

NEWSLETTER OF THE HONG KONG VETERANS' COMMEMORATIVE ASSOCIATION

President's Report

By the time you receive this newsletter, autumn will have arrived in your area with all those glorious colours. We have moved into new activities from those we enjoyed in the summer with renewed energy from a relaxing summer, I hope you all enjoy these changes.

I wish to commend our members for their efforts in promoting the projects of the 'Commemorative Association' because in doing so you are bringing more awareness to our Hong Kong Veterans. One of our main projects, education, has been given more prominence recently in many of our Regions as their Provincial Departments of Education have expressed interest in including the curriculum sponsored by the Association. This is very exciting and we wish to encourage this in all Regions by assisting in any way we can.

One of the ways we can assist the promotion of our curriculum is by making our website a valuable tool to students and teachers by supplying them with information not readily found elsewhere. We have very capable people working on our website (www.hkvca.ca) under the direction of our Web Mistress, **Linda May** and they are: **Mike Babin** and **Jim Trick**. Please visit our website and see the new look – I am sure you will be pleased. If anyone has items to contribute to the site please contact Linda to arrange the input. We would like to gather as much information as we can on our HK veterans in the form of pictures and short biographies as we get many inquiries by family and friends.

There will be a new production on the History Channel, '**For King and Country**' with a segment on the Battle of Hong Kong. Many of our members have assisted the producers with gathering information so please try to watch the program that is to air in November.

This coming year of 2005 will commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the cessation of World War II and the liberation of our Prisoners of War. It is also a convention year and this will be held in Ottawa to participate in some special activities to mark the occasion. Ontario Region is hosting the Convention and will have some information out to everyone shortly. Please plan on attending this special occasion and honouring our Hong Kong Veterans.

2005 is also an election year for the National Executive. There will be 3 positions open for nomination, as the people have served their maximum 2 terms in that office and they are: President, 1st Vice President and 2nd Vice President. The Secretary and Treasurer may let their names stand for one more term if they wish. When the nomination papers arrive, please give them careful consideration in selecting your new Executive and promptly return them for process. The final votes will be revealed at the 2005 Convention. We hope you will attend.

To ensure the success of our Association and our projects, all our members need to give support in some way. We appreciate the financial support that is given through dues and donations - we hope this continues. Members, who have

volunteered to work, serve in office or on a project, we are grateful for your time and commitment. We hope all members will assist in strengthening our Association by recruiting new members and/or donating some time – you will find it a win/win situation.

In closing I extend congratulations to all of you who have had a celebration in your life, like a birthday or anniversary. Please let us know of these wonderful times so that we can share with all our HK family. Also please let us know if there are other issues that may be a problem and we will try to help you find a solution. On a sadder note, we have heard of some of our members with health problems and families that are in mourning. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and I sincerely hope that you will be comforted by this.

May the Spirit of the coming Holidays be good to you all.
Sincerely, Carol Hadley

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HKVA President's Report

First, let me express my concern for Ian's parents, Lloyd and Peggy Doull. Lloyd was my platoon sergeant in "D" Company and has remained a friend over all these sixty-four plus years. Peggy was a pillar of strength in affairs of the Royal Canadian Legion where they used to live in Drummondville, Quebec. She was also involved in helping Lloyd in his many duties for the Hong Kong Veterans Association, including a term as National President.

Lloyd and Peggy have both been unwell. They are in our thoughts with wishes for improvement and a return to good health.

REMEMBRANCE DAY

It is gratifying to see the increase in interest by the general public all across Canada on November 11th, in remembering the sacrifices of Canadians in all wars. Hong Kong veterans are front and centre in many localities. We are also pleased that so many of our HKVCA members are becoming involved. They are carrying the ball far better than many of us ever did.

THE DARK SIDE OF THE SUN

Michael Palmer is the grandson of George Palmer, Hong Kong veteran and ex-member of the Royal Rifles. He has written a book, titled as noted above, in which he chronicles the journey of his grandfather from Newfoundland to Omine and back to Prince Edward Island.

Michael has done exhaustive research, has interviewed many, many, Hong Kong Veterans, has checked archives and reports from many sources and has tracked down numerous leads, in his effort to get the story of his grandfather's journey through those trying days down on paper for all to read. His efforts are a tribute to his grandfather's memory, and the results of his labours are yet another chapter in the story of the colossal mess that was "Hong Kong".

Michael's book will be available soon. Watch for it. Look for the links in the HKVCA web site and you'll get his website. Very impressive.

CONTACT

I feel honoured to have been in contact with so many of our Hong Kong Veterans in recent days.

I have heard from Lionel Speller, Aubrey Flegg, George MacDonell, John (Jesse) James, John Stroud, George Peterson, Ed Shayler, (who gave me news of Jack Smith, Don Nelson and Gus Bitzer), Reg Law, Henry Lyons and Dick Keays. I get frequent letters and newspaper clippings from Flash Clayton. Flash is one of the most active of our members, appearing as guest speaker at Legions and schools to spread the message. In addition to that, I see Lance Ross occasionally, and Bob Barter and Arnold Ross live in the same town as I do and we meet often. I have also heard from Cliff McDavid.

It is heartwarming to know that the tie that binds us together knows no boundaries or limits of the

vast expanse of Canada. We are brothers all.

