Australian prisoners of war: Second World War, prisoners of the Japanese

Overview

Overview of Australian prisoners of war of the Japanese during the Second World War [www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/pow/ww2_japanese/]

Sources of information

- **Personal service record** - request a copy of a Second World War service record from the National Archives of Australia [www.naa.gov.au/collection/explore/defence/service-records/army-wwii.aspx].
- Department of Veteran's Affairs [World War 2 Nominal Roll] [www.ww2roll.gov.au] includes unit name, service number and whether or not the person was a prisoner of war.
- **Australian Military Forces Prisoners of War and Missing in the Far East and South West Pacific Islands** Official record series AWM232. This series contains lists of those imprisoned arranged by service, unit or country. It has been digitised and is searchable online [www.awm.gov.au/research/people/prisoners_of_war/].
- **Roll of Honour** [www.awm.gov.au/research/people/roll_of_honour/] records the names of service men and women who died during or as a result of service with Australian military forces.
- **Commonwealth War Graves Commission** [www.cwgc.org/] casualty database lists all British and Commonwealth soldiers who died in the First and Second World wars. The register provides details about where the individual is buried or commemorated, includes plans of cemeteries and photographs of the cemetery or memorial.
- Casualty lists - a list of AIF casualties in Malaya, Java, and Timor, as known by 2nd Echelon AIF Malaya. Arranged alphabetically and by service number. (Includes force and fate). **Official record** AWM54 171/11/2
- Casualty information on prisoners of war, Burma-Thailand and Japan. **Official record** AWM127 77

The prisoner-of-war experience

The following resources are available on the Memorial's website. Search using the name of the unit, camp, force (such as A Force, Ramsay Force) or country (remember that some countries now have a different name – Taiwan was still called Formosa during the war).

- **Books database** [www.awm.gov.au/collection/books/]: Look especially for published unit histories. Some of these contain sections on the experiences of those members of the unit who were taken prisoner-of-war, often with lists of names.
- **Collections Search database** [www.awm.gov.au/ collection/search/]: To find photographs and private records, search by names of individuals, camps, name of unit or service (e.g., RAAF, RAN, nurses). A general search, such as **prison% with Second World War** from the Conflict pull-down menu, can also be useful.
RecordSearch [www.naa.gov.au/collection/search/] Search for official records held in the joint database of the Memorial and the National Archives of Australia using the name of country, camp, unit or service, or prison* and relevant date range. Some examples of types of official records:

- Series AWM127 contains some nominal rolls, such as those for individual units, groups of nurses, or specific camps
- War crimes and trials. Affidavits and sworn statements, various items in AWM54 1010/*. To locate items in this series, search RecordSearch using individual names (surname and prison* or prisoner of war) as keywords with AWM54 1010/* in the Series number field
- War crimes and trials. Control copy of evidence. Synopsis of evidence. Index of names. AWM54 1010/1/8. Alphabetical list of names (not listed individually on RecordSearch) of those giving evidence. Includes name, rank, number, unit, list of prisoner-of-war camps in which they were held, dates and synopsis of evidence

Ephemera and souvenirs include some material relevant to Second World War prisoners of war, such as concerts and theatre programs. Some guides to the ephemera collection are available online [www.awm.gov.au/findingaids/], while others are only available in paper format in the Reading Room. Please contact the Research Centre if you would like assistance [www.awm.gov.au/contact/].

Official history of the Second World War:

Location of camps

- Frances Worthington Lipe. *Japanese prisoner-of-war camps during World War II, 1941-1945: known locations of camps where American, British, Dutch, Australian, Canadian, Indian and other allied military and civilian personnel were imprisoned by the Japanese* (Brownsville, Tex.: Medical Research Committee of American Ex-prisoners of War, 1983?) AWM Map Collection G7720.57
- General diagram of railway between Thailand and Burma and brief list showing prisoner-of-war camps (about Oct 1943). Official record AWM54 469/4/1
- Sketch map of part of Burma, Thailand showing location of F and H Force Camps and Halts - Apr-Dec 1943. Official record AWM54 469/5/13

Further information

- Borneo (Sandakan) [www.awm.gov.au/research/infosheets/pow/japanese/borneo.asp]
- Senior Officers' Party, Korea, Manchuria and Taiwan [www.awm.gov.au/research/infosheets/pow/japanese/senior_officer.asp]
- Singapore (Changi and Singapore Island) [www.awm.gov.au/research/infosheets/pow/japanese/singapore_changi.asp]