

Tonga Cave - World War II Japanese Hospital

Songsong Village

The Tonga Cave served as a temporary hospital for Japanese civilians and military personnel during the initial phase and aftermath of World War II in the early 1940s. Additionally, residents of Rota utilized the cave as a refuge from storms and typhoons throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s.

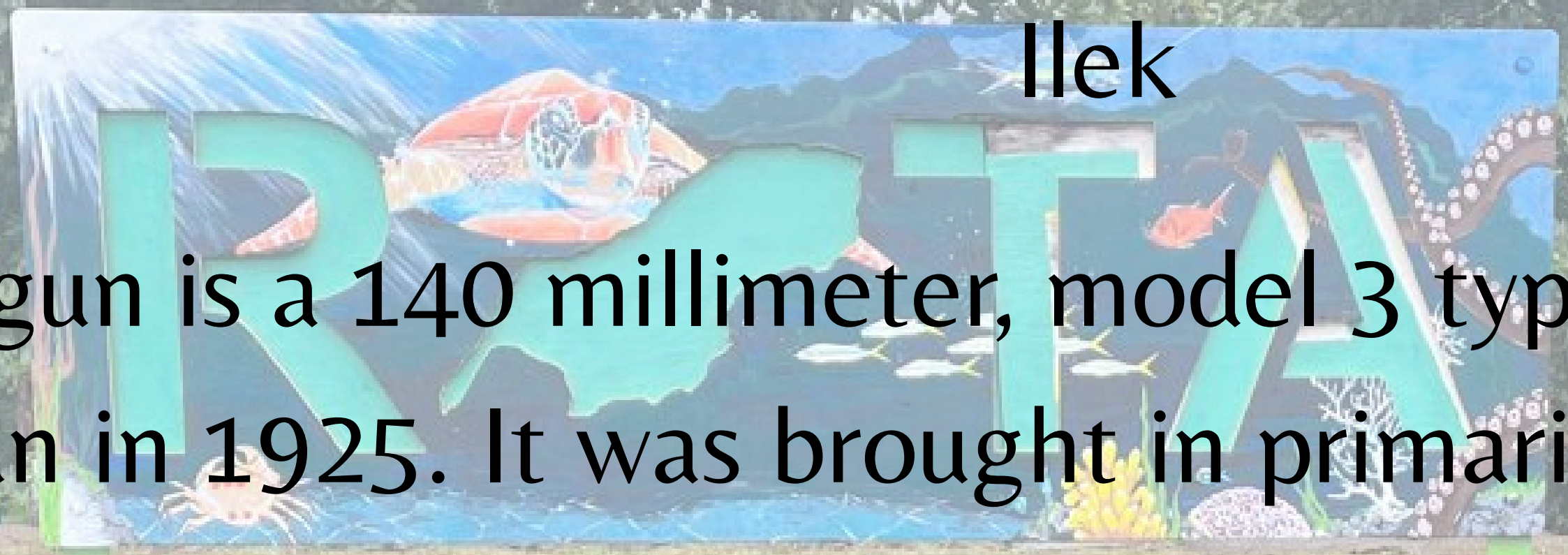
Spanish Colonial Government House

Songsong Village

The building is believed to have been occupied by the Spanish Mayor “Alkadi” during the Spanish Colonial Period in the mid-1800s. It is historically known as the “Casa Real,” serving as the central administrative building where all community affairs were managed. This structure is a significant example of Spanish architectural design and construction methods from that era, notably exhibiting a type of cement called “mamposteria.” Additionally, historical accounts suggest that a water well was situated in the immediate vicinity of the building.

Japanese Coastal Defense Gun

Ilek



The gun is a 140 millimeter, model 3 type, manufactured in Japan in 1925. It was brought in primarily by the Japanese Imperial Forces in preparation for the imminent invasion of the US Forces in the early 1940's. The gun was literally camouflaged and built along the coastal cliff-side, overlooking the prewar Japanese Sasan Haya docking facility, in an attempt to position themselves towards oncoming US Naval Battleships. This is one of the few defensive strategies employed by the Japanese Imperial Forces.

Ruins of Prewar Japanese Rectory

Tatachok

The most Reverend Fr. Juan Pons, S.J. of Spanish Ancestry, is reportedly to have been residing at the rectory during the prewar Japanese Occupational Period in the early 1930s, leading up to the outbreak of World War II. It is one of the few remaining church related buildings constructed in the late 1920s, at a time when the Chamorro civilians were forcefully relocated to Tatachok, in attempts to allow for greater expansion of the thriving sugar industry in Songsong Village. Architecturally, it is a transitional structural building for it has major building elements from the Spanish Era, but material specifications and designs from the Japanese administration.

Taga Ancient Latte Stone Quarry

As Nieves

The Ancient Latte Quarry is the only quarry site in the Mariana Islands that exhibits a majority of the latte pillars and capstones in its original location. It comprises of nine pillars and seven capstones. Scholars suggested that the arrival of the Spaniards and subsequent war that erupted with the Chamorros forced work at the quarry to be abandoned. The largest pillar is estimated to weigh about 35 tons, while the largest capstones is estimated at thirty 30 tons. If these megalithic latte stones were to be erected, the approximate height of both pillars and capstones would rise up to 24 feet, larger in size than those found at the Taga House on Tinian.

