

HONG KONG VETERANS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

MANITOBA BRANCH
PO BOX 381
WINNIPEG, MB R3C 2H6

April, May, June 2002

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President's Report

- George N. Peterson, Manitoba President

A lot has been happening in recent weeks as we have lost three of our comrades, Bert Delbridge, Harry Atkinson and John Pople. I was very honoured to give the eulogy at the services for Bert at the St. Andrews Anglican Church on March 5th. On March 6th at the services for Harry Atkinson at Sturgeon Creek United Church, I also gave the eulogy.

Unit #1 ANAVET provided the Colour Party for Bert and our own Colour Party attended at Harry's funeral. Many members of our Branch were in attendance at both funerals including the wives, widows and the Commemorative Association. For you that were able to be there, thank you, and to you that were not, I know you were there in spirit.

Through the kindness of Carol Hadley, offering to drive the car, Dick Wilson, myself and Carol were at the St. John's Anglican Church in Carman, Manitoba to attend the services for John Pople on March 16th. We met Bob Lytle and his good wife out there. Many members of the Carman Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion were also in attendance. Our late comrade Leslie Adams was a Past President of this Branch.

On Sunday February 24th, Juliet Lafortune and I attended a dinner and reception for comrade Bill Neil. A plaque was presented to Bill in appreciation for all the years he served as chairman of the Joint Veterans' Association of Winnipeg. Bill served on many veterans' committees in Winnipeg and I for one feel that this recognition was well earned. The Joint Veterans have also requested the Province of Manitoba to honour Bill with membership to the Order of Manitoba.

The Prairie Region of DVA have made the decision to form what is to be known as the Prairie Advisory Council. This Council is to include a member representative from each of the veterans' associations in the Prairie provinces. One meeting is planned to be held in alternating capitals of the provinces each year. The inaugural meeting is taking place March 20th in Regina, SK. The next year the

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meeting will be in either Calgary or Winnipeg. I was unable to attend this year but expect to receive all pertinent information on this. The main purpose of the council is for the veterans to provide input as to how DVA can best serve the needs of the veterans.

Bill Maltman is home from the hospital and much happier now. He has a new setup for his oxygen supply which allows him more freedom to move around. Roy Robinson, I am pleased to tell you, also arrived home from the hospital March 21st. I plan on seeing him soon as Roy and Shirley live within my limited driving distance.

Well that is all for now. Until next time, keep as well as possible; may you travel only on a smooth road with the wind always at your back. Take care and have a great summer.

National President, Harry Atkinson



Harry Atkinson, who died March 2, 2002 at age 80 after a battle with lung cancer, was a tireless fighter for the rights of Canada's Hong Kong veterans.

Harry was a founding member of our Branch, but it was when he took early retirement that he took up a more active role in our association. Before he retired Harry was appointed official branch pensions officer. As a development representative for Robinson Little Lighting Co., he travelled to many parts of the province. During these travels he met with a lot of our comrades. Harry was very approachable if you had a problem and he would seek an answer for you if he was unable to supply one.

Harry became the National President and the National Pensions Officer. Roger Cyr took over from Harry as National President but Harry retained the pensions office until the War Amps offered their assistance. When Roger's health prevented him from carrying on as President, then Harry stepped into the job and remained there until his demise.

At the Convention in 2001, Ron Duhamel, Veteran's Affairs Minister, announced the Hong Kong Veterans' pensions would be increased to 100% and commended Harry's efforts in this matter.

Harry was very proud and supportive of the

'Commemorative' association and was instrumental in the its growth, of which we are very appreciative.

We will always be grateful for Harry's efforts on behalf of the veterans but most of all we will miss his humour, his wisdom and his strength.

There are more tributes for Harry on our website www.hkvca.ca Also visit the family website at www.geocities.com/atkinson_family_newsletter/index.html

Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association

- Juliet Lafortune

Hello to everyone! Manitoba members are busy working at preserving the memory of the Hong Kong Veterans. There are several projects related to this that are on-going and reports will be given to you as progress is made.

