



# WASURERU-NAI "Never Forget"



**National Newsletter of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association**

## **Special Summer 2025 Edition**

**Editor: Jim Trick**

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## **Time is Running Out - Book the Dates! 80th Anniversary Reunion August 14th to 17th, 2025 Ottawa, Ontario**

Greetings again from the 80th Anniversary Reunion Committee.

This is our Committee's last chance to update you on more specific details about the HKVCA Reunion, which now seems so close. There are now fewer than 75 days left - can you believe it??

### **Not Yet Registered?**

There is still time to register for the weekend's activities, with the deadline June 30th. You can register online at [https://www.hkvca.ca/80th/index\\_e.php](https://www.hkvca.ca/80th/index_e.php) or by filling out the linked registration form. The fee is \$300 dollars per person, which includes:

✓ 3 Breakfasts	✓ 2 Lunches	✓ 2 Receptions
✓ Gala dinner	✓ Entertainment	✓ War Museum Tour
✓ Shuttle buses	✓ And More!	

### **This is over \$500 in value!**

If you register and find you are unable to attend, you may cancel until July 24. Your registration fee will be refunded, less a 20% administrative fee. **No cancellations will be accepted after July 24.**

We urge you to get your registrations in now and to book your room, as the Westin Hotel is booking up quickly. If you have any problems with bookings, please contact Kathie Carlson at 1-403-327-2799 or email [2025reunion@hkvca.ca](mailto:2025reunion@hkvca.ca)

## Here is a rundown on the weekend's activities.

### Breakout Sessions – Friday 2pm to 9pm

Speaking of breakout sessions, we have confirmed the focus of the sessions in the Registration form, with one exception to make. The Tales of Sabotage will not be available, but we are excited to offer a new session by author Jonathan Reid titled “The Canadians Shipped to Japan”. More to come! We also want to introduce you to our very qualified session presenters with a picture and a short Biography.

**Please remember that these breakouts are optional, so you also have opportunities to take in a tour, visit, shop or put your feet up and relax from 2:00 pm to 9:30 pm on Friday, August 15th when you get back to the Westin from the service at the National War Memorial.**



**1. Gander – His legacy, Our Hero!** JP Bear has spent years researching stories and information on this famous Newfoundland dog, the mascot of the Royal Rifles of Canada, who accompanied the soldiers to fight in the Battle of Hong Kong. It's a compelling story with a short film and even T-shirts to buy as a souvenir.



**2. The Canadians Shipped to Japan!** Jonathon Reid has worked as a filmmaker, English teacher, freelance writer, magazine editor, and partner in a magazine publishing firm. He lives in Toronto.

Jonathon wrote a book about his father called “The Captain was a Doctor”. An amazing story and a definite must-read, so Jonathan will provide details of how his father, a POW, a doctor, and the only Canadian officer in his Japanese POW camp, worked to keep some 500 POWs alive while they were working as slave labourers with little or no food. Unbelievable!



**3. History of Indigenous Veterans from Canada:** Sharon Parenteau from Manitoba will be presenting this session. For many years, HKVCA knew that Indigenous (Métis and First Nation) veterans played a huge role in the Battle of Hong Kong, but documentation was unclear, as many veterans could not be identified with their correct names. Find out what happened when these brave men returned to Canada.



**4. The Dispatch of ‘C’ Force to Hong Kong:** Brad St Croix will explore two

questions – Why ‘C’ Force was sent, and why the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles of Canada were chosen.



**5. Métis Beading Workshop, and its Cultural Heritage:** Tamara Favel, a very gifted Métis artisan from Manitoba will be illustrating how beading was introduced into the Métis culture, and the role it has played for many decades.

### Hospitality Room

This room will be open all weekend to provide a place to meet friends and family and have some refreshments. This is also where you can catch your breath and plan your next move. This room is where you will also register when you first arrive and receive a “swag bag” filled with knick knacks for the weekend.

### Memorabilia

We have heard from some registrants that they may have some personal family artifacts from their father/grandfather that they would like to display in the Memorabilia room. You are not too late to bring items for display. The Memorabilia room located on the third floor of the Westin, is being coordinated by Randy Wing, who would appreciate hearing from you. He can be reached at his email address – [wingrt88@gmail.com](mailto:wingrt88@gmail.com) or by phone at 1-(343)-996-5398 in Ottawa.

