poems, many of which were written during captivity, or were based on recollections or emotions experienced by close family since the war.

A second volume is being assessed for viability and is hoped to contain not only poetry by captives, but also stories, and thoughts or memories of loved ones in poetry form.

Merchandising Officers, Nick and Sylvie Bullen-Bell are asking for contributions of any new or freshly discovered poetry to be included. Any originals will be returned, but in the interests of protecting family heirlooms, they would prefer if rewritten or typed contributions could be submitted.

If you would like to provide any poems, please contact them at the merchandise office by emailing: tickles.sbb@gmail.com, phone 01245 222 604/ mobile 07721 067501.

Information will also be available on the COFEPOW website in due course, at [www.cofepow.org.uk](http://www.cofepow.org.uk)

## The two principal objectives of COFEPOW

### The objectives of the charity are:

B1: To provide and maintain a Memorial in memory of all British Servicemen and civilians who were prisoners of war in South-East Asia under Japanese occupation during World War II.

B2: To advance the education of the public about prisoners of war in South-East Asia whilst under Japanese occupation during World War II from 1941 – 1945.

# New members

NAME	LOCATION	EMAIL
Bernie Ingrams FEPOW - N/A	Coulsden, Surrey	bernie_ingrams@hotmail.com
M. Connor FEPOW - Father	Cheshunt, Hertfordshire Arthur Walter Victor Smith	arthurwaltervictor2@hotmail.com RAOC, held as POW in Japan.
Yvonne Smith FEPOW - Father	Hertford, Hertfordshire Arthur Walter Victor Smith	yvonesmith128@yahoo.co.uk RAOC, held as POW in Japan.
Anthony Wood FEPOW - Father	Houghton-on-the-Hill, Leics Arthur Joseph Hardy	Anthony.wood41@btinternet.com The Royal Army Service Corps

### DATA PROTECTION: please read the following carefully:

COFEPOW only publishes details of new members in this quarterly newsletter. Each new member is given the option on the application form to stipulate that their personal address/telephone/email details are not included in the listing.

If you are happy for your details to be included in the newsletter when you join, your local Area Co-ordinator will also be informed within their region. Each Co-ordinator is conversant with data protection legislation and your details are not shared again. Only officers of the charity will have access to this information going forward and all information is protected in accordance with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation).

Any bylines, credits and contact details within articles and features are included with the originators' approval.

## Donations

On behalf of COFEPOW, thank you for your generosity. Every penny goes towards the maintenance of the FEPOW Memorial Building and Grove at the NMA, and for the upkeep of other FEPOW memorials across the UK.

### Donations made over £100.00

£132 was raised from the raffle on the Saturday evening during the Torquay weekend.

### Donations made up to £20.00

Deborah Byam, Sybil Shaw, Barry Townley, Anthony Rose, Marilyn Leigh, Eileen Weir, Mr & Mrs Ingrams, Gordon Beswick, M. Boswell, Mr & Mrs McLaughlin, H. Langley, L. Whiteside, Mr & Mrs Palmer, A. Penny and L. Peach.

### Donations made above £20.00

Dianne Williams, Mr & Mrs Booth and J. Johnson.

## Donations of artefacts

The COFEPOW charity has accepted and continues to accept relevant donations of POW authored publications, personal artefacts, souvenirs, mementoes and military keepsakes.

Whilst donations of these artefacts are gratefully received, the trustees cannot guarantee that they will be displayed in the FEPOW Memorial Building at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA), as we are unable to change the display cases in the downstairs exhibition area, and, of course, we are limited by space.

Please be assured that the donations of artefacts will be stored safely in the archives (upstairs in the Building) under lock and key, where there are security cameras.



Unfortunately, the space in the archives is also limited and although we are not yet at full capacity, when it is full, we will regrettably have to turn down any further offers of donations.

If you wish to donate an artefact to the charity, please contact either Keith Andrews by email [scubaka@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:scubaka@yahoo.co.uk) or telephone 01530 450621, or Chris Wills by email at [chriswills5071@gmail.com](mailto:chriswills5071@gmail.com) or telephone 0121 244 7263.