Two very active, founding members of the HKVA, recently passed away - **Bert Delbridge** and **Harry Atkinson**. They each served their association well as President in the Branch and National offices. Our sincere condolences to the family.

The HKVCA was started about 6 years ago and has progressed to a viable and recognizable association across Canada. We encourage family and friends of the Hong Kong Veterans to join us in our mission of perpetuating the memory of the veterans. To ensure the welfare of the veterans, spouses and widows; to educate the future generations of the events of the Battle of Hong Kong; and to revere specific days like August 15 (VJ Day), Christmas Day and November 11 are other components of our mandate. Our fathers formed their association for strength to fight for their benefits and rights. The Commemorative share that bond - to fight for the veterans' right to be recognized as heros.

Membership in our association is **\$15.00** per year, payable to the HKVCA and sent to Box 381, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2H6.

Manitoba Region pledges their support to Phil Dodderidge and George Peterson, as National President and National First Vice-President respectively of the HKVA. Your past record of service and dedication assures us that you will do a fine job.

That is all for now, please call me if you have any questions or require any information, at: **home - 338-3354, cell - 294-9335.**

Winnipeg Grenadier's Hong Kong Trust Fund

- Donna Remillard

We are still seeking donations for the Winnipeg Grenadiers Hong Kong Trust Fund and cheques should be made out in that name (not HKVA). The Hong Kong Veterans' Association make a donation to this fund in memory of each deceased veteran member. The

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monies in this fund are used for the issue of the Winnipeg Grenadiers Hong Kong veterans, for their higher education.

Contributions can be directed to Donna Remillard at 303_740 Kenaston Boulevard, Winnipeg, MB R3N 1Y3 or phone her at 489-0008.

Website Update

www.hkvca.ca

-Linda May

Well well well..... haven't WE been the busy bees! First of all, I would like to welcome to the website the following contributors - Claire Hachey, our new graphics expert, Ron Parker, who is going to assist with a variety of things on the site, and is right now working on some improvements and new features to our Nominal Role, and Jeremy Swanson who will be contributing to various articles to ensure that they are historically accurate.

New to the site : An interview with Harry Atkinson, that was done in 1986; some new member contributions; and, thanks to Claire, new, easier to read buttons and graphics.

Look for lots of new stuff coming up.

As always, if you have a computer and a few minutes of time, drop me an email. Phone is 519-770-4099 and email is hkvca@hkvca.ca

Royal Rifles

The web site, www.geocities.com/rcwpc. contains the memoires of Major M.A. Parker, from Quebec, who was the Officer Commanding "D" Company of The Royal Rifles of Canada. This site is in his honour and for the men of 'C' Force.

Ron Parker, son of Major Parker, with the help of his family, have developed this site - so bookmark the site and visit it often as there are frequent updates.

Hong Kong War Diary

For those who have been following this project, you will be interested to know that a change will soon come to this site (www.hongkongwardiary.com), which will soon contain a listing of every service man and woman who served in the 1941 Hong Kong garrison, cross-referenced to Commonwealth Graves Commission and hospital records, and to all published material on the subject. The book, now expected to be published autumn 2002, will simply be an hour-by-hour history of the December 1941 fighting. Hopefully it will be the most comprehensive and accurate account so far.

C.O.F.E.P.O.W

This acronym stands for Children (and Families) of Far East Prisoners of War and Carol Cooper is

the Director of this group. She has a wonderful web site located at www.cofepow.org.uk.

There have been many changes to this web site. One of the changes would be the many links to other sites with personal stories of the War in the Far East; children of the FEPOW that have their own accounts of the events from their fathers diaries or stories; and in general information from which everyone would learn.

Items for Sale



Souvenir pin from 2001
Convention
\$5.00

Souvenir sweatshirts
(model Barry Mitchell
shown in picture)

\$20.00

Please send a cheque or
money order payable to
HKVCA, with the quantities
that you want, to Box 381,
Winnipeg, MB R3C 2H6.

