

# HONG KONG VETERANS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

MANITOBA BRANCH  
PO BOX 381  
WINNIPEG, MB R3C 2H6

July, August September  
2003

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district office do not change. If you have any questions please contact your VAC councilor in your district office.

After the VAC meeting, I was invited to attend the general meeting of our Calgary Branch. With seven members in attendance, an election was held for the executive. The new executive is Jack Smith, President; Ed Shayler, Secretary; and Ralph McLean remains as Treasurer by acclamation. Ed Shayler informed me that they have a nucleus of relative & friends of the HK vets that will form the Alberta/Saskatchewan Branch of our HKVCA. At this meeting the sum of \$2000.00 was passed to enable this executive to begin formation of the new Region. I spent the balance of my time in Calgary, very enjoyably, at the home of Ed and Lorna Shayler renewing our acquaintance and later they very kindly drove me to the airport for my flight home.

Recently I received a phone call from a man in Edmonton, Simon Ho. Mr. Ho was 6 years old living in Hong Kong during the Battle. He arrived in Canada 33 years ago and has become a collector of military artifacts particularly related to the Battle of Hong Kong. A few years ago he attended an auction in the United States where he bought an envelope with no letter inside addressed to the Canadian Bank of Commerce (Main Office) Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada. The front of the envelope was stamped "Detained in Hong Kong by Japanese from December 1941 to September 1945". Lt. J.D. McCarthy's signature appears as having been censored & passed by him. CPL. H. KELSO H-6499 of D Coy had written this letter with his signature on the reverse side. Mr. Ho kindly mailed a copy of it to me. During our conversation he mentioned that he had another envelope that I thought he said had been mailed to Bill Maltman by his mother. I will write to Mr. Ho to clarify this and ask for a copy of that envelope also.

## *President's Report*

It's very sad to begin my message by reporting on the deaths of Emile Van Raes, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, Bill Maltman, April 4<sup>th</sup>, and Roy Robinson on April 26<sup>th</sup>. As you know, these valued comrades had been in ill health for some time but were hanging in there and now we are all left with feeling a great loss. Bill's service, held on April 11<sup>th</sup>, Roy's on May 2<sup>nd</sup> and Emile's on May 9<sup>th</sup> were well attended by our HK and Commemorative members and the Colour Party. I had the honour of saying a few words at each service. Our deepest condolences are extended to the bereaved families as we share their grief and miss their presence. May they rest in Peace.

The meeting with VAC Prairie Advisory Council held in Calgary in April, was a huge success. Many items were discussed in regard to our aging veterans and their needs. Many of you, who are in receipt of VIP services, will receive a letter from VAC explaining the new direction for the cheques. The benefits and the role of VAC

**Box 381 Winnipeg, MB R3C 2H6 Address for dues and/or correspondence for HKVA and HKVCA**

Mr. Syd Davy, President of the Intrepid Society, has approached Juliet and I with a proposal for a statue honouring the HK veterans. The Intrepid Society, (the code name for Sir William Stephenson, a man from Winnipeg who was Sir Winston Churchill's head of espionage operations during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War) is a registered charitable organization which seeks to keep Canada's military heritage alive and meaningful to those for whom sacrifices were made. One of the projects was to commission Leo Mol (who resides in Winnipeg) to create a full size statue of Sir William which stands on Memorial Blvd presently. The society believes the Canadian participation in the battle for Hong Kong should also be commemorated with two identical statues designed by Leo Mol with one erected in Winnipeg and one in Quebec. The total cost for this project is estimated at \$300,000.00 with a request for \$30,000.00 from the HKVA as a commitment to begin the project. The proposal states that a request for funding will be made to the Federal and Provincial governments, donations from members of the HKVA, and fund-raising will supply the balance of the monies. The statues would depict 3 soldiers – a Grenadier, a Royal Rifle and one representing the people of our support units who were in Hong Kong. I will be putting this proposal up to our members of the HKVA executive council in Victoria in August and will advise you of the outcome.