VERNA

Verna Pearson is a quilter of note. She has made several quilts honouring the Hong Kong Veterans, one of whom was her father, CQMS Elmer Cole, whose remains lie in Hodogoya, and her brother, Bliss Cole who lives in Saint John, New Brunswick.

Verna's most recent quilt had the pictures of several Hong Kong Veterans appliquéd to the cover. She sold tickets, and the winner was Isobel Lyons, wife of HK Vet. Henry Lyons.

Verna is another booster of the HKVCA and a valued member of the New Brunswick District. We go from strength to strength.

REUNION IN OTTAWA

By this time you will have heard of the option that was given us regarding the reunion in August, 2005 in Ottawa. If things go as planned, there should be a good turnout of Hong Kong Veterans. I hope that you will all be able to get there. It should be a great reunion.

COMMEMORATIVE ASSOCIATION

When the Association was enduring its first growing pains, one of the items that concerned us was an appropriate name. Some of the suggestions were, "Hong Kong Future", "Hong Kong Generation II," "Comemmoration Association" and a few others.

Roger Cyr came up with the name, "Commemorative Association" and it was immediately accepted.

This little tale is intended to make us think for a moment of Roger Cyr.

In the last issue of The Bamboo Telegraph, dated June, 2001, I wrote, in part: "Jean Napoleon Roger Cyr "Roger is dead. After years of fighting the dread disease, he finally succumbed to cancer on May 26, 2001.

"His leadership over the years, his dedication to his fellow Hong Kong Veterans, will be remembered as long as there is a Hong Kong Veteran alive.

"Roger's part in achieving the settlement of the claim for slave labour is only one of his efforts for which we should be grateful. One had to admire his ease of expressing himself in French and in English, and his mastery of both languages served him well, in his chosen vocation as well as in his untiring efforts on behalf of his fellow HK Veterans.

"He was laid to rest in Ottawa on May 30, after a very moving ceremony conducted by his son, The Reverend Father Terrence Cyr. Roger was 79 years old."

If he were alive, Roger would be very proud of the achievements of the Hong Kong Veterans Comemmorative Association.

CHRISTMAS IS A-COMIN'

Since this will be the last occasion for me to wish all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthful New Year, please accept my good wishes for all our members and their families for the coming 2005, 60 years of freedom.

Be good to each other and may God Bless, Philip

Treasurer's Report "Dues and Views"

Greetings to all our members from 'Sunny Manitoba'. I'm pleased that we are once again able to communicate with the complete membership through this newsletter and I thank those who are diligent enough to gather all this information, assemble it, and send it out to over a thousand people. Well done!!

As your Treasurer, I am concerned about how a small

organization like ours can survive financially with so few resources upon which to draw. I always have my eye on our bank account while continuing to seek ways to make it grow. The national association only has three sources of income—primarily our dues, which are purposely kept to a minimum so that we are readily accessible, secondly donations, which are always welcome but over which we have no control, and thirdly the sale of merchandise.

This third item is something we can all work at and it represents an opportunity to put the HKVCA on a more solid financial footing. Each Region has their own methods of fund raising and they are allowed to keep all the proceeds from their efforts. However, in addition to this, there are a few items which are supplied by the Corporate Office and proceeds from their sales remain with the national account. They include:

- Books
 - *No Reason Why* by Carl Vincent (\$35.00)
 - *17 Days Until Christmas* by Leo Berard (\$20.00)
 - *One Soldier's Story* by George MacDonell (\$20.00)
 - *The Royal Rifles of Canada in Hong Kong* by Grant Garneau (\$50.00)
- Video—*Slaves of the Rising Sun* (\$10.00)
- Grave Markers (\$52.00)
- Blazer Crest (\$20.00)

Cheques made out to HKVCA should also include return postage and can be sent to myself or Derrill Henderson.

Some of the Regions have additional items for sale and in Manitoba, for example, we offer a beautiful Honour Roll for \$20.00 which has the complete roster of the Winnipeg Grenadiers who went to Hong Kong, lapel pins (\$5.00), sweat shirts (\$20.00), and WG ties (\$30.00). Again, postage must be added to these prices.

We are most receptive to new ideas for items to sell, even though we didn't proceed with any of the suggestions put forward after the last convention in Victoria. I know it's

hard to please a national executive but we continue to search for ideas that might "click" with our membership. One thought which persists is a top-quality lapel pin with very fine artwork in the form of our crest or the like. Your thoughts on this would be welcome. We also looked into a small flag desk set but we found we would need to sell hundreds if we were to break even. The purpose of all this is to make money for the Commemorative Association and any new venture will need to have a meaningful profit associated with it as a result of reasonable sales.

So folks, we are looking for your support, not only by purchasing some of our attractive merchandise but as well by suggesting new and exciting items which might be added to our national inventory. We are in the planning stages for the next convention and it would be opportune to have a wide array of tasteful items for sale as lasting memories and souvenirs.

Thank you for supporting your organization in appreciation of the Hong Kong Veterans. You can show this support in a tangible way by promptly paying your dues, sending us a generous donation and by purchasing some of the items we make available to the membership. Your continued involvement is appreciated.

Barry Mitchell, National Treasurer

1Convention 2005

Make plans to celebrate "The Year of the Veteran" by spending the 60th Anniversary of V-J Day in the nation's capital. See the Changing of the Guard. Tour the Parliament Buildings. Take a boat ride on the World Famous Rideau Canal. Shop on the Sparks Street Mall. And much more...

