

CAPAS

The Great History

Created in 1710, Capas is among the oldest towns of Tarlac together with Bamban (1710), Paniqui (1574) and Tarlac (1686). Its creation was justified by numerous settlements which were already established in the river banks of Cutcut River since the advent of the eighteenth century. The settlements belonged to the domain of Pagbatuan and Gudya; two sitios united by Capitan Mariano Capiendo when he founded the municipality.

Historical records suggest three versions on how Capas got its name. The first version, as told, was originated from *capas-capas*, the “edible flower” similar to that of the *cataray* or the *melaguas* that abundantly grew along the Cutcut river banks. The second version, accordingly, was adapted from a “cotton tree” called *capas*, in Aeta dialect. The third version suggested that it was derived from the first three letters of the surnames of the town’s early settlers, namely: Capitulo, Capitly, Capiendo, Capuno, Caponga, Capingian, Caparas, Capera, Capunpue, Capit, Capil, Capunfuerza, Capunpun, Caputol, Capul and Capan. Assertively, they were called “caps” or “*capas*” in the local language.

Between 1946-1951, registered barangays of Capas were Lawy, O’Donnell, Aranguren, Sto. Domingo, Talaga, Sta. Lucia, Bueno, Sta. Juliana, Sampucaao, Calingcuan, Dolores and Manga, which were the 12 barrios during Late President Elpidio Quirino issued the Executive Order No. 486 providing “for the collection and compilation of historical data regarding barrios, towns, cities and provinces.”

Today, Capas constitutes 20 barangays including all 12 except Calingcuan was changed to Estrada, Sampucaao to Maruglu, Sto. Domingo was divided in two and barangays such as Sta. Rita, Sto. Rosario, Cristo Rey, Cubcub, Cutcut I & II, and Talaga were added.

Facts & Historical Timeline:

1710 Capas Founding Year

1860 A politico-military commandancia was created out of the towns of Concepcion, Bamban, Capas, Mabalacat, Porac, Floridablanca, Victoria and Tarlac.

1874 The *commandancia* has ceased its function when Tarlac became a province.

1938 During the American occupation, local chief executives then were called *president* but in mid 1938 it was changed back to *mayor* which is the title of municipal and city top leaders up to date.

1942 Fall Of Bataan. On April 9th, 78, 300 soldiers (66,500 and 11,800 Americans) were forced to march from Mariveles to Camp O’Donnell at gunpoint and under the scorching heat of the sun, the infamous 5-day *Death March* caused about 10,000 Filipinos and 1,200

Americans to die along the way out of disease, brutal treatment, starvation and dehydration.

In the end not less than 26,000 Filipino and American soldiers died. And to represent each of the brave heroes who died at Camp O'Donnell, 35 out of the 54-hectare National Shrine were planted with rows of trees.

1956 It was said then that Tarlac Gov. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr. had the idea of putting a marker in Tarlac to let travelers and tourists (from south) known they have reached the province and are bound to North. Since Capas have had a great share in World History, Cutcut then was chosen as location over Bamban – Death March Monument or replica.

1960's to 1970's

The town was once a host to the American strategic facilities – the O'Donnell transmitter Station and the Naval transmitter station – which were instrumental to the United States' continuous dominance over Asia. Incidentally, Capas is also the hometown of Bernabe G. Buscayno also known as "Kumander Dante" who carve out his name as the founder of the new people's army between the late 60's to 70s which was the turbulent period of the Philippine contemporary history.

1991 Mt. Pinatubo Eruption - the tragedy which damaged approx. \$250,000,000 worth of properties, killed 350 people during the eruption and 372 more from diseases and its effects, and left more than 200,000 people homeless, has been dubbed the second-largest volcanic eruption in the 20th century and by far the largest to effect a densely populated area. By 1992, the Bases Conversion and Development Authority was created out of the R.A 7227, Proclamation No. 163.

2018 Capas is a first-class municipality; one of the favorite tourist destination because of the beautiful Mt. Pinatubo crater; also known for Tinapang Talaga; and marked by the gigantic Shrine Obelisk. Cited as the location of today's biggest and most ambitious project (New Clark City), Capas is said to be the Next City in Tarlac where smart meets green; a place for investment, harmony and sustainability.