Juliet and I will be attending the services at Brookside Cemetery on Sunday, June 15<sup>th</sup> for the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Brookside Cemetery. Neil Bardal and Padre Gord Shields organized this event. During the ceremony we will recognize the sacrifice of the Kelso family who lost Harry & Jack in Hong Kong and a third son while serving with the Grenadier Militia. On June 22, also at Brookside Field of Honour, we will be laying our wreath at the Annual Decoration Day service.

I mentioned in my last report that my good wife and I are having some renovations done to our home. After tearing down our attached garage, patio, part of our dining room wall, and the driveway, we can see that the completion is in sight. For the last 3 months during the hours of 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. week days and sometimes Saturday one of us had to be home so we will be glad to see the end of

that. Now is the time to close this report and wish you all the best. May you have a level road to travel with the wind at your back.

Sincerely & in comradeship  
George

### ***Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association***

- Juliet Lafortune, Regional Director  
Hi everyone,

River East School Division held a "Manitoba Heritage" display at the Centro Caboto Centre on Wilkes Avenue on May 8<sup>th</sup>. With a borrowed display case from Manitoba Museum and some of the items from our Museum displays, we entered the event. We truly appreciated the assistance of Wyn Andres and Gerry Woodman of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles Museum at Minto Armouries for manning the display and their intimate knowledge of the items in the display. This was our first attempt at bringing information to students about the conflict in Hong Kong and we hope to do more of it in the future.

We are awaiting a proposal from the Intrepid Society that wish to erect a **monument** to acknowledge the efforts of the members of 'C' Force. The sculptor will be internationally known, Leo Mol. The intent is to have 2 monuments – one in Winnipeg for the Winnipeg Grenadiers and one in Quebec for the Royal Rifles. George Peterson was asked to be one of the models for the monument. The National Executive will review the proposal before approval is given.

Contact has been made with the committee initiating the **Humanitarian Museum** to be completed in a couple of years and situated at the Forks, indicating our interest for a display probably in an electronic format. This display will be educational in nature and depicting the issues of human rights that have surrounded the HK veterans.

We have initiated a proposal to have a plaque placed in the **True North Arena** in memory of the HK vets. The committee for this project requires the name of the HK vet, if he worked in Winnipeg or in rural Manitoba, and the name of the place where he worked. With this information we have a better chance of proceeding with this

proposal. So please send as much information as you can about any, or as many as you can, of the HK vets so that we are successful.

**August 10, 2003** will be the **VJ Day** observance at All Saints Church in the Parish Hall at 1 p.m. Please bring family and friends to share this special time together and partake in light refreshment.

Plans are in the works for our **Annual Reunion in October 25, 2003** to be held at the Holiday Inn Airport West on Portage Avenue in Winnipeg. More information will be sent out in the mail. So please reserve that date and plan on attending – we hope to see and greet many of our members for this special time of fellowship.

Congratulations to the newly elected National Executive who will be serving for the next 2-year term:

Carol Hadley - President

David Murray - 1st.Vice

Neil Darrah - 2nd Vice

Barry Mitchell - Treasurer

Lucette Mailloux-Muir - Secretary

A scooter and 2 walkers have been donated to Deer Lodge Hospital for HK Vet's or widows use. Mrs. Sheardown of Rossburn, donated the scooter MB in memory of Pte. W.J. Hill. Allan and Carol Hadley and Bill and Janie Agerbak donated 2 walkers.

Pam Heinrichs, Pat Bale and Carol Hadley are working on a presentation for the Dept. of Education in Manitoba and for a teachers' conference in the fall with the intent of obtaining acceptance to include the Asian-Pacific theatre of WWII into the senior level of education. We have copies of the syllabus in use in BC and the one being proposed in Ontario as resource material for our proposal.

A brief reminder of the **National Convention** being held in Victoria, BC in **August 14- 17, 2003** and we hope to see many of our members in attendance.

### ***Winnipeg Grenadier's Hong KongTrust Fund***

- Donna Remillard

The Winnipeg Grenadiers Hong Kong Trust Fund appreciate all donations that are received to meet the requests that are made annually by the issue of the Winnipeg Grenadiers Hong Kong veterans, for their higher education.