While you are here, plan on attending our Annual Convention being held August 12th through 14th. Arrangements have been made at the Lord Elgin hotel which is centrally located and in walking distance of most of Ottawa's points of interest.

In addition to the Memorial Service which will be held at Canada's War Memorial, we are planning special activities such as a visit with the Governor General at Rideau Hall, a special tour of the new War Museum, and much more.

Watch your Corporate and Region Newsletters for more, and updated information. Convention Registration Packages will be mailed out in April 2005, but mark your calendar now!

Election of HKVCA Executive Committee

In August 2005, a new Executive must be elected in accordance with corporate By-Laws.

Only two individuals may be re-elected into their positions, the Treasurer (Barry Mitchell) and the Secretary (Lucette Mailloux-Muir). The President and the two Vice-Presidents must vacate their present positions.

Please consider whom you would like to see in all five Executive positions and be prepared to submit nominations when the nomination form reaches your door in the Spring edition of Wasureru-nai, our corporate newsletter.

Book Corner

We are now the agents for a new book for your library. Thanks to the efforts of Ron McGuire, NE Ontario Regional Rep., who also was instrumental in allowing us to acquire long, out-of-print classic, "No Reason Why", Simon Kooter, owner of Vanwell Publishing has agreed to credit us with the 40% dealer's discount on any sales of the following book to our members: **Behind the Fence (Life As A P.O.W. in Japan 1942-1945)** by Les Chater & Elizabeth Hamid (Card cover 288 pp 6x9") Les Chater, a Canadian with the Royal Air Force, was captured by the Japanese in 1942 at Singapore, and remained a prisoner until liberation in 1945. During that time he kept a secret diary, recording life in the camps day by day. b/w photos, illustrations, Appendices.

The cost to acquire your copy is just \$24.95 plus \$3.95 postage and handling (this covers up to two books, well packaged against damage) **plus** the taxes applicable in your province. Place your order in one of four ways:

- 1 - Calling toll free: 1-800-661-6136
- 2 - Fax: 1-905-937-1760
- 3 - Email: sales@vanwell.com
- 4 - Writing:

Vanwell Publishing Limited, Box 2131, St. Catharines, ON Canada L2R 7S2

Payment can be made for ordering options 1-3 by Visa or Mastercard, and for option 4, by those credit cards or a cheque payable to Vanwell Publishing Limited.

Important:

Be sure to identify yourself as a member of the HKVCA to ensure we receive the 40% credit to help finance our many programmes.

I would like to point out that Simon's kind arrangement eliminates us from having to buy, store and ship the books, so please order a copy now to learn about the ordeal and experiences of a non-"C" Force Canadian, Japanese held POW.

Remember we still stock five of the best books ever written about "C" Force and our HK vets. They are:

No Reason Why by Carl Vincent - \$35.00 plus postage - Widely reputed to be the best ever written about the Canadian involvement in Hong Kong.

The Royal Rifles in Hong Kong

1941-1945 - by Grant Garneau - \$50.00 postage included - Written in two parts, the first an historical view of the background and life of the men of "C" Force concentrating on the Royal Rifles; and Part two, excerpts from diaries and recounts of events by the men themselves.

17 Days Until Christmas by Leo Berard - \$20.00 plus postage - A Winnipeg Grenadier and a career soldier gives his accounts.

One Soldier's Story by George MacDonell - \$20.00 plus postage - Written that students may get a glimpse of WWII life as a soldier and as a POW.

Guest of Hirohito by Kenneth Cambon - \$20.00 plus postage - The tale of a 17 year old coming of age and his efforts to rise above the horrors of war and life as a POW.

Even if you have a copy in your library, please consider donating one or more to the schools in your area. We must take every advantage of insuring the youth of today have the opportunity of learning about the Canadians that fought in the Far East and the trials they faced while POWs. If desired, all donated copies may have a label inserted naming the Donor and the name of the person it is intended to memorialize.

We are also adding another service to the Publication "department" of your association - out of print books. Arrangements have been made with a Used Book Dealer association to advise us when out of print books of Good/Very Good condition dealing with Hong Kong become available. If you are looking for a specific book, send along your request and we'll try to locate a copy for you. You will be notified of the cost before any commitment is made.

Veteran's Corner

Widows War Veterans Allowance

Widows can now apply for War veterans Allowance in their own right. If any widow has a limited income and is having difficulty due to medical costs, etc., she may contact the local office of Veterans Affairs Canada. A "means test" will be conducted and Veterans Affairs has a formula that they use to determine eligibility for this allowance. The National Council of Veterans Associations has on its agenda, the pursuance of all possible benefits to which widows may be entitled. The NCVA will push for having a Widow's Division established within Veterans Affairs.

Veterans Issues - Just a note to remind all the vets of the ongoing dedication of the War Amps in meeting your needs. Your National Secretary acts as a "post office" for your queries, but promptly passes along any pensions & welfare issues

to them for resolution. You are encouraged to contact them directly if your problem relates directly to any benefit program.

Ontario Members - The province has cancelled the Retail Sales Tax Rebate for vehicles. They have allocated these funds to the Ontario March of Dimes home and vehicle Modification Program.

Remembrance Day - Ottawa

Roger Cyr started a "tradition" of having a different HK veteran lay the wreath at the National Cenotaph. This year, Bob "Flash" Clayton represented the Hong Kong veterans. He had as the wreath bearer, his wife Jessie. These two had several radio and TV interviews during their stay in Ottawa, and Bob also addressed the Rotary Club.