### Commemoration Ceremony at National War Memorial – Friday at 11:00 am

Friday, August 15th is the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day with a solemn but uplifting service at the National War Memorial at 11 a.m. This service will be held with all of you who attend the weekend activities, dignitaries from the Military, Provincial and Federal governments, Media and the Ottawa community. **The Canadian Military Wives Choir** (more about this group in our online version) will perform, as will the **Canadian Armed Forces Central Band**. It will be a chance to lay a wreath if you choose. The service will last approximately one hour, and everyone staying at the Westin will be bused there and back. Seating will be available at the War Memorial site.

If you are travelling to Ottawa and unable to carry a wreath with you, you can contact Ian Englehart in Ottawa as soon as you can, as he has 4 wreaths you can use for the services to honour your father/grandfather. He can be reached at (343) 984-6672 or email [habs1993@rogers.com](mailto:habs1993@rogers.com) **First come, first served!**

## HKVCA Memorial Wall - Saturday at 10:30 am

A chance for families to spend some quiet time at the Memorial Wall will be available on Saturday morning, with busing provided to arrive at the Memorial Wall at 10:30 am for about one hour. You will be able to lay a wreath to honour a Hong Kong Veteran. If you wish to lay a wreath, please contact Ian as above.

## Canadian War Museum - Saturday at 11:30 am.

We will leave directly from the Memorial Wall and be bused to the War Museum. We will have a box lunch in the cafeteria, guided tours and finish off with keynote speaker Tony Banham in the Museum's theatre. His talk will focus on the Canadians and British in the Battle, the POW Camps, and beyond and how Hong Kong was really one of the battles on the critical path to eventual victory.

## Gala Reception & Banquet - Saturday at 5:30pm

What a night this will be!!

A reception will start at 5:30 pm for one hour, outside the Governor General's Ball Room, 4th floor, with an open bar.

The Gala banquet will start at 6:30 pm, with Opening remarks, Introductions and a Rice Ceremony in honour of our Hong Kong Veterans. A program will be provided introducing our guest speaker Mark Sakamoto, followed by exceptional entertainment, including a Métis Fiddler from Manitoba, The Northern Jig dancers from Manitoba, and well-known singer/guitarist Alan Sandeman who has performed at previous HKVCA conventions and his colleague Carrie Clermont, a singer/ piano player from Ottawa.

We have had a few questions about the dress code for this event. Our recommendation is "Dressy Casual". Being summer, you want to be cool and comfortable, so eliminate your Tuxes gentlemen. So, no ripped jeans or T-shirts and flip flops, but what you might wear to a dinner, or work meeting. Or go big and bring on some dazzle and sparkle. It's up to you but enjoy the evening in comfort!

## Your Reunion Committee

It seems timely to now introduce you to our dedicated 80th Reunion Committee. This Committee has been planning this event since October 5th, 2023. It seemed at the time that it was so far away, and yet here we are with a couple of months to go until the weekend of August 14th to 17th. We asked everyone to provide a picture, which some of us shudder

about, but also provide a little insight into what it has meant to be part of this Commemoration event.



*Mike Babin*

My father, Alfred Babin, was a Rifleman in the Royal Rifles of Canada. He was born in Moncton, NB, but when he enlisted he was living in Sydney, NS. He enlisted in 1939, earlier than did many 'C' Force members.

After the war he remained in the Canadian Army as a bandsman, and he retired from the Army in 1971, having attained the rank of Staff Sergeant (WO II). Both he and my mother passed away in 2014.

Alfred and my mother, Christina, were wonderful parents and whatever I have been able to accomplish in life I owe to the happy childhood and good values they gave me. I am involved in the HKVCA as a way to honour them, and especially my father and his service to Canada. The 80th Anniversary event in Ottawa will be a fitting tribute to the legacy of all Hong Kong Veterans, and I am fortunate to be involved in preparing for it.



*Kathie Carlson*

This past year and a half has been a tremendous experience to be part of a team of dedicated volunteers planning the HKVCA 80th Anniversary Reunion, to commemorate the liberation of our Veterans. For me personally, it is the ultimate satisfaction that the idea to get together has blossomed into our Ottawa Reunion. The excitement and anticipation we have heard from all of you is wonderful for this upcoming opportunity to honour our Veterans and families.

My father was Leonard B. Corrigan., Winnipeg Grenadiers. He lived most of his life in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, until his passing January 24th, 1994. He was married to Gladys Corrigan, and raised four daughters. I am proud to say that all my sisters have had a lifelong commitment to HKVCA to honour our Veterans' Legacy.