Cheques should be made out to **Winnipeg Grenadier's Hong Kong Trust Fund** (not HKVA).

The Hong Kong Veterans' Association donates to this fund in memory of each deceased veteran member.

Contributions can be directed to:

**Donna Remillard at 303-740 Kenaston Boulevard, Winnipeg, MB R3N 1Y3** or phone her at (204) 489-0008.

### ***Notes from Barry Mitchell,***

#### ***Treasurer and Membership***

Greetings to all in the HKVA and the Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association. I extend my best wishes for a terrific summer and I hope you have the opportunity to take full advantage of Canada's great outdoors.

I'm glad we have been able to bring together a variety of items for the membership to purchase and proudly display or wear, as the case may be. Your Editor has dubbed our collections of goodies "Barry's Emporium" which seems to fit our ever increasing inventory. However, I request that when you make a purchase, **please make out your cheque to "HKVCA"** as the bank is wondering about this mysterious company that has entered the

retail business. My wife Connie acts as our shipping department and has a great time making up the packages to all parts of the country. We are pleased that the items are catching the fancy of our members and we will be adding to our array of merchandise as new products are brought to our attention.

One of the benefits of distributing these items is the chance for me to meet with some of our Vets and have regular communication with our Regions. For example, **Verna Pearson**, the Treasurer and Membership person for the **Atlantic Region**, has seen fit to make sure as many members as possible are well identified as members of the Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association. Verna has placed the largest orders, by far, for the lovely Maple Leaf pin and I am so impressed with just how well they are going over in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Well done Verna!!

I have also had the opportunity to visit briefly with **Tom Dewar** of **Winnipeg** when making my deliveries as well as a couple of trips to **Cliff Matthew's** home here in town. Both of these guys, along with quite a few others, have ordered a copy of the video "Slaves of the Rising Sun" and it has become a 'best seller'. I'm so pleased that these videos have such a wide appeal as this is a handy way of telling our story and in a way that can reach people of all ages. So, folks, here's a chance to pick up a dandy gift for just \$10.00. Just send me a note and keep in mind we can include pins, scrolls, decals, and even handsome shirts for just a few dollars more.

Since the last newsletter, I have sent out a reminder notice to those who had not yet paid their dues for 2003. As usual, the response was really good, but there are still a few who haven't found the time to put a cheque in the mail. Like everyone else, we need to pay our bills, so we cannot allow any 'free rides' for our members. After a couple of years of non-payment, we will have to remove members' names from our mailing list but hopefully everyone will wish to continue to offer their support. We now have over 75% paid and I don't see why we can't make this 100% by convention time.

You will be pleased to know that we are still attracting new members and I send out special greetings to all those who are receiving their first

newsletter. We now have about 200 members on our dues-paying list, which is over and above the veterans and widows who are lifetime members at no charge. But we also need a few volunteers for the executive, to occasionally help with one or more of the many projects we are working with. Ontario, by contrast, has about a dozen people on their executive to contribute their efforts in an organization that consists of about 300 members. Admittedly, they have a huge geographical area to deal with, but nonetheless they have been able to recruit many more willing hands than Manitoba. I suspect that there are at least a couple of people out there who would like to join us in our monthly meetings, so please give Juliet Lafortune a call and try us on for size. We can use your help and I'm sure you will feel rewarded for your efforts!

In case you are wondering exactly what it is we do, it can best be summed up by "spreading the word". We want as many people as possible to know about the Defence of Hong Kong, the sacrifice our veterans made in that battle and in the years following in prison camps under horrific conditions. We want the history of Asia in the 1930's and 1940's to be told to all young Canadians and to do this, we need to find audiences in schools and other facilities where the youth of Canada gather. Our executive (primarily the ladies) has been attending various functions to tell this story, sometimes with the aid of artifacts in display cases. Our major effort will be to follow the lead of our Ontario and BC Regions whereby our history is documented in such a way as to have it included in the provincial school curriculum. This takes lots of work and we would welcome new voices and faces.