# Patrons, trustees, members, officers and officials.

COFEPOW: Children, Families and Friends of the Far East Prisoners of War, incorporating FEPOW. Registered address: 3 Blossom Way, Little Billing, Northampton NN3 9ET. Tel: 07930 960241. email: [cofepow.chairman@gmail.com](mailto:cofepow.chairman@gmail.com) Website: [www.cofepow.org.uk](http://www.cofepow.org.uk) Registered charity, number 1074474.

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M: 07935 312349. Membership fee per annum: **£15** per person, or **£21** per joint membership.

Payments can be made annually in August by cheque, payable to COFEPOW:

please post to: COFEPOW, 14, Ridgcroft, Ashton under Lyne, Greater Manchester OL7 9TG.

Or please visit the COFEPOW website at [www.cofepow.org.uk](http://www.cofepow.org.uk) for easy online payment.

**Donations are also welcome and can be made to the Membership Officer by cheque, payable to COFEPOW, or at the COFEPOW website at [www.cofepow.org.uk](http://www.cofepow.org.uk)**

**The FEPOW Memorial Building Archives at the NMA are open to visitors by arrangement.**

**If you would like access to the material held there, you must be accompanied by a COFEPOW officer. If you would like to visit, on a Sunday preferably, please arrange with Keith Andrews, Research Adviser, on 01530 450621. Thank you.**

**Area Coordinators.** Please note: the list of Area Co-ordinators is provided to facilitate access to a local group for members. The trustees are also anxious to recruit Co-ordinator volunteers for overseas, and for regions in the UK not covered below, particularly in Beds, Bucks, Herts, Staffs, Warwicks, Wilts, West Hants, East Somerset and Yorks., where we enjoy existing groups which no longer have a Co-ordinator. If you have a Co-ordinator near you, they would welcome you making contact, with a view to meeting and sharing knowledge and memories about your FEPOWs.

Area	Name	Email
1. Birmingham and the Black Country	Annette Hughes	<a href="mailto:cranedriver1964@live.com">cranedriver1964@live.com</a>
2. Derbyshire	John Rutherford	<a href="mailto:Joruth27@gmail.com">Joruth27@gmail.com</a>
3. Devon and Cornwall	David and Val Warner	<a href="mailto:davalofcedartree@gmail.com">davalofcedartree@gmail.com</a>
4. Dorset	Ann Whiteside	<a href="mailto:louisewhiteside7426@gmail.com">louisewhiteside7426@gmail.com</a>
5. Essex	Nick Bullen-Bell	<a href="mailto:bullebell@btinternet.com">bullebell@btinternet.com</a>
6. Gloucestershire	Diane Vear	<a href="mailto:dianevear@yahoo.co.uk">dianevear@yahoo.co.uk</a>
7. Greater Manchester and east Cheshire	<i>New vacancy</i>	<i>Please apply to David Brede, Chair.</i>
8. Herefordshire and the Wye Valley	Kerry Bird	<a href="mailto:hanjoem@gmail.com">hanjoem@gmail.com</a>
9. Kent	Brian Faulkner	<a href="mailto:faulkner2021@btinternet.com">faulkner2021@btinternet.com</a>
10. Leicestershire	Shirley Barnes	<a href="mailto:shirleyb60@virginmedia.com">shirleyb60@virginmedia.com</a>
11. Lincolnshire	Hazel Taylor	<a href="mailto:hazel.taylor@yahoo.co.uk">hazel.taylor@yahoo.co.uk</a>
12. Merseyside and Lancashire	Colin Coleman	<a href="mailto:colin.colemanuk@mac.com">colin.colemanuk@mac.com</a>
13. New Zealand	Hilary Cunningham	<a href="mailto:hilarycunningham1@gmail.com">hilarycunningham1@gmail.com</a>
14. Norfolk	Thelma Johnson	<a href="mailto:tjohnson4@btinternet.com">tjohnson4@btinternet.com</a>
15. Northamptonshire	David Brede	<a href="mailto:davidbrede@yahoo.com">davidbrede@yahoo.com</a>
16. Oxfordshire	Mike Clarke	<a href="mailto:mikejclarke27@hotmail.com">mikejclarke27@hotmail.com</a>
17. Scotland	Jackie Sutherland	<a href="mailto:skyscape96@gmail.com">skyscape96@gmail.com</a>
18. South Wales	Tony Jukes	<a href="mailto:bajukes@tiscali.co.uk">bajukes@tiscali.co.uk</a>
19. Surrey	Una Price	<a href="mailto:trryroger@aol.com">trryroger@aol.com</a>
20. West Sussex	Elizabeth Hallett	<a href="mailto:wscfepow@gmail.com">wscfepow@gmail.com</a>
21. Yorkshire	<i>New vacancy</i>	<i>Please apply to David Brede, Chair.</i>
22. USA (East coast)	Jan Slimming	<a href="mailto:jslimming@comcast.net">jslimming@comcast.net</a>
23. USA (West coast)	Sharon Cusumano	<a href="mailto:lestweforget1941@gmail.com">lestweforget1941@gmail.com</a>