POSTAGE AND HANDLING INCLUDED.



The items which we wish to forward to the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature need to be catalogued. The Commemorative is taking on this task and I am heading up the committee to gather, document, itemize - all the things required in cataloguing. We ask you, the Hong Kong family, to take stock of the historical information that your family has been saving and see if there is information that you are willing to donate to the Museum. Of course, there will be personal items such as letters and telegrams that you may not wish to part with and that's just fine.

Whatever you feel may compliment our goal of presenting the Hong Kong Veterans of Canada to the Museum for display/archiving will be greatly appreciated. You may find newspaper articles pertaining to your family Veteran, in particular. These articles may be hard to duplicate as, I know in my family, we have saved articles that featured our Dad. Therefore, even if you do not want to part with an article, you may wish to give us permission to copy it. We want to get as overall a picture as we possibly can. This is a great opportunity that we all need to take advantage of before the information is no longer available. Please sort out your information and give me a call. If you would like help going through your keepsakes I, or another Commemorative member, will come over and help you. If you would like to invite a member of your family over at the same time that's okay too. Lora Wachtendorf Box 885, Niverville MB R0A 1E0 (home) 1-204-388-6536 (work- message) 945-3012

Notes from Barry Mitchell, Treasurer and Membership

Greetings to all in the HKVA and the Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association. Yes, I know I said that by now we would all be in the same group, but I was mistaken. For a variety of reasons, we are maintaining both entities in Manitoba and I hope it hasn't confused you too much. From an administrative standpoint, it would be much easier to just have one organization to deal with but instead we are maintaining two sets of books, two membership cards, two sets of letterhead, and so on. However, we want to continue to recognize the Veterans in every way we can and keeping their own organization together contributes to their identity.

In fact, the HKVA is so well established, has a solid and loyal membership, maintains a healthy bank account and still has members who meet each month for lunch, that we hesitated to wind things down. All Veterans and widows are automatically members of the Commemorative Association, and thus many of you have dual memberships. I feel that as long as the Veterans in Manitoba want to keep their traditional ways, we will do our best to accommodate them. We may move to a single

Grave Markers \$48.00 * Crests \$20.00

For the Crests and Markers shown below, please contact Lora Wachtendorf, Box 885, Niverville MB R0A 1E0 (home) 1-204-388-6536, (work-message) 945-3012

Museum Project

The Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature has expressed its interest in putting together a permanent display of Hong Kong Veterans' memorabilia. The Museum is also offering to "archive" our historical documentation ie. letters, newspaper clippings, things such as badges, medals, old items a Veteran may have brought home with him such as a gun or a piece of clothing etc. This means, in addition to a permanent display, the Museum is willing to properly store our historical information, at the correct temperature, under ideal conditions for preservation. Harry Atkinson stated recently that "it's about time" when I told him of the Museum's intent to have a permanent display dedicated to the Hong Kong Veterans.

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membership at the end of this year, but I won't predict that it is a certainty. Things seem to be working well as they are and the Commemorative Association is growing across Canada. However, I welcome your thoughts on the matter and any comments or suggestions would be helpful.

The weekly trip to the post office has truly been rewarding since Christmas and we have enjoyed a terrific response as far as memberships are concerned. I have sent out a few "special" letters as a reminder to those who have not contacted us for the last couple of years and that has resulted in some of our long-term members bringing things up-to-date. In these busy times it seems more and more people need to be prompted to submit their dues and we don't mind doing that if it brings results. So let this also be a nudge to send us your fees for 2002 and particularly those who have not yet paid for 2001. We have lots of great newsletters for you to read over the coming year and in the future. Please send your \$15.00 membership cheque to P.O. Box 381, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 2H6. Widows and Veterans are automatically members of the Commemorative Association free of charge and for life.

