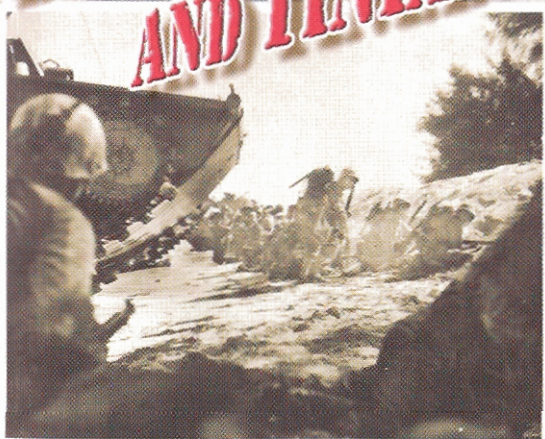


**COMMEMORATION  
OF THE  
60TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF WWII**



**BATTLE OF SAIPAN  
AND TINIAN**



**JUNE 10 - 16, 2004**

The fall of Japan's inner defense ring began with the execution of Operation Forager and the capture of Saipan, one of the key islands within the strategic Marianas Archipelago in the Western Pacific. On 15 June 1944, U.S. Marines of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Divisions began their invasion of Saipan, landing on the southwestern coastline. They were joined by the Army's 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. Despite three days of bombardment by ships and planes prior to the invasion, Japanese resistance was fierce. Over 4,000 American casualties were suffered in the first two days of fighting. The Battle of Saipan was one of the bloodiest confrontations in the Pacific theatre. As Lito Airfield was captured, followed by Mt. Tapotchau as U.S. forces drove toward the northern point of the island. On 9 July 1944, twenty-five days after the Americans hit Saipan's beachheads, the island was secured. Neighboring Tinian was invaded on the 24th of July and was secured by 1 August after only nine days of intense fighting.

Over 5,000 American soldiers lost their lives in the Marianas campaign. Japanese losses totaled 66,000. The demise of Japanese defenses on these islands, and later on Guam, accorded the United States strategic airfields from which the bombardment of the Japanese home islands was pursued.

The high number of civilians was something that the U.S. troops had not anticipated. To better care for and protect them, Camp Susupe and Camp Chalan Kanoa were established on Saipan and Camp Chulu on Tinian.

Life in the camps was not easy, but people did their best with what they had. The camps opened their gates for the final time in July 1946 when the last of the Japanese nationals and the Korean laborers were repatriated to their respective homeland. The native Chamorros and Carolinians remained in Chalan Kanoa and began the arduous task of rebuilding.

The indigenous population of Saipan and Tinian has come a long way from the plight of



Saipan's Isely Airfield as it looked in November 1944 with B29s



Northfield on Tinian became the busiest airfield in the world with planes taking off every 45 seconds



Saipan and Tinian in ruins

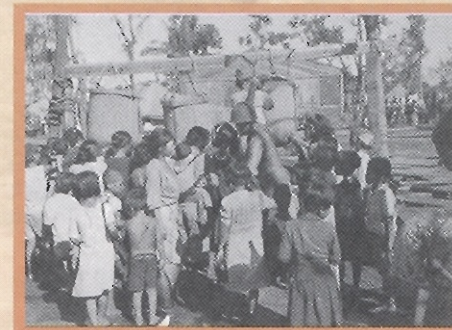
Nan'yo Kohatsu Kabushiki Kaisha (NKK) sugarmill, dock, and executive homes in Chalan Kanoa, Saipan after bombardment



Doing laundry and drawing water at one of the water stations (Camp Susupe)



Tending to Okinawan civilians on Tinian



Obtaining rations (Camp Susupe)



Marine Staff  
Sergeant Federico  
Claveria gives  
candy to Okinawan  
boy in Camp Chulu

the battle and the indelible imprint of centuries of colonization to reclaim their Paradise Lost. In 1976, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands chose to become members of the American family as a Commonwealth in political union with the United States.

Today, many of their achievements can be readily seen. The islands are once again lush tropical environments and they offer the amenities of any unique modern-day vacation destination where history is still alive.



Hyatt Regency Hotel, Garapan

Court of Honor and Flag Circle (American Memorial Park, Saipan)



Kingfisher Golf Resort (Saipan)



Swimming around WWII tank in beachhead Green I area (Saipan)



House of Taga, an ancient Chamorro latte site on Tinian, has survived centuries of conflict and can still be visited today.

Map of Saipan showing target beachheads



WWII veterans on parade during the Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Saipan

**BROCHURE FUNDED BY ARIZONA MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION**

## SCHEDULE OF COMMEMORATION ACTIVITIES 10~16 JUNE 2004

- Commemoration Ceremony with Coin Presentation to Vets
- Tours of American Memorial Park's Visitor Center and WWII Exhibit (opening scheduled June 2004)
- Dedication of American-Japanese Friendship Memorial
- Dinner reception with Northern Mariana Islands Governor
- Dedication of Marianas Memorial
- Unveiling of commemorative stamp
- Hour-long seminars on Battle topics
- Evening reception with Tinian Mayor
- Tours of Saipan's WWII historic sites
- Tours of Tinian's WWII historic sites
- Commemoration golf tournament
- Vets swap stories around campfire
- Time capsule dedication
- Evening concerts/dance
- Memorial mass
- Parade for visiting veterans
- Fireworks
- VFW Convention - June 11-18

Visitors Center and WWII Exhibit Hall - 2004



For more information please contact:  
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*Brochure designed by The Division of Historic Preservation  
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*Photos courtesy of HPO, CNMI Museum, and Marianas Visitors Authority*