## Help and information

While researching personal information, members below have accumulated data which they are happy to pass on and share with others. They are as follows:

**Amanda Johnson:** Haruku/Ambon and Moluccas (Spice Islands)

email: [amanda@dcodetranslations.co.uk](mailto:amanda@dcodetranslations.co.uk)

**Agnes Dougan:** 155th (Lanarkshire Yeomanry)

Field Regiment, Royal Artillery.

email: [agnes.dougan@live.com](mailto:agnes.dougan@live.com)

**Jean Roberts:** 3rd Heavy Anti-Aircraft Saigon Party.

email: [jeanadrianroberts@gmail.com](mailto:jeanadrianroberts@gmail.com)

**Steve Mockridge:** Jesselton, Sandakan and Kuchin.

email: [smockridge@sky.com](mailto:smockridge@sky.com)

**Keith Andrews:** Singapore Coast Regiments and A.A.

Artillery and Thailand. email: [scubaka@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:scubaka@yahoo.co.uk)

**Colin Docketty:** Rabaul and Ballale Island.

**Frank Clark:** Saigon.

email: [paghamfrank@talktalk.net](mailto:paghamfrank@talktalk.net)

**Thailand-Burma Railway Centre:**

All things related to the Thai-Burma railway.

email: [admin@tbrconline.com](mailto:admin@tbrconline.com)

Address: Thailand-Burma Railway Museum,

Kanchanaburi, Thailand: [www.tbrconline.com](http://www.tbrconline.com)

**Derek Lawson:** Deaths in captivity.

email: [lawsonderek@hotmail.com](mailto:lawsonderek@hotmail.com)

**Michael Hurst MBE:** Director, Taiwan POW Camps

Memorial Society. email: [society@powtaiwan.org](mailto:society@powtaiwan.org)

Web: [www.powtaiwan.org](http://www.powtaiwan.org)

**Hong Kong:**

Tony Banham, email: [tony@hongkongwardiary.com](mailto:tony@hongkongwardiary.com)

Web: [hongkongwardiary.com](http://hongkongwardiary.com)

**David Tett:** The subject of 'mails'.

Also: [www.fepowmail.com](http://www.fepowmail.com) may be useful.

**Welfare Grants:** Grants are available from the FEPOWs' Central Welfare Fund for all FEPOWs, wives and widows. It covers hospital stays, carers, care homes, sheltered accommodation, etc.

For further information contact:

**Margaret Martin** of the Java FEPOW Club,

email: [enquiries@thejavafepowclub42.org](mailto:enquiries@thejavafepowclub42.org)

or **Pauline Simpson** of NFFWRA,

email: [pauline761@btinternet.com](mailto:pauline761@btinternet.com)

**Donations can be made to COFEPOW via cheque or transfer. See above.**