I always enjoy receiving the envelope containing the membership dues from the **Sinclair** family--**Thomas, Cheryl and Karen** of **St. Andrews**, Manitoba. They are the neatest printers in the H.K. family and impress me as being very well organized. Thanks so much to the three of you for your renewal in the Commemorative Association....I appreciate the note from **Dennis Stewart** of **Selkirk**, MB. He tells us he's a real busy guy and is currently the President of the Selkirk Legion Branch #42. It's nice to hear about some of the activities of our members, their travels, state of health, and so on. We encourage you to include a few words with your cheque and when possible we'll pass along your greetings....Nice long note from **George Coutts** of **Melita**, Manitoba, along with some welcome cheques. George is following up on the enquiry from Mrs. Pam Broadhead in England. He got to know a number of POW's from England and has maintained correspondence with four of them. He also tells us that he and his wife are enjoying good health and are able to keep active as long as they stay at their own pace.

Thanks to **Mary-Anne Chambers** of **Winnipeg** for the kind note and for making us aware that her mother, Eileen De Villiers, had passed away in December, 2000. Mary-Anne is the daughter of **Arthur De Villiers** who passed away in 1990. Sorry we were still sending newsletters to your mom's address, Mary-Anne, but unless we hear otherwise, we keep all our members on the mailing list until we receive a note such as the one you just sent. Glad to have you in the Commemorative Association....Our best wishes to **Johanna Richardson** of **Winnipeg** who dropped us a note along with her dues. She sounds just fine, health wise, but admits to the slowing down process. A

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reminder to Anne and everyone else, that inflation has caught up to the H. K. Association along with everything else and all dues are now \$15.00. Thanks for your cheque--it just doesn't buy as much as it used to.

Best wishes to **Alvin Zaharychuk** out in **Stenen, Saskatchewan**, who has sent us his membership dues, a generous donation and a cheerful "hello". We are truly pleased when our Veterans take a few minutes to send us a note....The Commemorative Association welcomes **Doug Styles** of **Edmonton**, Alberta as a new member. Doug is a military historian and collector of memorabilia, such as medals and various documents associated with the military. We have had a couple of very interesting phone conversations and I know that Doug has considerable knowledge of the Defence of Hong Kong and a strong interest in matters concerning the Veterans. Welcome aboard, Doug....Very much enjoyed a telephone chat with **Bill Nicholson** from his winter home in **Tempe, Arizona**. **Tom Dewar** of **Winnipeg** thought he might have lost touch with Bill due to a returned letter. It turns out that the Nicholsons still have a residence in Victoria, B.C. but are there only in the summer. I think all parties have now touched base, so all is well. Bill has sent applications for membership in the Commemorative Association to his two daughters, so we hope to hear from them shortly, and to welcome them into our family.

That's it for now folks. Thanks again to those who have sent in their dues and a friendly reminder to those who haven't. There are lots of exciting things happening with your organization, some of which are noted elsewhere in this letter. We welcome your ideas on all matters pertaining to the Hong Kong Veterans' Association and look forward to hearing from you.

Barry Mitchell

Last Post

Cecil Devouge, E-29892, on December 24th, 2001

George Belcourt, H-6618 on Dec.28, 2001

Milton MacDonald, E-30184 on January 3rd,2002

Renaud Cot  e , D-110142 on January 13th, 2002

Kenneth R. Inche, C-65559 on January 30th, 2002.

Allen Martin, K-84852 on February 7th. 2002

John Fertal, H-20798 on February 21st, 2002.

Albert H. Delbridge, H-6331 on February 28th, 2002.

Harold A. (Harry) Atkinson, H-41687 on March 2nd, 2002

John W. Pople H-6183 on March 12th, 2002

Our thoughts and prayers are extended to all the families and friends.

"We will remember them"

Miscellaneous Items

Tribute to Bert Delbridge - George

Peterson

Bert was a founding member of the Manitoba Branch and in later years was elected into the executive and became President. As the Manitoba President he was a member of the National Executive Council and soon was elected to be National President. He performed his duties and commitments to our association to the best of his ability.

