

# 旧海軍司令部壕

The Former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters



Memorial Stamp



## Admission

	Adults	Children
Individual	¥ 420	¥ 210
Group (30 people or more)	¥ 380	¥ 180

※Adults - high school students and older  
 ※Children - elementary and junior high school students

## Business hours

Open 8:30~17:00 Open Year Round

## Transportation

25 min. (¥220) from the Naha Bus Terminal taking bus lines 33, 46, or 101. Get off at the bus stop in front of Tomigusuku Castle Park and walk for 10 min. It's 20 min. from Naha Airport by taxi.

## Information

**The Former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters**  
 236 Aza Tomishiro, Tomishiro-city, Okinawa, Japan.  
 Tel: 098-850-4055 Fax: 098-850-9342

**Okinawa Convention & Visitor's Bureau**  
 Okinawa Industrial Support Center 2nd Floor  
 1831-1 Oroku, Naha City, Okinawa, Japan 901-6152  
 Tel: 098-859-6123

URL <http://www.ocvb.or.jp/>



## The number of deaths in the battle of Okinawa

**Total deaths 200,656 people**

- Japanese (188,136 people)
- \*From other prefectures (soldiers and civilian employees) 65,908 people
- \*From Okinawa (soldiers and civilian employees) 28,228 people
- \*From Okinawa (civilians fighting in battles) 56,861 people
- \*From Okinawa (non-fighting civilians) 37,139 people
- Americans(12,520 people)

## The number of shells used by Americans

(Apr 1 - Jun 30, 1945) **2,716,691 shells**  
 The population on Okinawa at that time was 574,368 people giving a ratio of 4.72 shells fired per person.

## The number of shells used by the U.S. 10th Army Division

(Apr 1 - Jun 30, 1945) **2,116,691 shells**

## The number of unexploded shell disposal in Okinawa Prefecture

**1,178,869 shells**

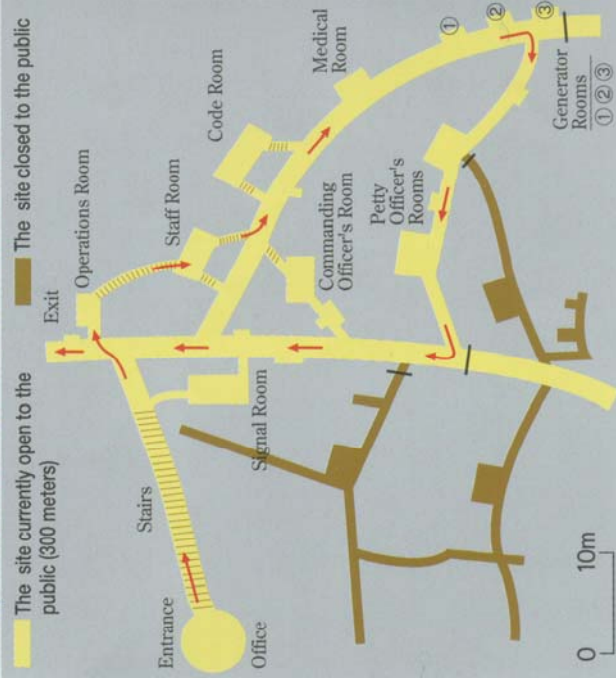
## The number of remains collected from Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters

About **2,400 people**



## THE MAP OF INSIDE CAVE

Map and route inside the cave (→)



Rear Admiral Minoru Ota, commanding officer of the Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters, and his six officers shot themselves due to the Americans' severe attack on the night of June 13, 1945. In his farewell telegram to the Navy Vice Admiral, Ota commended the Okinawan people for their cooperation and self-sacrifice and appealed for special consideration for them.



Rear Admiral Minoru Ota

## This is how the Okinawan people have fought the war.

Message number 062016

Please convey the following telegram to the Vice Admiral. The Prefectural Governor should be the person to relay this report on the present condition of the war on Okinawa, but the Okinawa Prefectural Government has no means of communication, and the 32nd Division Headquarters appear to be thoroughly occupied with their own correspondence traffic. I feel compelled to file this urgent report though it is without the consent of the Prefectural Governor.

Since the enemy attacks began, our Army and Navy have been fighting defensive battles and have not been able to attend to the people of this prefecture.

Consequently, due to our negligence, these innocent people have lost their homes and property to enemy assault. Every man has been conscribed to defense while women, children, and elders are forced into hiding in the small underground shelters which are not tactically significant or are exposed to shelling, air raids, and wind and rain. Moreover, girls have devoted themselves to nursing and cooking, as well as volunteering to carry ammunition and join in attacking the enemy.

This leaves the village people vulnerable to enemy attack where they will surely be killed. In desperation, some parents have asked the military to protect their daughters, for fear that when the enemy comes, elders and children will be killed and young women and girls will be taken to private areas and harmed.

After military medical personnel had moved on, the volunteer nurses stayed behind to help the badly wounded move. They are dedicated and go about their work with a strong will.

The military has changed its operations, forcing people to evacuate residential areas. Those without transportation trudge on in the dark and rain, without complaining, all the while searching for food. Ever since our Army and Navy have occupied Okinawa, the inhabitants of this prefecture have endured these constant hardships.