We salute and honour our Canadian Veterans of the Battle of Hong Kong, for their courage and fortitude to survive as POWs. Education is the beacon we focused on in our planning, as that is our organization's ultimate goal.

Our Veterans have an amazing story to tell about their contribution to World War II in the Pacific. Even researching how these very young men ended up in Hong Kong is astonishing, which is a story that will be told at the 80th Reunion.

We are all looking forward to this summer when we can meet again. We hope that everyone will enjoy their weekend in

Ottawa and rekindle friendships. Our HKVCA organization is unique to our country, for its longevity and commitment to our Canadian Veterans of the Battle of Hong Kong. Let's celebrate this uniqueness and pride in Ottawa, as this may be one of our last opportunities to meet nationally as a group.



*Carol Hadley*

Hi -my name is Carol Hadley, the daughter of the late Borge (Buster) Agerbak, H-6326, and niece of Tage (Tiger) and Knud (Ken) Agerbak, Winnipeg Grenadiers/Hong Kong veterans.

As many of the families of Hong Kong veterans know, the vets didn't talk about their horrific experiences during the war. As a teenager, I learned from my Dad of some of their actions and realized that these Canadians were heroes.

I was so proud that they stood up to the vicious enemy and attempted sabotage on anything they were forced to do. It inspired me to get their stories known by getting involved first with the Manitoba Branch of the HK and later becoming a member of the Commemorative Association from the beginning.

With the more vets that I met, I saw what a close relationship – a brotherhood that they shared and that their families are one big family. As I saw that the aging vets needed help, I was inspired and grateful that they trusted us “kids” to continue their work.

I have been honoured and humbled to work for and attend the many conventions over the years. Each convention is like a reunion of family and friends so that we can help with the veterans legacy for the future.



*Ian Englehart*

I am the proud son of Harold W Englehart and my 2nd cousin Rupert C Englehart. My father was 17 years old when he joined up as did many of the Hong Kong veterans. My 2nd

cousin, who I never met died as a prisoner of war in Japan.

I am involved with the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association to help continue the memory and to honour the Canadian Hong Kong veterans

I joined the 80th Anniversary committee to help with the planning of the HKVCA Anniversary reunion, in particular working with Veterans Affairs in planning the memorial service to be held at the National War memorial on Friday August 15, 2025 at 11:00 am. I am also helping to plan the visit to the Hong Kong Memorial Wall on Saturday August 16, 2025 from 10:30 - 11:30 am

I look forward to meeting everybody at the reunion.



*Stephanie Mitchell*

This year's 80th anniversary of VJ Day in Ottawa is more than just a milestone—it's deeply personal.

As the grand-daughter of a Hong Kong veteran (Lieutenant William Vaughan Mitchell - Winnipeg Grenadier) and as someone who now proudly serves on the board of the HKVCA, this event is a powerful reminder of where I come from, what my family has lived through, and the legacy I now have the honour of helping carry forward.

It's about more than a chance to come together, not just to reflect on history, but to stand in gratitude for the courage and sacrifice of the soldiers who fought in Hong Kong, many of whom (including my grandfather) never made it home. It's about making sure their stories live on, not just in plaques and ceremonies, but in the hearts of the next generation.

I wanted a chance to bring my experience, skills and passion to a key moment in our living history - to participate in the coming together of our members as we remember all that happened 80 years ago, and the amazing distance we've traveled as a community since then. The 80th anniversary in Ottawa matters to me because we, the living, the children and grandchildren, the historians and educators, the community members and those with a platform to share our mission - all have a tremendous debt to pay for the freedoms and privileges we enjoy today. That's worth coming together for!

And I can tell you - this event is going to be a world class DO NOT MISS event!

This event is important because it brings families like mine together. It's where we honour the past, reconnect with each other, and recommit to remembering. For me, it's not just about history - it's about identity, community, and the responsibility to never forget. At a time when so much is virtual, I'm excited to bring all this to life this August in Ottawa. Hope to see you there - make sure you say hi!



*Judi Denison*

I believe we must study and learn from history, particularly the history of WW2. The Canadian experience in Hong Kong was extraordinary. It is important to remember the story, to remain grateful and to share memories. The veterans are our fathers and grandfathers, husbands and brothers, uncles and friends, they are gone, but will not be forgotten.

