

## **The Capas National Shrine (Pambansang Dampaan ng Capas)**

It was Built by the Philippine government as a memorial to Allied soldiers who died at Camp O'Donnell at the end of the Bataan Death March during the Second World War.



The site is a focus for commemoration on Araw ng Kagitingan (Valour Day), an Annual observance held on 9 April—the anniversary of the surrender of US and Philippine force to the Imperial Japan in 1942. There is also a memorial to the Czechs and some Slovaks who died fighting alongside the Filipinos and US Soldiers.

The area where the Bataan Death March ended was proclaimed as “Capas National Shrine” by President Corazon Aquino on 7 December 1991. The shrine encompasses 54 hectares of parkland, 35 hectares of which have been planted with rows of trees to represent each of the dead.

On 9 April 2003, a 70-metre obelisk and new memorial wall unveiled on the

Ground of the former internment camp. The obelisk is surrounded by a three-segmented, black marble wall engraved with the names of the Filipinos known to have died during the Death March. There are also statistics about the total numbers

Nearby, there are three smaller memorials to the countries whose nationals died at the camp; the Philippines, the United States, and the Czech Republic (then Czechoslovakia). A small museum and monument is also on the site, built by an American group called the "Battling Bastards of Bataan".

A few hundred meters from the Obelisk is a garden separated from the rest of the shrine by a creek that can be crossed via a hanging bridge. The relics of an old train and railings are also located in the "Battling Bastards of Bataan".

This memorial is dedicated to the brave men and women who defied the might of the invaders at Bataan, Corregidor and other parts of the Philippines during World War II. Thousands died in battle, during the Death March, and while in captivity. Thousands more endured inhuman conditions at the prison camp in Capas, Tarlac. They suffered in the night so that their countrymen would make wake to the dawn of freedom.

Location: Barangay Aranguren Capas, Tarlac ( 8 Kilometers west of Capas Business District)

Owned by the Department of the National Defense and managed by the Veterans Memorial and Historical Division Office, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City