The Okinawan people have been asked to volunteer their labor and conserve all their resources (mostly without complaint). In their heart, they wish only to serve as loyal Japanese. Finally, this battle is nearing its end, the situation of the island of Okinawa is as follows:

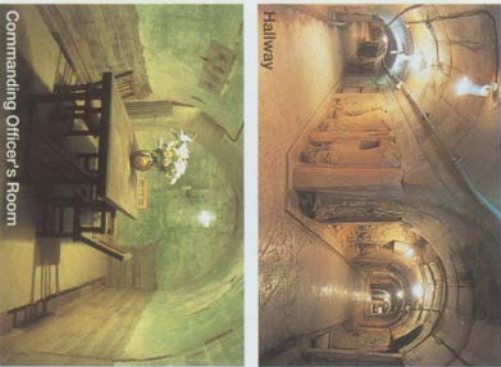
There are no trees, no grass; everything is burnt to the ground. The food supply will be gone by the end of June. This is how the Okinawan people have fought the war.

And for this reason, I appeal to you to give the Okinawan people special consideration from this day forward.

Note: This is the original document though some parts of the document are illegible.

# JAPANESE NAVY UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS

Members of the Japanese Navy Corps of Engineers, Yamane Division dug a tunnel complex for the Navy's Okinawa Headquarters bunker in 1944. The semi-circular tunnels hardened by posts and concrete were 450 meter in length at that time. They served as underground headquarters to endure the American bombardment and long drawn out fighting and could sustain 4000 soldiers. After the war, tunnels remained untouched for many years. The remains of those who died were collected and a 300-meter portion centered on the commander's office was renovated and opened to the public in March 1970 by the Tourism Development Board.



These 1000 original paper cradl crosses were created to represent grief and pray for world peace for those individuals that lost their lives during the war.

## The FORMER JAPANESE NAVY UNDERGROUND HEADQUARTERS The Underground talks! The tragedy of war and value of peace.

The Former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters is located where Rear Admiral Ota and his men desperately fought to the end on June 13, 1945. You can view the commanding officer's room and the operations room as it was during the battle. Also, the tunnels, which were constructed utilizing hoes and picks, still exist in their original condition.

During the Pacific War, the Okinawa Islands were the only populated Japanese home islands to experience a large scale land battle. Consequently, many Okinawan people were caught up in the battle and suffered tremendous hardships. The underground was opened to the public in 1970 so that future generations might understand the tragedy of war, and to invite prayers for lasting world peace.

In early 1945, 10,000 men of the Oroku Japanese Naval Base forces were dug in and well prepared to defend Naha City and its airfield. However, U.S. Forces landed on April 1, 1945 and a fierce struggle for the south central area of Okinawa began. As the battle progressed, Japanese casualties mounted and reinforcements were shifted from the Oroku area to support the Shuri defence. This resulted in a steady weakening of the Oroku Naval Base forces.

At the end of May 1945, the 32d Army Headquarters, commanded by Lieutenant General Ushijima retreated from Shuri to Kunishi Ridge (Yaqui Dake/Yuzi Dake) near Ioman City in the southern part of Okinawa. The Oroku Naval Base forces were also ordered by Lieutenant General Ushijima to retreat to the south. They destroyed a vast quantity of their weaponry in Oroku before leaving for their new positions in the south. They discovered that the new positions were inferior to their own well-constructed defensive positions on the Oroku Peninsula. The sailors pleaded with Admiral Ota to allow them to return to the Oroku Peninsula to make a final stand. Admiral Ota agreed and led 5,000 men back to Oroku to fight bravely and die honorably.

On June 4, 1945 the Sixth Marine Division, commanded by Major General Lemuel C. Shepherd Jr., conducted an amphibious envelopment, landing on the peninsula just north of Naha Airfield. The Sixth Marine Division had already proven itself in the Okinawan fighting. The Division had landed on April 1, 1945, fighting its way through central Okinawa, Motobu Peninsula, northern Okinawa and the fierce fighting at Sugar Loaf Hill. The Division was ultimately responsible for capturing two-thirds of Okinawa. The Naval Base forces were lacking in ground combat training, but fought bravely. The defeat of the Naval Base forces was inevitable due to the overwhelming fire superiority of the U.S. Forces.

On June 6, 1945, Admiral Ota sent a lengthy telegram to the vice minister of the Navy reporting the battle situation and commending the self-sacrifice and cooperation displayed by the Okinawan people during the battle. In the message he gave a detailed account of how the Okinawan people—both young and old, women and men—devoted themselves wholeheartedly in supporting the battle. He concluded his message with the statement, "This is how the Okinawan people have fought the war, and for this reason, I ask you to give the Okinawan people special consideration from this day forward!"

On June 13, 1945, Admiral Ota, with many of his officers and men, died an honorable death inside the underground. According to the intelligence section of the Sixth Marine Division, 175 bodies were found.

It has been said that the Naval Base forces lost 4,000 men in the Battle for Oroku Peninsula. The Sixth Marine Division casualties were 1,608 killed or wounded. There is a display about the Sixth Marine Division located in the Former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters Museum.

