

CAMP ZAMA THROUGH THE YEARS....

Occupation Years (1945~1952)

On September 5, 1945, one battalion of the 1st Cavalry Division of the U.S. Army entered Sobudai campus and took control of the Academy from the Japanese soldiers guarding it. Shortly thereafter, a smaller unit replaced the 1st Cavalry and, for a while, the post was named the 4th Replacement Regiment Depot. Later, the name was changed to Camp Zama, whose main mission, along with Atsugi Base, was to serve as a stopover for Soldiers awaiting transportation to and from the Far East.

相武台は昭和20年9月5日から米陸軍第1騎兵師団の1個大隊の管理下におかれ、その後米陸軍の第4兵員補充基地になりました。その更に後、相武台の基地は「キャンプ座間」と改名され、厚木基地と共に極東区域に移動する将兵の中継地点となりました。



1945 – The main gate of Camp Zama and home to the 4th Replacement Depot.



Various artillery pieces were used during the Academy years which were collected and eventually slated for disposal under the disarmament agreement.



A 4th Replacement Depot (part of 8th Army) Military Police jeep and its occupants.



4th Replacement Depot Soldiers walk near the main gate. The sign stands on the rotary.



Soldiers line up to enter the Post Exchange.



Following U.S. Army occupation, the installation was first known as the 4th Replacement Depot. Its APO was 703.



One Academy building was converted into a mess hall (dining facility).



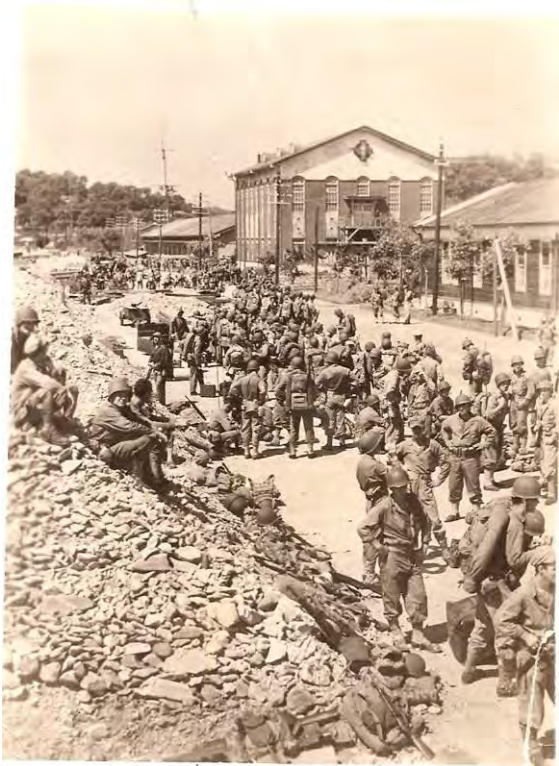
The Sobudai monument was buried by a group of Japanese soldiers at the Academy shortly after Japan's surrender to the Allies in August 1945. It remained buried until it was located and restored to its original spot in 1947 on order by Lieutenant General Robert L. Eichelberger, commanding general of Eighth Army, stationed at Yokohama. Here the monument is laying on its side ready to be re-erected on its original foundation.



The Imperial Army Academy headquarters building later became headquarters for Camp Zama in the wake of U.S. Army control.



Soldiers gather around the front of what is now Gate 2 of the 4th Replacement Depot. The 14th Battalion was on the south portion of installation.