By the way, I believe Manitoba lost one of its more active veterans when **Harry Gyselman** quietly moved to **Comox, BC**. Harry was a regular at the monthly lunches and I'm sure that when we last spoke, he said he was going to visit family in BC and was going to take a leisurely drive out west on vacation. However, it seems he has really settled into his new digs and is thrilled with his new location in Comox. We miss you Harry, but of course are pleased that you have settled in to your new (permanent?) home so well.

I must tell you that finally having my own computer is a really good deal--it beats trying to

squeeze things in at work at my office downtown. I can now work at different times of the day or night and accommodate my mood towards cranking out financial statements and the like. It's also handy to be able to respond promptly when an e-mail arrives, so please contact me on any subject pertaining to Hong Kong Vets, or on any subject at all, for that matter ([bcmitchell@shaw.ca](mailto:bcmitchell@shaw.ca)).

The convention seems to have heated up not only our paraphernalia sales but has also caused us to get all our ducks lined up for good discussion in Victoria. We now have a deadline to meet for the proposals that need to be discussed and reviewed on a national basis, so we're looking forward to moving our organization ahead this summer. Geography is a challenge, however, and in a country as large as Canada, it's difficult to bring all our members together in one place. I look forward to meeting many of you this summer and renewing acquaintances from the last convention here in Winnipeg.

For those who need a reminder, now is the time to send in your dues for 2003. If you aren't sure whether or not you have paid, just give me a call (204-269-1497) and we'll bring you up-to-date. Please forward 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.

Best wishes to all--see you in Victoria!

Cheers,

Barry Mitchell

### ***Miscellaneous Items***

Our **website** ([www.hkvca.ca](http://www.hkvca.ca)) is very important for many reasons. It is a source of communication for our members and others, outside of our HK family. It is also a way to share the many talents of our members. The **'Special Features'** folder on the web site spotlights certain individuals who are willing to have their gift shared with all of us. One of the more recent additions to the web site is a paper written by **Heather Heinrichs**, granddaughter

of HK veteran **Ferdinand (Fred) Poitras, WG, H 6359**.

Heather was one of three winners chosen by the No. 1 Branch (Winnipeg) of the Royal Canadian Legion, for her essay on the Battle of Hong Kong. Heather is 16 years old, in Grade 11 at Gordon Bell High School in Winnipeg. Heather and her family accompanied Fred in the 2000 Pilgrimage that had a profound effect on all of the first-time visitors and gave her greater insight to express her feelings in this wonderful paper.



Another reason our web site has great value, is for education purposes. As our HKVCA strive to have the senior levels of education in the various provinces expanded to include the Asian Pacific theatre of war, particularly the Battle of Hong Kong with all its issues, this web site will aid, the students in their studies and the teachers with resources. It has begun with a new folder **'Lesson Plans'**. This folder contains information about the project from Ontario Region with 10 lessons that are presently being promoted to the Department of Education in Ontario. The document **"Canada in Hong Kong: 1941-1945 The Forgotten Heroes"** is an excellent plan for educators to use with clear, precise information that is ready for any classroom.

Ontario Region has sold many of George MacDonell's book **"A Soldier's Story"** to the

**Rotary Clubs of Ontario** for donation into the senior high schools of Ontario and as a resource for the 10 lessons. Well done to all those hard workers in our neighboring province.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥  
If you are wondering what Manitoba Region is doing about the education project – it is work in progress. As Julie has reported there is a committee formed that is working to have change implemented in Manitoba’s Department of Education curriculum but many obstacles have been thrown in the path.

An information package was sent to a special group of teachers belonging to MSSTA (which stands for Manitoba Social Science Teacher Association) to be reviewed and for comments. We asked for suggestions on how we might recommend this information to the Department of Education in Manitoba as we heard that this curriculum was to be under going change. We heard nothing from this group and our contact has been unable to retrieve the information or extract an official letter with any comments.