My father, Elmer Denison (Denny Mark 2), and my uncle, Everette Denison (Denny Mark 1) both served in Hong Kong (Royal Rifles of Canada).



*Jim Trick*

While I've been a member of the 80th Commemoration Committee, my role has been minor and I've mostly observed the hard work and dedication of the members who are in the midst of making this event unique in the evolution of HKVCA. Anne and I are looking forward to reconnecting with the HKVCA family in Ottawa at this special commemorative event.



*Pam Heinrichs*

My dad was Ferdinand (aka Fred/Fern) Poitras, a member of the Winnipeg Grenadiers. I attended a number of HK events with him before he passed, and I continue to do so as a way of remembering him. This 80th Anniversary is particularly important to me as it coincides with the culmination of the Indigenous Veterans Project that I have been working on, with funding from the Metis Veterans Legacy Program, and the help of a number of other volunteers. Given there are over 120 HK vets with Indigenous ancestry (including my dad who was Red River Metis), it is

important to me that the event be inclusive of and honour the Indigenous HK vets, which is being done in many ways – commemorating them, learning about them, and celebrating them. I am so enjoying working with the committee as well as all the connections I am making with different organizations, and especially with family members of other HK Indigenous veterans. I am looking forward to honouring the veterans and celebrating with the families!

**Other Committee Members**

- Randy Wing
- Gail Angel
- Emmie Flanagan
- Rita Flanagan
- Lucette Mailloux Muir

All of our 80th Reunion Committee will be at your disposal to answer any questions you may have, or provide directions or just have a chance to meet one another, and share our collective stories.

## Donations and Sponsors

Many of you have made donations to this event, and we sincerely appreciate them. We also gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our Sponsors:

### Platinum Sponsors

 <p><b>HONG KONG</b></p>	<p>Funded by Veterans Affairs Canada Financé par Anciens Combattants Canada</p> 	<p>Vivienne Poy</p>
<p>Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto) <i>We work across Canada</i></p>	 <p>The Legion National Foundation   La Fondation nationale Légion</p>	<p>Manitoba Métis Federation</p>

Silver Sponsors	Gold Sponsors		
<p>Lethbridge United Services Institute</p> 			 <p>Cochrane-Sinclair Law</p> <p>Lundar, MB Royal Canadian Legion</p>

## Breakout Sessions - Selected Bios of Presenters

### Sharon Parenteau - Breakout session "History of Indigenous Veterans,"

Sharon Parenteau is a Métis educator. She lives in the Turtle Mountains in Southwestern Manitoba, where she grew up surrounded by a large extended family. Sharon has been a Winnipeg Inner-City teacher and Support Teacher for Indigenous Education before moving to the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) as Provincial Education Coordinator. She retired as the General Manager of the Louis Riel Institute, the MMF's educational authority.

Sharon has extensive curriculum writing experience spanning 30 years. Writing the Kindergarten to Grade 4 Social Studies Curriculum for the Province of Manitoba is one of her most significant accomplishments. She has also developed many teacher guides, including the Residential School Teacher's Resource, the Indigenous Culture and Language Program, and the Métis History and Culture Program.

### J.P. Bear - "Gander"

I am JP Bear, a US Army Vietnam Veteran. Having owned numerous Newfoundland dogs I developed an affinity for them. After I learned about SGT Gander's involvement as a mascot at the Battle of Hong Kong, I decided, "Gander's Story needed to be Told."

For over 7 years, I worked on my passion project to tell Gander's story.

I will be attending the convention not only to show my film, but also to answer any questions people might have.

### Beading - Tamara Favell

Hello everyone, I'm Tamara Favell from lil Bear Beading, raised as a Red River Métis, with First Nation roots from Peguis Manitoba. I am proud to be a part of this celebration as I had a grandfather who fought in World War 2 as part of the Winnipeg Grenadiers. He was sent to Hong Kong where he became a POW for almost 4 years. So it means a lot for me to be here. A little more about me, I have been beading since 2016 and have learned many ways of beading. Some of my favourite pieces have been medallions, moccasins, as well as earrings and even some clothing. Beading is what I love to do, and getting to share my knowledge is something I look forward to doing.

### Brad St. Croix

Brad St. Croix is a freelance public historian and researcher. He earned his PhD in history from the University of Ottawa. His dissertation examined the legacy of the Battle of Hong Kong in Canada and the myths surrounding the battle. He has written several articles on the battle and given numerous presentations on it.