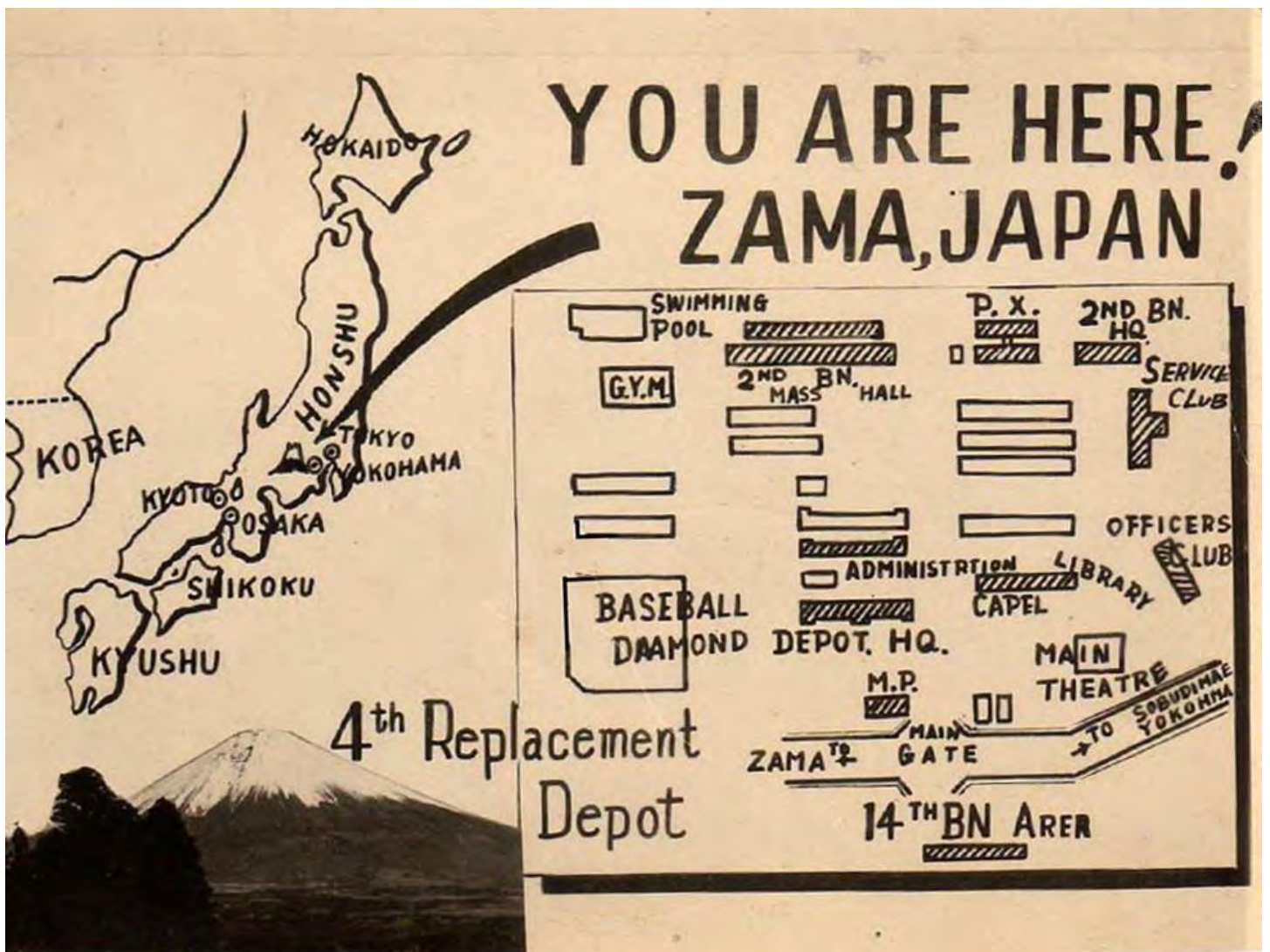
Soldiers assemble inside the former Academy grounds following occupation.



A directory sign for the 4th Replacement Depot Headquarters' sections and units stands on what is now the main gate rotary with the former Academy auditorium in the background before a sign went up designating it as the installation's theater.



The Imperial Army Academy auditorium still sports the Japanese Imperial Army star at its peak as well as the open columns in the front and a walkway on the right side (both later enclosed). This was renamed the 'Repple Depple' (nickname for Replacement Depot) Main Theatre.



An early and quickly drawn map was given to Soldiers to find their way to different facilities on the installation.