It was bitterly cold this year, but to quote Flash, "It was truly a great honour (to lay the wreath) and I really appreciated having the opportunity".

Any HK veteran wishing to lay the wreath in Ottawa should send his name to Derrill Henderson, National Secretary HKVA, 75 Priam Way, Nepean, ON, K2H 8S7.



Bob (Flash) & Jessie Clayton, November 11, 2004 laying a wreath in Ottawa.

Watch and Warn - by Allan F. Coggon

At the last meeting of the National Council of Veterans Associations, our Patron Cliff Chadderton mentioned this book. It is the story of Canadian civilians that formed the Aircraft Detection corps. Under the direction of the RCAF, it is "a story of ordinary people who answered their country's urgent call for help". During WWII, both Germany and Japan attempted to shell the shores of Canada and/or to land spies. This book, written in anecdote form, tells their stories, and gives them some public recognition. Soft cover, 150 odd pages, it is interesting to read and makes a nice addition to your WWII books.

It costs \$29.99, shipping & handling included, and may be ordered by sending a cheque to:

Allan Coggon, RR2, Mahone Bay, NS B0J 2E0.

Canada's Recipients of the Victoria Cross

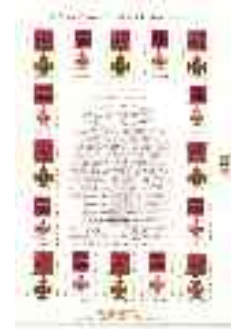
by
Ron McGuire, NE Ontario Regional Rep.

For over 35 years I have been part of a group endeavouring to have postage stamps issued for Canada's Victoria Cross winners. My most meaningful contribution was in the late 1980's when I was the Historian for the Canada Post postage stamp programme. My proposal was accepted to issue a stamp for two Victoria Cross winners. However, when the stamps were issued in 1994 there was only one for Air Marshall Billy Bishop, the second was for Mary Travers, a Quebec singer-songwriter. Canadian stamps are often issued in joined pairs and depict people with a common connection. The only thing common to Bishop and Travers is they were both born in 1894.

My rationale was that one stamp be for Bishop, a First World War airman, who also did significant work during the Second World War. The second stamp was to feature Sgt.

Major John Osborn, the first to receive the VC in the Second World War, a soldier and veteran of the Royal Navy in the First War. Thus both major wars and the three services would be represented. Makes sense? I thought so! But not to Canada Post officials?

Now for the good news. On 21 Oct 2004 a 16 stamp panel 32 mm x 48 mm was issued to recognize all 94 Canadian recipients of the VC. As good an example as you will find of the old saying "better late than never"!



In Case You Missed It ...

I thought you would be interested in the results of a "committee" that were asked to research and submit the top 40 (don't ask me why that number) War Stories from Canadian history. This Remembrance Day project was printed in many eastern newspapers - I don't know if they made the western press or not.

They were listed by conflict and among those from WWII were:
#2 - the beheading of escaped prisoner Sgt. John Payne
#7 - the story of Anna May Waters & Kay Christie
#10 - the story of Gander & his being awarded the Dickin Medal in 2000
#11 - Air Commodore Birchall

At last the pacific theatre of war is getting recognition.

The Canada Veterans Hall of Valour (CVHV)

by
Ron McGuire,

On 19 June 2004 I had the privilege to induct a hero of the First World War, William Ross Blyth, DCM, MM, into the CVHV at its second induction banquet in Ottawa. I am pleased that my involvement and work for this organization has permitted the earlier than planned induction of Sgt. Major John Osborn, VC, at the banquet on 7 May 2005. I informed our Honorary member Capt. Gerald Osborn who plans to attend to accept a replica of the certificate with his father's artist drawn sketch and appropriate text.

At this same banquet I will have the honour to induct Sgt. Lancelot Ross (RRC). I will be writing more about Lance, father of members Mitzi, Randall and Dale for the first edition of the 2005 National Newsletter.

I have also been successful in arranging the inductions in 2006 of two more members of "C" Force who were with Brigade HQ - Sgt. Charlie Clarke (CPC) and Cpl. Ken Cameron (RCOC). They were awarded the DCM and MM respectively for orchestrating a very successful sabotage of the Nippon-Koken shipyard on 20 Jan 1944. Charlie's Distinguished Conduct Medal, just below a Victoria Cross, may have also been for his actions during the defence of Hong Kong, which I outline in my article "The Postal History of Canada's World War II Hong Kong Field Force" published in 1980 (see Appendix). I am updating it for the HKVCA website. To my knowledge Charlie and Ken are the only Canadians to receive awards for valour as POWs of the Japanese. Ken is Sandi Cameron's father, to whom I am most grateful for her work to "computerize" this and my other pieces for the HKVCA newsletters. I am desperately trying to locate any members of Charlie Clark's family. If you can help, please call me now at (613) 724-3223. Thanks.

At present, I am working on a proposal for the Board of Directors to have "Gander" inducted into the

CVHV. If successful, there will be five representatives of "C" Force in the CVHV that is scheduled to open to the public in 2005. It will be in the historic, first Town Hall, now the local Museum (shown below), in Carleton Place, Ontario. I have been invited to have my eight 30" x 40" panel exhibit and case of artifacts on semi-permanent display. My panels will be familiar to members attending the National Convention in Granby (1999), Winnipeg (2001) and Victoria (2003). The panels and my artifacts will be in the Memorabilia Room at the convention in Ottawa next August.