He was a co-author to a book about the history of the Royal Canadian Air Force. He has also written numerous articles for the Juno Beach Centre, Project 44, Defining Moments Canada, Journal of Military History, and the Canadian Military History Journal. He has worked on public history projects with several organizations including the RCAF Foundation, the Royal Canadian Regiment Museum, and the Canadian War Museum. He runs the OTD Military History

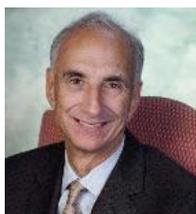
YouTube channel, which has a strong focus on Canadian military history, particularly the world wars.

## Comments from Attendees

*From Stephen Chung:* Canadian soldiers, namely the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal Rifles of Canada, led by Brigadier Lawson, had defended Hong Kong, my place of birth, in December 1941 during WW2. For their sacrifice and service, we remain grateful.

*From Gerry Tuppert:* It's important to me as this may be the very last National Convention to be organized by the HKVCA and I want to be a part of it. I really cannot see this happening again in two or four years.

## President's Message



*Mike Babin*

### AGM and Election Results

Our Annual General Meeting was held on May 6 by conference call. The agenda and draft minutes are here.

Nominations for 2025/2026 Directors were solicited from the membership, and 8 were received. As this was fewer than the number required to hold an election, those 8 were presented as the slate of Directors and a motion to approve them was passed by attendees at the AGM.

The Board is required to choose from among themselves the Executive for the coming year. The results for 2025/2026 are:

Mike Babin - President

Bernard LeBlanc - Vice President

Mark Purcell - Treasurer

Lucette Mailloux-Muir - Secretary

### Wrap-up of Indigenous Research Project

Pam Heinrichs has very successfully wrapped up our project to identify and research Indigenous members of 'C' Force. This project was funded by the Métis Veterans Legacy Program, and we are very grateful for their generosity in providing this support.

Congratulations to Pam for spearheading this project. Through it she has been able to recognize and highlight the heritage of well over 100 Indigenous 'C' Force members,

*From Jo-Ann Brown:* My attendance at the 80th Commemoration event is very important to me and my husband as it will allow us the opportunity to meet with other Hong Kong Veteran families. We look forward to honoring my father and others for the sacrifices they made during their mission to Hong Kong. They must never be forgotten.

and to inform many of their relatives who may not have been aware of their service.

### King Charles III Coronation Medal Recipients

Seven medals have been awarded to HKVCA members to recognize their outstanding volunteerism, plus one posthumously to Veteran Hormidas Fredette.

(All photos used by permission)



*L to R: Pam Heinrichs, Barry Mitchell, Carol Hadley at their awards ceremony in Winnipeg.*



*Ronald (l) and Brian Fredette accepting on behalf of Veteran Hormidas Fredette*



*Lucette Mailloux-Muir (l), accepts her medal from Cde Dawn Poll, District Commander Yamaska Valley #9 RCL*

## In Remembrance

Mavis Martin, widow of John Lionel Martin, RRC, on March 4, 2025.

Yvonne Still, mother of Prairie Region padre, Rev. Canon Murray Still, grandson of 'C' Force member Howard Joseph Oige, passed away recently.



*Lori Atkinson Smith (c) was presented with her medal by Lisa and Vance Badawey.*

Kathie Carlson and Jim Trick also received the King Charles III Coronation Medal.

Congratulations to all these well-deserving recipients!

## Online News

*Jim Trick*

### Thank you, Lillian!

As many of our members and researchers know, our Individual Reports on 'C' Force members are a highly visited spot on our website, and we are always attempting to improve and expand the information they contain. There is one person who has worked on this continuously over the past few years, and the results of her research appear almost daily in our Facebook group. I'm talking about Lillian Randall. We owe her a huge debt of thanks for her dedication.

Lillian, though, is always looking for other ways to preserve the memory of 'C' Force. Over the past few months, she has been contacting various Legion and community groups across the country, alerting them to our Plaque project and making a strong case for them to display our plaque in an appropriate, high-visibility area. She has focused her efforts on communities where 'C' Force soldiers are buried. Her efforts, along with those of Jim Laidlaw (see the BC report below), are paying off with plaques being dedicated in several venues, and scheduled for more. (Also see the BC Region report below).