As things happen in this world when people are very determined to achieve something, another lead has come our way. This experienced person will assist us with developing a presentation for the Social Studies teachers at their gathering at the end of October. We will go armed with information from both new curriculums from British Columbia and Ontario. We plan on making resource buckets for teachers to use that will contain all the information for the lessons including the video, “Slaves of the Rising Sun”, lists of books (from the web site), a powerpoint presentation, a list of artifacts from the Manitoba Museum and any other place that would have information about our ‘C’ Force.

So you see we haven’t been idle, maybe just a few more hurtles to cross. If anyone wishes to help with this project please don’t hesitate to contact any of the Executive.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥  
**ADDRESS CHANGES???**

Please, don’t forget to let us know if you have any changes to your phone number or address. It is very important to keep this current so that communication can be sent out without incurring extra charges for postage when we finally track you

down or worse still if we lose you for a period of time.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

\*\* “**Honour & Pride**” is a CD produced by **Cove Records Inc.**, with the assistance of our Padre - Rev. Gordon Shields, to assist anyone that is organizing a memorial or funeral service for veterans. At our VJ Day Memorial in August, we used excerpts of the CD. The CD has the correct order of service and music to enhance any event. There are 2 distributors for “**Honour and Pride**” now, Royal Canadian Legion – Dominion Command Kit-Shop, 359 Kent St., Ottawa, ON K2P 0R7 and McNally Robinson Booksellers at [www.mcnallyrobinson.ca](http://www.mcnallyrobinson.ca). The cost of the CD is \$25.00 plus taxes (and shipping and handling where applicable).

***Humour***

*(With Canada Day approaching I thought this was appropriate.)*

An American decided to write a book about famous churches around the world. For his first chapter he decided to write about American churches. So he bought a plane ticket and took a trip to Orlando, thinking that he would work his way across the country from South to North.

On his first day he was inside a church taking photographs when he noticed a golden telephone mounted on the wall with a sign that read "\$10,000 per call".

The American, being intrigued, asked a priest who was strolling by what the telephone was used for. The priest replied that it was a direct line to heaven and that for \$10,000 you could talk to God. The American thanked the priest and went along his way.

Next stop was in Atlanta. There, at a very large cathedral, he saw the same golden telephone with the same sign under it. He wondered if this was the same kind of telephone he saw in Orlando and he asked a nearby nun what its purpose was. She told him that it was a direct line to heaven and that for \$10,000 he could talk to God. "O.K., thank you," said the American. He then traveled to

Indianapolis, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York. In every church he saw the same golden telephone with the same "\$10,000 per call" sign under it. The American, upon leaving Vermont saw a sign for Canada and decided to see if Canadians had the same phone. He arrived in Edmonton, and again, there was the same golden telephone, but this time the sign under it read "10 cents per call." The American was surprised so he asked the priest about the sign. " Father, I've traveled all over America and I've seen this same golden telephone in many churches. I'm told that it is a direct line to Heaven, but in every state the price was \$10,000 per call. Why is it so cheap here? The priest smiled and answered, "You're in Canada now son, it's a local call".

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What Gender Are They?

Ziploc Bags - male, because they hold everything in, but you can always see right through them.

Shoe - male, because it is usually unpolished, with its tongue hanging out.

Copier - female, because once turned off, it takes a while to warm up.

Tire - male, because it goes bald and often is over inflated.

Hot Air Balloon - male, because to get it to go anywhere you have to light a fire under it... and, of course, there's the hot air part.

Sponges - female, because they are soft and squeezable and retain water.

Subway - male, because it uses the same old lines to pick people up.

Hourglass - female, because over time, the weight shifts to the bottom.

Hammer - male, because it hasn't evolved much over the last 5,000 years, but it's handy to have around.

Remote Control - female! .... Ha! You thought I'd say male. But consider this... it gives men pleasure, he'd be lost without it, and while he doesn't always know the right buttons to push, he keeps trying.

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ALL ABOUT GOLF A golfer asked his friend, "Why are you so late?" The friend replied, "It's Sunday. I had to toss a coin between going to church or playing golf . . . and it took 25 tosses to get it right!"