For more information about Canada's Veterans Hall of Valour please write: Robert Campbell, President - CVHV Inc., 2084 Naskapi Drive, Ottawa, ON, K1J 8M3 or check their website: www.canadaveteranshallofvalour.com. Anyone can attend the induction banquets, a very nice affair at the Crown Plaza Hotel, in downtown Ottawa. So if you want to join the Clark and Ross families, space is limited and I suggest reservations be made ASAP. Tickets are \$40 per person and well worth the price.

While attending an appropriate function I always wear a blazer with my HKVCA crest and the nametag illustrated below. They always encourage enquiries about the HKVCA to which I am glad to be

able to respond.



MESSAGE FOR VETERANS

Veterans Affairs Canada will be going across Canada with the purpose of gathering veterans' stories as they did in 1996/97. If you missed this opportunity the last time and wish to be interviewed, please notify

Your story is important to be told for your family and students. There is new curriculum in the schools dealing with the Battle of Hong Kong and your story is an excellent resource for the students.

In Memoriam

- Raymond Drouin, RRC,
7 February, 2003
- Lt. John McGreevy, RRC,
25 March, 2004
- Lt. Elmer Denison, RRC,
13 April, 2004
- Ernest W. Roberts, WG,
4 May, 2004
- Allan R. Harper, RRC,
3 October, 2004
- Eldon MacWhirter, RRC,
7 October, 2004
- Air Commodore Leonard J.
Birchall (Retired)
10 September, 2004
- John F. Webb, RRC,
9 October, 2004
- J.C. (Chris) Webb, RRC
12 October, 2004
- Harry White, WG
28 October, 2004
- David Martin, WG
16 November, 2004

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

The following deaths have occurred within the greater "Hong Kong family".

Dorothy McGrath, widow of John McGrath, RRC

12 February, 2004

Florence May Fryatt, widow of Walter Fryatt, celebrated her 100th birthday in August 2003

19 June, 2004

Charlie Gordon, WWII veteran, friend of the HKVA

Dorothy Lockhart, widow of Maurice Lockhart, RRC

20 June, 2004

Beth Agerbak, widow of Knud Agerbak, WG,

30 August, 2004

REGION REPORTS

From BC ...

- Linda Stewart

The British Columbia Region sends our best wishes to all Hong Kong veterans, HK widows, Commemorative members and friends. We enjoyed an exceptionally long hot summer on the west coast, but the short and rainy days of winter have now turned us into the "wet" coast.

On June 5, 2004 we held a luncheon in Victoria at the site of the 2003 HKVCA National Convention. There were 26 people in attendance, including five HK vets and their wives, and one HK widow. It was a beautiful spring day and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

A week later, on June 12, 2004 we held a second luncheon in Vancouver at the site of the 2003 luncheon on Kingsway. There were 50 people in attendance, including 6 HK vets, one HKVDC vet, one Korean War vet, and 4 HK widows. Pictures from both luncheons can be seen in the photo gallery at the HKVCA website. We will all get together again in both cities in the spring of 2005.

We are looking forward to the 2005 National Convention in

Ottawa. The Ontario Branch is working hard to put it all together. This convention will commemorate the 60th anniversary of the liberation of "C" force from Japanese POW camps. It is fitting that this event will take place in our nation's capital.

Remembrance Day ceremonies were very well attended throughout our province this year. It was a bright sunny day and the flags were flying crisply in the wind. Wreaths were placed at cenotaphs by HKVCA members in many cities throughout the province. In Victoria, Sardis, and Kelowna, Hong Kong veterans placed wreaths and paid tribute to their fallen comrades.

A tradition that is decades old will continue again on Christmas Day in Victoria this year. Hong Kong veterans and their families and friends will gather at the cenotaph in front of the Legislative buildings in Victoria at 2:00 PM to participate in a short service which will include the placing of a wreath. Christmas Day is still a difficult time for all of our HK vets, even after 64 years. If you know a vet or a widow that may be alone on December 25, please pay them a visit or pick up the phone and say hello. If you can attend the service in Victoria, please do so.

A special thanks to the HKVCA Committee members who have been working diligently on the "C" Force Memorial project as per the resolution at the National Convention in Victoria in 2003. Vince Lapota recently showed a slide show in Victoria about the project, and it was very well received by those in attendance.

In closing, we would like to wish everybody a safe and happy Holiday Season. Please take good care of each other and we will see you at HKVCA activities in the New Year.

From Alberta-Saskatchewan ...

- Gail Richoz

The AB/SK Branch of the Hong Kong Veteran's Commemorative Association has been trying to bring the families and Veterans together over the last few

weeks. On Remembrance Day in Calgary, family members and some Veterans met at the Roundup Centre to attend the services that were held there. Gordon Durrant laid a wreath on behalf of the Hong Kong Veterans. We then went to the Cenotaph where another service was held and again Gordon laid the wreath. Norma Fuchs, daughter of John Doiron, laid a wreath there on behalf of the Commemorative Association. Everyone went out for lunch afterwards.