The Hong Kong Veterans of Canada owe a lot to people like Harry Atkinson and Bert Delbridge. It is through their efforts, and members like them, that we are receiving recognition of what we endured in the Battle of Hong Kong and the ensuing years while held captive by the Japanese Empire. I say now on behalf of all my comrades, Harry and Bert, your job has been completed, thank you and now, may you at long last rest in peace and the Good Lord bless you.

! ! ! !

Dorothy Morris called me for some information and we had a nice chat. She will be 80 in August and still gets lots of exercise with her apricot coloured poodle, Queeny. Thanks for the call, Dorothy.

! ! ! !

I received a note from Lillian Bjornson (nee Townsend) of Selkirk, MB. She would like to talk to anyone who knew her brother Cpl. George Townsend H 6186. Her mother received word that George died in the mines in Osaka and Lillian would like further information about this.

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ARMY CADET LEAGUE OF CANADA

The Army Cadet League of Canada is a non profit, civilian organization, established in 1971 to partner with the Canadian Forces to support the Army Cadet Program. To help the League do more for Army Cadets and become more pro-active, they are attempting to increase their membership and also develop a more extensive foundation of potential supporters. If you have any questions, please contact Dave Boudreau, executive director, at 613/ 991-9637 (direct), 877/ 276-9223 (toll free) or by email at dboudreau@armycadetleague.ca. The League address is 305 Rideau Street Ottawa, ON K1N 9E5 and the website can be accessed at www.armycadetleague.ca.

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One of the very talented people who has joined our web master, Linda, is Claire Hachey. Here is one of her poems to honour the memory of her Dad, Rifleman Dean W. Hachey, and his comrades in arms, the Hong Kong Veterans:

Faded Glory

Faded glory

Old medals resting on his chest

Tarnished reminders

Of a young man at his best

Called upon to serve

In distant lands unknown

For king and for country

No mercy to be shown

Duty calls

Fears he must cast aside

There is no place to run to

Nowhere he can hide

So to the battlefield

He marches head held high

His heart pounding like thunder

As darkness fills the sky

A young boy's dreams

A man's despair

Entwined like barbed wire seen

Sprawled across his hidden lair

Faded glory

Old wounds still not healed

Though he survived the hell

Of war on a bloodstained field

For memories linger

Where red flowers bloom

And silent guns still echo

The dreaded march of doom

Humour

Morris and his wife Esther went to the state fair every year and every year Morris would say, "Esther, I'd like to ride in that airplane." Esther always replied, "I know Morris, but that airplane ride costs 50 dollars, and 50 dollars is 50 dollars." One year Morris and Esther went to the fair and Morris said, "Esther, I'm 85 years old. If I don't ride that airplane I might never get another chance." Esther replied, "Morris, that airplane ride costs 50 dollars, and 50 dollars is 50 dollars." The pilot overheard them and said, "Folks, I'll make you a deal. I'll take you both up for a ride. If you can stay quiet for the entire ride and not say one word, I won't charge you; but if you say one word it's 50 dollars." Morris and Esther agreed and up they went. The pilot did all kinds of twists and turns, rolls and dives, but not a word was heard. He did all his tricks over again, but still not a word. When they landed, the pilot turned to Morris and said, "By golly I did everything I could think of to get you to

yell out, but you didn't." Morris replied, "Well, I was gonna say something when Esther fell out, but 50 dollars is 50 dollars."

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Five cannibals get appointed as engineers in an electrical utility. During the welcoming ceremony the boss says, "You're all part of our team now. You can earn good money here, and you can go to the cafeteria for something to eat. So please don't trouble any of the other employees". The cannibals promised. Four weeks later the boss returns and says, "You're all working very hard, and I'm very satisfied with all of you. However, one of our janitors has disappeared. Do any of you know what happened to him?" The cannibals all shake their heads no. After the boss has left, the leader of the cannibals says to the others, "Which of you idiots ate the janitor?" A hand raises hesitantly, to which the leader of the cannibals replies, "You fool! For four weeks we've been eating Department Managers, Supervisors and Project Managers and no one noticed anything, and you have to go and eat the janitor!"