Ancient Latte Village

Mochong

The Mochong archaeological site is considered the best preserved and largest latte village in the Marianas. It comprises of over 50 individual latte sets, associated with human skeletal remains, buried around or within their houses, grinding stones, tools, fishing implements and an abundance of predominantly plain-ware pottery. Based on archaeological investigation, the latte village is reportedly to have been settled and occupied for over 3,000 years. According to accounts by numerous explorers, latte stones served as structural foundations for Chamorro residences and other specialized buildings such as men's (Uritao) and canoe houses. Today they are considered the most important cultural symbol for modern Chamorros as they represent and define who we are as a people.

Ancient Latte Village

Alaguan

The Alaguan archaeological site is the largest latte village ever recorded in the Mariana Islands. It features 60 latte features of varying sizes, including pillars and capstones, and 24 mortar grinding stones. The site also contains numerous burials, a rich abundance of subsurface artifacts, and other assemblages. Scientific analysis through radiocarbon dating indicates the site was occupied for slightly over 2,000 years (1442 AD - 1630 AD). Additionally, the Alaguan site is reported to contain a cave with pictographs (rock art paintings) and petroglyphs (carved paintings).

Ancient Latte Village

Ma'ya

The Ma'ya latte district, one of the many latte sites on Rota, remains largely undisturbed. It is believed to be associated with the Mochong Ancient Latte Village due to its close proximity. The site features four latte houses, along with ancient tools and a large amount of plain-ware pottery. Each latte house is oriented parallel to the ocean, a common characteristic found in most, if not all, latte sites along the coastline.

Pictograph Cave

Chugai'

The Chugai' pictograph cave is one of the most impressive of ancient Chamorro rock art in the Marianas. It's been suggested to have been associated with the latte period, comprising roughly 90 individual images painted on both opposite walls of the cave. The drawings are painted in black, dark grey and brown pigment most probably a mixture of bird droppings called guanu, some sort of tree sap and charcoal. It's been suggested that the drawings were directly associated with the practice of ancestral worship, as a form of communication with their ancestors. The cave itself was also occupied temporarily by the Japanese civilians and military personnel during the onset of World War II.

WWII Japanese Fortification Defensive Complex

Ginalangan

The Ginalangan Japanese Defensive Complex also known as the Command Post is the sole manifestation in the Marianas of a defensive strategy developed by the Japanese Imperial forces after the fall of Saipan in July 1944. This strategy, which was effective in Peleliu, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa called for defense in-depth to delay, demoralize and inflict maximum casualties on American Forces, instead of attempting to defend beach positions, as the Japanese had attempted to do in earlier battles. This new strategy required Japanese troops to fall back to prepare defensive positions where they were to fight to the last man. Since Rota was not invaded and occupied by the US Forces, the Ginalangan Defensive Complex survived the war, essentially intact. It is possibly the best preserved example of a fortification resulting from Japan's in depth defensive strategy during the final days of the war.

Prewar Japanese Sugar Mill Factory

Liyo' Songsong Village

The Nanyo Kohatsu Kabushiki Kaisha (NKKK), also known as the South Seas Development Company, became the dominant economic force and largest corporation in the Marianas when it arrived in 1921. Its executive director, who later became board chairman, Haruji Matsue, considered the Marianas the ideal location to establish the sugar industry, especially after previous Japanese commercial enterprises had failed in their attempts to grow and process sugarcane. The NKKK faced significant challenges during its initial years, almost leading to the cessation of operations. However, circumstances began to improve in 1926. By the early 1930s, Matsue expanded the company's land holdings to Tinian and its operations to Rota. On Rota, there was one mill, and approximately 38% of the farmlands were dedicated to sugarcane cultivation. This mill is reported to have produced around 100 tons annually. Unfortunately, constant naval bombardment of Rota during the war caused extensive destruction to the mill structure.

Prewar Japanese Hospital Liyo' Songsong Village

The ruins of the prewar Japanese Hospital are located south of Songsong Village. It is primarily a concrete building structure with an "L" shaped configuration. The wooden floor and roof have since been destroyed. The Nanyo Kohatsu Kabushiki Kaisha (South Seas Development Company) constructed the hospital primarily for its workers as part of their sugar industry operation on Rota. Two other building structures, used as schools, were also situated within the compound during the prewar Japanese occupation. The structural damages were a result of bombardment during World War II.

Bird Sanctuary Chenchon

The Rota Bird Sanctuary, located on the eastern coastline of Rota, is home to a diverse population of breeding seabirds. It stands as the largest seabird nesting colony in the area, providing crucial habitat for numerous Red-Footed Boobies, White-Ferry Terns, and Great Frigates. The sanctuary's natural landscape is an integral part of the Rota regulated marine preserve, designated as a conservation and wildlife protected area.

Peace Memorial Sabana

The Peace Memorial served as a command post for the Japanese Imperial Military at the onset of World War II. In 1973, a monument was constructed as a gesture of goodwill between the people of Rota and Japan. It is dedicated to and memorializes the Japanese Nationals who lost their lives due to the atrocities of World War II.

Japanese Tomb

Apanon



The designated tomb is reportedly to have been placed at the very same locality, as a tribute to memorialize a Japanese Imperial Army, Captain Saito and fellow troops that ended their lives as a result of the World War II battle on Rota.



Japanese Tomb Pali'e

The designated tomb is reportedly to have been placed at that locality, as a tribute to memorialize the Japanese Nationals who died on Rota during the World War II battle.

German Chapel Patten Gogue

Through the steadfast efforts of Father Corbinian and the German Capuchins, a Catholic Chapel was built circa 1911. It is one of only a few building remnants from the German Colonial period and is now known as the Santa Lourdes Chapel.