On November 13 a luncheon was held at the Kensington Legion in Calgary. Twenty-one members of our Association met for lunch and a visit. Daniel Sakamoto read his Grandpa Ralph MacLean's "One Day" story. It was a very moving account of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, 1941. I think we are beginning to fulfill our mandate of reuniting the families and letting the world know what happened in Hong Kong during the war years.

We had some sad news from Saskatoon. David Martin passed away on November 16. He was 85 years old. He had attended the Remembrance Day Services there and had laid the wreath on behalf of the Veterans. He was buried on Friday, November 19th. Please remember him and all the Veterans of the Battle of Hong Kong.

David Coleman of Regina laid a wreath there for the HKVCA and Robert Dunlop's granddaughter laid one for the Hong Kong Veterans. There were also wreaths laid in Edmonton and Medicine Hat.

From Manitoba

- Juliet Lafortune

We have been busy in Winnipeg. We had our second **Tea and Tidbits** afternoon with the ladies and it was great. We had 14 ladies in attendance, but we would like to see more come out. There will be another one in late February or early March.

George and I have attended several functions - attending the unveiling of the new 25 cent with a poppy. November 5 dinner with War Amps; November 7 rededication of St Lukes - 100 Battalion Winnipeg

Grenadiers; November 11 wreath-laying at the Convention Centre. He keeps me hoping.

I was busy getting things prepared for the **Reunion** that was held October 23, 2004. This year all who attended received a table decoration. There were approximately 140 people in attendance; 10 were Veterans. The veterans were: **George Peterson, Garfield Lowe, Joe Michalko, John Maruschak, Grant Shepherd, John James, Larry Stebbe, Reg Riddoch, Freddie Poitras, and Bob Lytle.**

On December 5, 2004 the Winnipeg Cadet Corp will hold a **Battle of Hong Kong** parade and Memorial Service at Minto Armouries. All veterans and their families are requested to attend.

As far as the monument goes, Vince Lopata gave us a short presentation of what might take place if all goes well. If you have any comments on the monument please forward them to the Monument committee - they would like some feedback on this. You can send your comments to the committee by going to the H.K.V.C.A. web site look under Monument.

Take Care and God be with you.

From Ontario ...
- Pat Turcotte

There has been a lot of activity in the Ontario Region in 2004. In the early months we were preparing for our Mini-Reunion in September, which in itself was a great success. Mike Babin, one of our Deputy Directors, chaired that event, and there were many special moments, including a presentation by Nancy Hamer Strahl that I'll refer to in a moment. We also had a wonderful performance by John Spearn, a singer-songwriter from Edmonton, who specializes in Canadian History. He performed a number of songs that he has written about events in Canadian history, and concluded with a song he had written specially to honour those who fought at Hong Kong. The song is called "Christmas in Hong Kong, 1941",

and we hope you'll have a chance to hear it when you attend the National Convention, as we're trying to make arrangements for John to perform for us there.

On May, as well as a General Meeting which helped set up the parameters for the Mini-Reunion, our Deputy Director, Ken Skelton participated in Asian Heritage month with a spectacular display of memorabilia from his own personal collection. He was the perfect spokesperson for our organization when he explained to the Governor General, who opened the event at First Place Mall in Markham, the relevance of some of the artifacts he had included in the display. Mme. Clarkson was particularly interested because her father had fought with the Hong Kong Volunteers during the Battle of Hong Kong in 1941.

As the host Region, Ontario is now in preparation for the National Convention in Ottawa next August. A special committee, under the direction of Derrill Henderson, has been laying the groundwork in Ottawa over the last few months. No easy task with all of the political changes that have taken place in the same period. We're fortunate to have so many volunteers in the Ottawa area to start the ball rolling, and the Ontario Executive will be asking members around the province to assist in that volunteer effort in the coming December Newsletter. Ian Doull, one of the Ottawa Committee members, has written a short report in this Newsletter to give you a hint of what to expect at the Convention. Much more will be mentioned in Regional newsletters across the country. The dates in August are Friday, August 12th, Saturday, August 13th and Sunday, August 14th. The choice was based on getting as close as we could to the celebration of the Anniversary of VJ Day on August 15th, which officially marks the end of World WarII.

There have been several exciting developments in the area of the "Ten Lessons", our series of lessons for High School students, which is now being used in several

areas across the country. To highlight, Neil Darrah, Regional Director in the Atlantic Region, has just sent us a copy of a release from the Minister of Education in New Brunswick, stating that the "Ten Lessons" will be part of a pilot project in that province, at the Grade Nine level where Canadian History is taught. Once the project is complete there will be a recommendation in November of 2005 that the "Ten Lessons" become part of the New Brunswick High School curriculum. In addition, in Manitoba, as a result of the leadership role of Carol Hadley, our National President, the Winnipeg School division is using the "Ten Lessons", and other schools divisions may well follow. More work needs to be done in Ontario, and visits to school boards should take place no later than the spring of 2005. It would be very helpful if Regional Directors in the various regions across the country could let us know about the extent of interest in their areas regarding a French translation of the lessons, as we are focusing on that possibility in the next few months.