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A 90-year-old man went to his doctor for his annual check-up. The doctor asked him how he's feeling. The 90-year-old says, "I've never felt better. I have an 18-year-old bride who is pregnant with my child. What do you think about that?" The doctor considers his question for a minute and then begins, "I have a friend who is an avid hunter and never misses a season. One day when he was going out in a bit of a hurry, he accidentally picked up his umbrella instead of his gun. When he got to the creek, he saw a prime beaver sitting beside the stream of water. He raised his umbrella and went, 'Bang bang' and the beaver fell over dead. What do you think of that?" The 90-year-old said, "I'd say somebody else shot that beaver." The doctor replied....."My point exactly".

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The other night I was invited out for a night with the guys. I told my wife that I would be home by midnight... "promise!" Well, the hours passed quickly and the beer was going down way too easy. At 3 am, drunk as a skunk, I headed for home. Just as I got in the door, the cuckoo clock in the hall started up and cuckooed three times. Quickly, I realized she'd probably wake up, so I cuckooed another 9 times. I was really proud of myself for having such a rapid, witty solution, even though I was drunk. The next morning my wife asked me what time I got in, and I told her 12 o'clock. She didn't seem disturbed at all. Got away with that one, I thought! Then she told me we needed a new cuckoo clock. When I asked her why she said, "Well, last night it cuckooed 3 times, then said, 'oh shit,' cuckooed 4 more times, cleared its throat, cuckooed another 3 times, giggled, cuckooed twice more then farted."

(((((

One hot July day, we found this old straggly cat at our door. She was a sorry sight, starving, dirty, smelled terrible, skinny and hair all matted down. We felt sorry for her, put her in a carrier and took her to the vet. She had no name so we named her pussy cat. The vet decided to keep her for a day or so, and said he would let us know when we could come and get her. My husband, the complaining type, said "OK, but don't forget to wash her, she stinks. My husband and my vet don't see eye to eye. He calls my hubby El-Cheap-O, and my hubby calls him El-Take-O. The next day, hubby had an appointment with his doctor, who is located next door to the vet. The doctor's office was full of people waiting to see the doctor (many our friends and neighbors). The door opened and in popped the vet and announces to my hubby, "Your wife's pussy is finally shaved and clean. She now smells like a rose. And by the way, I think she is pregnant. God only knows who the father is!" and then he closed the door...

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Reminders

Monthly lunches at Rae & Jerry's Restaurant on Portage Ave. at NOON every 2nd Thursday of the month; except June and December.

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Manitoba Branch of the HKVA will be hosting the **ANNUAL DINNER on October 19, 2002**, so please mark that date on the calendar – we would like to see you there.

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Quebec Region will be hosting their **ANNUAL REUNION on August 15 - 17, 2002**, so mark your calendar, if you plan to attend.

(This poem was written by Mother Teresa and is engraved on the wall of her home for children in Calcutta)

People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you. Be honest and frank anyway.

What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight. Build anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow. Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough. Give the world the best you've got anyway. You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and God; It was never between you and them anyway.

— — —

**** PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS****

The Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association address in Ottawa is: 1 Stafford Road, Ste.164, Nepean, ON, K2H 1B9. This new address should be noted by anyone who purchased one of the earlier grave markers as it will have the old address on the sheet to send in to register the location of the grave.

Your Branch Council Phone Numbers - Keep Them Handy:

George Peterson, President	256-7174
Bill Maltman, 1st Vice	669_4941
Carol Hadley, Secrtry/Newsletter	837-6754
Barry Mitchell, Treasurer/Membership	269-1497
Juliet Lafortune, Social	338-3354
Terence Jackson, Memorials	452-1460
Phil Dodderidge, Nat'l President	418-392-5838

