



You are invited to attend this ceremony. If you plan on going, please advise Post CDR Terry so we can have a good count of attendees.

Hellfire Pass U.S. Plaque Dedication Ceremony

The ceremony will commence at **11:00** on **25 October 2023**
Hellfire Pass Interpretive Centre
207 Tha Sao, Sai Yok District, Kanchanaburi 71150, Thailand

The Veterans of Foreign Wars have graciously donated funds for the creation and establishment of a U.S. plaque commemorating the U.S. POWs imprisoned at Hellfire Pass. This plaque will be placed across from the existing Australian Prisoner of War Memorial Plaque at Hellfire Pass. Below is the citation that will memorialize the sacrifice and hardships endured by the American Prisoners of War at Hellfire Pass.

American Prisoner of War Memorial

This memorial honors the approximately 690 American prisoners of war who labored for their Japanese captors under horrific conditions on the Burma-Thai Railway and the Thais who risked their lives to support them. Most of the American prisoners of war were captured on Java in the Dutch East Indies (present day Indonesia). They were primarily Soldiers along with Sailors and Marines from the USS Houston, a United States Navy heavy cruiser sunk in the Sunda Strait in the early hours of March 1, 1942. Before sinking, the USS Houston's crew rescued Merchant Marines and Soldiers of the 2-131st Field Artillery, 36th Division, Texas National Guard, from a torpedoed troop transport ship which had been sent to assist with the defense of the Dutch East Indies. As their fate remained unknown until the end of the war, the 2-131st became known as "The Lost Battalion." Aside from United States servicemembers, several American civilians captured by Japanese on Java were sent to work on the railway. Approximately 134 Americans died on the Burma-Thai Railway, and all were repatriated to American soil following the war. The section of the railway, known as Hellfire Pass, is a stark reminder of the grueling conditions experienced by allied prisoners of war and the thousands of Asian civilians forced to labor for the Japanese.

Given on this day by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States of America, 26 October 2023.