The presentation by Nancy Hamer Strahl at the Mini-Reunion in September has created quite a lot of interest on the part of Ontario members. Her high schools students were the 150 students from Port Perry who attended the Juno Beach celebrations this year after connecting with Juno Beach veterans before they went to France. Their assignment, in order to make that trip, had been to write stories about the individual veterans they had met or studied, and to create a work expressing their response to the veterans' stories. The resultant effort was to be in any form they chose, a poem, an article, a song, or some other means of expression. The plan was a great success, and Nancy Hamer Strahl explained in her presentation to us at the Mini-Reunion how she and her students have now decided that they would like to interview and learn about our Hong Kong veterans in preparation for their trip to China and Hong Kong

in 2005. They are hoping that their time in Hong Kong will coincide with HKVCA's 2005 Hong Kong pilgrimage. Something to look forward to!

Needless to say, Ontario is looking forward to seeing many HKVCA members from all across the country in Ottawa next August. If you have any ideas about the way your Region could make a contribution to the convention - even something as simple as a product representing your Region that could be part of a gift bag that everyone would receive - by all means let us know. Above all, we want everyone to really enjoy their visit, and we know this Convention will be one of the best ever. We'll keep you posted!

From Quebec

Since our last newsletter, representatives attended celebrations of the Battle of the Atlantic, ceremonies for "D-Day" 60th anniversary, various meetings for the elderly. We also held HKVCA executive meetings and we attend the monthly National BOD net meeting.

For the first of July members traveled to New Richmond, QC for the official opening of the Baie des Chaleurs Military Museum. Thanks to Phil Doddridge HK Vet., Ray Smith, museum president, and their twenty plus volunteers for their hard work in making this project come to life after ten years of hard work and preparation etc. for this "Grand Jour". Seventeen HK Vets were present, as well as many other vets, widows, family members and area Legion members.

Your Commemorative executive presented to Phil for the museum a framed Nominal Roll of all the Royal Rifles of Canada in Hong Kong. The names of all Royal Rifles Vets will be in the museum for all who visit to see. During the visit of the museum,

the frame caused a "traffic jam" as people stopped to read the names, looking for their own or someone they know.



Lucette M. Muir, QC Regional Director & Phil Doddridge, HKVA President Presentation of framed Nominal Roll RRC

Our Quebec Reunion of last August was a complete success. There were 18 HK Vets in attendance (after 2 last minute cancellations) 76 wives, widows, family members and friends for a total of 94 present for the closing banquet. Guests came from Quebec, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba and BC.

On arrival the greetings of old friends is always special for everyone. Catching up on the latest news etc. Then on Friday morning we held a joint general meeting with the Color Party and the Opening Ceremony. Reports were read, new projects were explained, suggestions were brought forward by the members etc. All in all a very good meeting.

During the afternoon, there was time to relax and fraternize in the hospitality suite. Everyone went to "La Cabane à Sucre" (The Sugar House) for dinner and evening. After a generous dinner it was time for the entertainment. The evening of dance presentations closed with the "Friendship Ring" where all guests and dancers participated.

Saturday was a full day with the morning Commemorative Ceremony, Parade etc. Flash, as usual, did a very good job with the Color Party as the Parade Marshall

with Arnold Ross, HK Veteran with the HK Banner and Veteran Friends with the Canada and Quebec flags. Prayers, reading of deceased Vets with the deposit of miniature flags and reading of deceased widows. Phil Doddridge deposited the HKV wreath, Lucette Muir deposited the HKVCA wreath and Mrs Ruth Kellas, widow of William A. Kellas HKV Wg G., helped by her son William deposited a wreath for all widows.

Following the official ceremonies, Phil Doddridge escorted by Larry Everett son of a HKV dressed in the original army uniform, took the Salute as all HKV proudly marched pass to the sound of a pipe music march.

At the banquet each wife, widow and companion of a HK Vet, received a corsage and were acknowledged by all later in the evening. The usual short speeches and thank yous by Phil Doddridge and Lucette followed.

There was great suspense as each HK Veteran's name was called and he was presented with a gift. They were invited to wear their gifts, a green baseball jacket with a Royal Rifle Crest and cap. What a handsome group of "HK Royal Rifle Baseball Team" as they proudly posed for all the cameras.

A full and complete report was read by the secretary in the absence of the Election Chairman. Your executive committee for the next 2 year term is:

Treasurer: Allan Marshall – re-elected

Secretary: Debbie Batley -Everett – re-elected

Director East: vacant

Director West: Marcel Mondou – re-elected, also the membership chairman

HKV Representative: Philip Doddridge

President (Quebec Regional Director): Lucette Mailloux-Muir – re-elected.

Earlier mentioned that QC Region presented a framed “Nominal Roll” of all RRC Veterans, if you would like to have a 12” x 18” copy, we do have copies for sale. Send your cheque payable to HKVCA-QC in the amount of \$ 10.00 including all shipping and handling charges to:

HKVCA- QC, 18 Barre, Granby, QC J2H 2E6.

Thanks to all our QC Region members and all our friends from other regions for your participation in our Region. Have a *Joyous Holiday Season* from all Quebec members.

Sorry, I still have much to say but, at this time I should leave space for others. Thank you for your interest and until the next time.

Lucette Muir, Quebec Regional Director.

A little humour -

Digging in the garden

An old man lived alone in the country. He wanted to dig his potato garden but it was very hard work as the ground was hard. His only son Fred, who used to help him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and described his predicament.

Dear Fred, I am feeling pretty bad because it looks like I won't be able to plant my potato garden this year. I'm just getting too old to be digging up a garden plot. If you were here, all my troubles would be over. I know you would dig the plot for me. Love, Dad

A few days later the old man received a letter from his son.