## BC Region Report



*Gerry Tuppert*

Hello all from the West Coast

I'm pleased to provide a summary of our BC Region happenings since the last newsletter. We have six treasured HK veteran widows still with us. We wish them a comfortable easy summer with plenty of visits from family and friends. Over the span of these last eight decades I suspect these ladies have their own wonderful stories of past conventions.

Although we have had declining ranks we seem to be holding fast at around 100 members. A prominent FaceBook presence is useful enough for our message but a strong engaged membership is what sustains our association.

Hats off to those who continue to support us with their dues paying memberships and donations.

We have continued to march along with our HKVCA plaque installations. Mr Jim Laidlaw of Vancouver has carried forward his momentum from last year and has completed this plaque installation in the lower mainland area of Vancouver.

## George Peterson's Recordings

A hidden gem! Thanks to Pat Peterson, Anne and Rob Foord, we now host a two-part interview of 'C' Force veteran George Peterson, Winnipeg Grenadiers, on our website. Rob interviewed George in 2017. [Interview](#)

## Battle of Hong Kong Teacher's Guide

Did you know that 'C' Force had many Indigenous members? This [Teacher's Guide](#) (PDF) includes information about the Battle of Hong Kong, its aftermath, and Indigenous peoples in Canada's military. The Guide was made possible with funding from the Métis Veterans Legacy Program and created by Sharon Parenteau, a Manitoba educator with over 25 years experience in curriculum writing. Be sure to share with your children's and grandchildren's educators!

## RCL Branch 177

The following is an excerpt from Jim Laidlaw's notes:

As a result of previous conversations held in late 2024 and early 2025, a member of the Executive Committee from the Royal Canadian Legion Mt. Pleasant Br177 placed an order for our HKVCA Commemorative Plaque. Their member, Mr. Gordon Coburn, was enthusiastic about obtaining a plaque, as he explained that he had an uncle in the Merchant Marine who was very familiar with the Hong Kong story.

On Thursday March 27, 2025, Mr. Coburn called to request a timely installation of the plaque at their Legion hall as he wanted to have it on display before a meeting on the following Saturday. Our HKVCA rep Mr. Jim Laidlaw delivered the plaque promptly and ceremoniously presented it to Mr. Coburn. Gordon immediately set about the placement of the plaque in the hallway just outside the Legion hall's main doorway where it can be viewed by all who enter the premises.



RCL Br.177 member Mr.Gordon Coburn and Mr.Jim Laidlaw.  
Photo by permission.

The Legion hall itself features a large assembly and seating area with walls displaying various memorabilia and (somewhat uniquely) its own bowling alley.

The plaque now resides securely and prominently within the building's lower access area.

We thank their Legion executive for displaying our plaque in such a high profile visible location.

**Update:** I am delighted to report very positive feedback from members of this branch. The most common remarks refer to the attractive display of graphics and the message of commemoration the plaque conveys. Always nice to hear that people understand and appreciate the subject matter.

## ANAVETS Unit 26

Jim's efforts resulted in yet another planned plaque installation at the ANAVETS Unit 26 in downtown South Vancouver on June 13th at 14:00.

I am pleased to say I will be attending this unveiling and will report back in the busy fall newsletter. Sadly though, this location is only a few blocks away from the horrific event that took place at the Filipino Lapu Lapu Day festival on April 26th. This branch subsequently opened their doors to the grieving community for what was a very solemn gathering of their friends and neighbours. We extend our heartfelt condolences to all who were affected by this tragedy.

The president of ANAVETS 26, Mr Cris De Silva extends his welcome to all HKVCA members living in the area who would like to come by say hello and attend our plaque installation.

Place: ANAVETS Unit 26 – 727 East 49th Avenue Vancouver.

Time: June 13th at 14:00.

Thank you Cris and to your executive for the warm invitation.

## Interior BC

As you may already know Lillian Randal of Creston, BC has been researching with much success the individual burial locations of our Hong Kong Veterans.

She now adds an invitation in her correspondence with the Legions and Municipal offices asking if they would like to install a plaque in honour of those Hong Veterans who are laid to rest in their community cemeteries.

So far this has generated some interested parties in Houston, Mission City and Maple Ridge.

Nice work Lillian!

## Last Post Fund

One of our long-time Vancouver members will be manning a 'Last Post Fund' information booth at the commemoration. Mr Edmund Wu will have current information on how to apply for a gravestone marker for Hong Kong veterans who do not have one.