These pictures were taken in 1951. The left is taken near the Sobudai monument looking north. On the left side behind the sign stood the former installation headquarters building and now the site of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Japan District. The building in the back right was the first high school and later replaced by the Community Activities Center. On the right is the Camp Zama theater.



Military Police guard platoon pose for a group photo in front of the former Academy auditorium converted into the installation's theater. The officers' club is barely visible on the hill to its left.



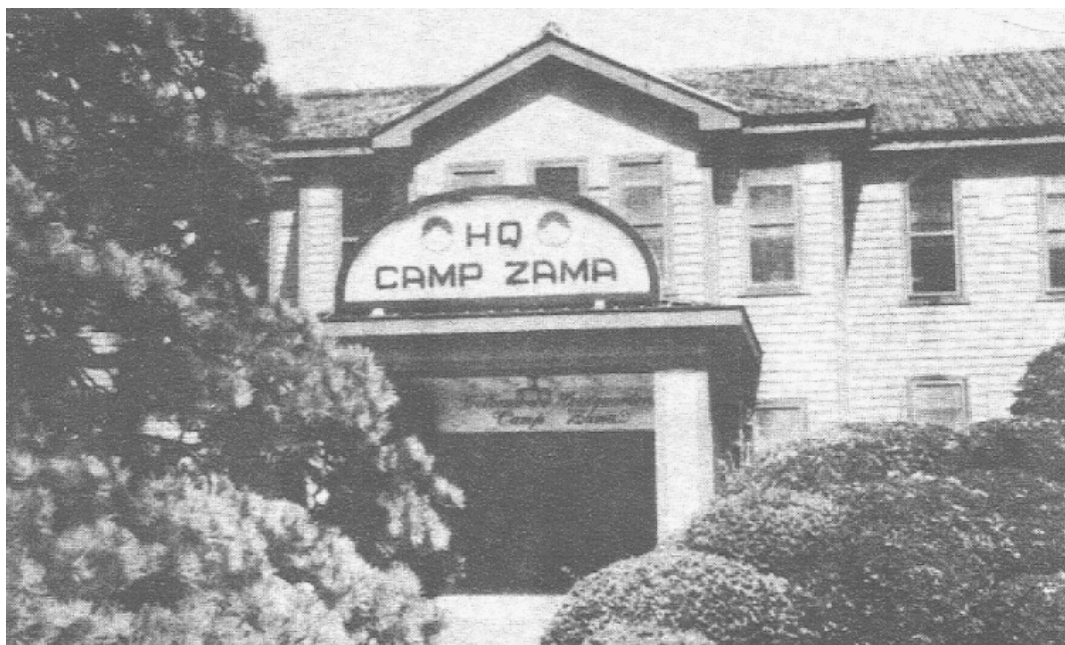
A truck passes the first torii leading to Otakebi Shrine as it rumbles toward the main gate. The torii marked the entrance to the former shrine area, but was later removed leaving only the shrine's formal torii standing further up the stairs. That one was later replaced with a stone torii in December 1985 by the association of former cadets.



Two Soldiers walk through the tunnel on Gyoko-dori toward the main gate on what is now Highway 51. The road above the tunnel has connected south and north posts since November 1936.



Several groups of Soldiers stroll along the gravel road toward the main gate on what is now Friendship Blvd.



Camp Zama headquarters building that first served as the Imperial Army Academy headquarters.



Soldiers pass some time playing a game of catch outside one of the barracks.



A Japanese crew clean up near the front gate.



Two military policemen man the front gate.



Posing by the 4th Replacement Depot sign.



Soldiers wait for a train at Sobudai-mae station.



Standing guard at the main gate.



The 14th Battalion Cadre Club on South Post. Two buddies relax in the club after their duty day.



Originally built to accommodate Imperial family princes attending the Academy, it was rarely used as most princes preferred living in the same barracks as their classmates. In 1945 it became officers' quarters for the 4th Replacement Depot. In 1976 the building was dismantled and reassembled at Japan Ground Self-Defense Force's Camp Asaka serving as a museum.