Dear Dad, For heaven's sake Dad, don't dig up that garden, that's where I buried the BODIES. Love, Fred

At 4 a.m. the next morning, FBI agents and local police arrived and dug up the entire area without finding any bodies. They apologized to the old man and left. That same day the old man received another letter from

his son.

Dear Dad, Go ahead and plant the potatoes now. That's the best I could do under the circumstances. Love, Fred

Negotiations !!

In recent negotiations for influenza vaccine between a Canadian health official and an American representative, it was clear that there was a disconnect between the American government's sudden reliance on Canada for influenza vaccine despite the fact that the U.S. wants to discourage Americans from buying routine prescription drugs from Canadian pharmacies.

Not seeing the irony in the request, the American continued to press for the vaccine and then demanded to know why the United States would be charged for the vaccine when Canadians get theirs "for free."

The Canadian official replied, "Oh it's not free, the government pays for it."

"Well then," the American replied, "How much will it cost us?"

The Canadian replied, "Well, we don't know...we'll let you know."

In frustration, the American replied, "Well, it's urgent, so just send an invoice with the shipment. By the way...how will the vaccine be delivered?"

After careful consideration, the Canadian official replied, "By cow. Twenty vials of vaccine will be tied around the neck of every cow that passes over the border. Now...if you want faster delivery, there are some softwood lumber trucks available..."

A winter story

Norman and his wife live in Calgary. One winter morning while listening to the radio, they hear the announcer say, "We are going to have 8 to 10 centimeters of snow today. You must park your car on the even numbered side of the street, to allow for plowing." Norm's wife goes out and moves her car.

A week later while they are eating breakfast, the radio announcer says, "We are expecting 10 to 12 centimeters of snow today. You must

park your car on the odd numbered side of the street, to allow for plowing" Norm's wife goes out and moves her car again.

The next week they are having breakfast again, when the radio announcer says "We are expecting 12 to 14 centimeters of snow today. You must park....." then the electric power goes out. Norman's wife is very upset, and with a worried look on her face she says "Honey, I don't know what to do. Which side of the street do I need to park on to allow for plowing?" With the love and understanding in his voice like all men who are married to Blondes exhibit, Norman says, "Why don't you just leave it in the garage this time?"

Everybody on earth dies and goes to heaven.

God comes and says, "I want the men to make two lines - One line for the men that dominated their women on earth and the other line for the men that were dominated by their women. Also, I want all the women to go with St. Peter."

With that said and done, the next time God looked, the women are gone and there are two lines. The line of the men that were dominated by their women was 100 miles long, and in the line of men that dominated their women, there was only one man.

God got mad and said, "You men should be ashamed of yourselves. I created, you in my image and you were all whipped by your mates. Look at the only, one of my sons that stood up and made me proud. Learn from him! Tell them my son, how did you manage to be the only one in this line?"

And the man replied, "I don't know, my wife told me to stand here."

Seniors!!

We went to breakfast at a restaurant where the "seniors' special" was twoeggs, bacon, hash

browns and toast for \$1.99. "Sounds good," my wife said. "But I don't want the eggs."

"Then I'll have to charge you two dollars and forty-nine cents because you're ordering a la carte," the waitress warned her.

"You mean I'd have to pay for not taking the eggs?" my wife asked incredulously. "I'll take the special."

"How do you want your eggs?"

"Raw and in the shell," my wife replied.

She took the two eggs home.

A Good Chuckle

A man goes to the minister at his church. "Reverend," he said, "we have a problem. My wife keeps falling asleep during your sermons. It's very embarrassing, not to mention disrespectful. What can I do?"

"I've noticed this and have an idea if you're up to the task," said the minister. "Take this hat pin with you. I can see when Mrs. Jones is sleeping, and I will motion to you. When I motion, you give her a good poke in the leg with the hat pin.

In church the following Sunday, Mrs. Jones dozed off. Noticing this, the preacher put his plan to work.

"And who made the ultimate sacrifice for you?" he said, nodding to Mr. Jones.

"Jesus!" Mrs. Jones cried out as her husband jabbed her in the leg with the sharp hat pin.

"Yes! You are correct, Mrs. Jones!" came the minister's quick reply.

Mrs. Jones then turned and glared angrily at her husband.

Soon, Mrs. Jones again nodded off. The minister noticed. "Who is your redeemer?" he asked the congregation, motioning toward Mr. Jones.

"My God!" howled Mrs. Jones as she was stuck again with the pin.

"Right again!" bellowed the minister, a slight grin on his face.

Mrs. Jones again gave her husband a real hard threatening glare. Before long though she again nodded

off. This time however the minister did not notice. As he picked up the tempo of his sermon, he made a few hand gestures that Mr. Jones mistook as signals to sharply poke his wife with the hat pin again.

The minister asked, "And what did Eve say to Adam after she bore him his 99th son?"

Mrs. Jones jumped up and shouted, "You stick that thing in me one more time and I'll break it in half and shove it where the sun don't shine!"

"Amen!" replied all the women in the congregation

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**Plan now!! To attend the
National Convention 2005 –
Ottawa**

We will be commemorating the
60th Anniversary of the cessation
of World War II in the Pacific,
Victory Japan.

It is hoped that many of the
veterans will be in attendance for
this special time so that suitable
tribute may be paid for their valour
and sacrifice. Families and friends
are encouraged to also attend in
support of these brave men.
Book your calendar now.