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A gushy reporter told Jack Nicklaus, "You are spectacular, your name is synonymous with the game of golf. You really know your way around the course. What's your secret?"

Nicklaus replied, "The holes are numbered".

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A young man and a priest are playing together. At a short par-3 the priest asks, "What are you going to use on this hole my son?" The young man says, "An 8-iron, father. How about you?" The priest says, "I'm going to hit a soft seven and pray." The young man hits his 8-iron and puts the ball on the green. The priest tops his 7-iron and dribbles the ball out a few yards. The young man says, "I don't know about you father, but in my church when we pray, we keep our head down."

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Mulligan: An American went to Scotland and played golf with a newly acquainted Scottish golfer. After a bad tee shot, he played a "Mulligan" which was an extremely good one. He then asked the Scot, "What do you call a Mulligan in Scotland?" "We call it hitting 3."

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Police are called to an apartment and find a woman holding a bloody 5-iron standing over a lifeless man. The detective asks, "Ma'am, is that your husband?" "Yes" says the woman. "Did you hit him with that golf club?"

"Yes, yes, I did." The woman begins to sob, drops the club, and puts her hands on her face. "How many times did you hit him?" "I don't know, five, six, maybe seven times.....just put me down for a five."

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"The Consultant"

A shepherd was herding his flock in a remote pasture when suddenly a brand-new BMW advanced out of the dust cloud towards him. The driver, a young man in a Broni suit, Gucci shoes, Ray Ban sunglasses and YSL tie, leaned out the window and asked the shepherd; "If I tell you exactly how many sheep you have in your flock,

will you give me one?"

The shepherd looked at the man, obviously a yuppie, then looked at his peacefully-grazing flock and calmly answered, "Sure."

The yuppie parked his car, whipped out his IBM Thinkpad and connected it to a cell phone, then he surfed to a NASA page on the internet where he called up a GPS satellite navigation system, scanned the area, and then opened up a database and an Excel spreadsheet with complex formulas. He sent an email on his Blackberry and, after a few minutes, received a response. Finally, he prints out a 130 page report on his miniaturized printer then turns to the shepherd and says..... "You have exactly 1586 sheep."

"That is correct; take one of the sheep." said the shepherd. He watches the young man select one of the animals and bundle it into his car.

Then the shepherd says: "If I can tell you exactly what your business is, will you give me back my animal?"

"OK, why not." answered the young man.

"Clearly, you are a consultant." said the shepherd.

"That's correct." says the yuppie, "but how did you guess that?" "No guessing required." answers the shepherd. "You turned up here although nobody called you. You want to get paid for an answer I already knew, to a question I never asked, and you don't know crap about my business....

Now give me back my dog."

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Thank you, to all of you who send me the jokes. The jokes serve a dual purpose as they brighten my day and I appreciate the contributions to share with the rest of the members. Keep up the good work!

### ***Reminders***

**Monthly lunches** have changed location to St. James Legion on Portage Ave. at NOON - 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month. Full accessibility available.

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The National Convention will be held August 13 – 17, 2003 in Victoria, BC,

please refer to your registration package for further information.

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The Annual Reunion Dinner will be held October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003 – information package will be sent out later, please keep the date open.

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VJ DAY will be observed on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2003 at All Saint's Church, Broadway and Osborne. Everyone welcome!

**\*\* 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:**

<b>George Peterson, President</b>	<b>256-7174</b>
<b>Carol Hadley, Secrtry/Newsletter</b>	<b>837-6754</b>
<b>Barry Mitchell, Treasurer/Membership</b>	<b>269-1497 338-3354</b>
<b>Juliet Lafortune, Social</b>	<b>452-1460</b>
<b>Terence Jackson, Memorials</b>	<b>418-392-</b>
<b>Phil Doddridge, Nat'l President</b>	<b>5838</b>

**\*\*PLEASE REMEMBER**

**SEND US ANY ADDRESS CHANGES –  
WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU  
AND  
CHEQUES FOR BARRY'S EMPORIUM  
SHOULD BE  
PAYABLE TO HKVCA\*\***

*Have a great summer and be safe!*