Recent research work by Prairie members of the HKVCA has revealed that many of our Indigenous and Métis Veterans have no such marker! So drop by and say hello to Edmund and see how we can help bring attention to this and support efforts to rectify this unfortunate situation. Our HKVCA and Last Post Fund have very similar goals. Both associations are bringing awareness to our veterans' burial locations with a marker. We have our own HK gravestone marker that dovetails well into their mission statement.

## We Will Remember Them

Congratulations are in order to all the HKVCA recipients of the King Charles 111 Coronation medal. In this region Jim Trick, our webmaster and newsletter editor, was the proud recipient. It's no exaggeration to say every member of our organization benefits in some way or another from his newsletter skills to his constant attention to detail. The end result of his efforts is the very professional looking website we all enjoy. Well-deserved recognition indeed.

So in closing I wish to put my gratitude on record for all those individuals who have put in so much time and effort into

making our upcoming 80th Anniversary of VJ Day convention a week-end to remember.

The best way to support their efforts and our association is to actually sign up and be a part of this memorable milestone occasion.

## Prairie Prose

*Carol Hadley*



Thank you to Stan for bringing the equipment and his expertise of setting it up for the Zoom meetings. We welcome all our members to attend these meetings and give input into the activities.

There are still some Lawn signs available to put in your yard to honour our veterans.

Thank you to our members who attended the VE / VJ event on May 8 at the Legislature as we recognized the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII in Europe. There were 3 WWII veterans present, (One 103, one 101 and one who just turned 100 who represented – Army, Navy and Air Force) There was a reception that followed. The LT Gov., and Premier spoke to about 100 people who gathered there. There are more events being planned - for September 10, 2025 with a candlelight service in the Field of honour at Brookside Cemetery, September 24 will be a film viewing of the “IF” play, and on September 25 there will be a Historical Forum on “Winnipeg at War” at the Royal Aviation Museum of Western Canada.

For our members who are unable to attend the 80th in Ottawa, we are organizing a service at 1:30 on August 24 with a service in the Field of Honour and a reception at the Neil Bardal Centre.

## Ontario Offerings



*Shelagh Purcell*

Barry Fair, John Grey Fair RRC, has been interested in the HK gravestone markers that can be added to the burial site of Hong Kong Veterans. He remembered being at the funeral of a family member in Campbellton, NB and hearing that 2 brothers who had fought in Hong Kong, had been buried in the cemetery there. He decided to search for them and, covered with weeds, he located both graves of Raymond and Harry Adams. Unfortunately, there are no HK gravestone markers. Barry checked with Lori Atkinson Smith and learned that the red markers are usually placed on the grave by the family. But if there are no known relatives, cemetery officials can give permission for the gravestone markers to be attached to the burial site. Barry is hoping that

From here in BC to Ottawa we have the most miles to travel and I commend those who have already committed to going the distance.

See you all there and happy trails for a great summer.

At the beginning of May Stan Lopata and Alex Taylor participated in the Red River Heritage Fair at the University of Winnipeg where about 150 students from grade 4 to grade 12 participated with their projects - with research, a diorama and presentation to win various awards in many categories. We sponsor a Veterans Award with the Fort Garry Horse.

We are waiting for information for the MSSTA SAGE conference in October where Alex and Stan will have a display and we may have an opportunity to speak in a breakout.

Lillian Randall has been sending out information on the plaques – these are to communities/legions with members of ‘C’ Force. Yorkton Legion has indicated that they want a plaque. It’s in the works and they became a sponsor in our 80th Anniversary event.

Pam Heinrichs will be taking the banner display to the CFB Winnipeg 100th Anniversary Indigenous Reconciliation Gathering, Saturday June 7, 2025, where she and a couple of other members will man it for the weekend.

We continue to ask our members for their assistance in getting donors – financial and with items for the swag bags. Kathie Carlson, Stephanie Mitchell, Pam Heinrichs and I continue to work on the 80th anniversary committee with frequent meetings now as the time draws near.

these 2 Hong Kong veterans can be properly remembered by having the gravestone markers added at some future date. [Read more.](#)

A call on May 15th, 2025, from Oda Barlow’s daughter was to say that Oda had passed away at the family home in Picton, ON. She was 102. Funeral services were held Tuesday May 29th, with burial at a special section of a cemetery in Aurora, ON where Oda’s husband Edwin Barlow, RCASC, is buried.

Barbara Drew, Winston Cunningham, CDC, and her daughters will be going to Ottawa for the 80th Celebration of VJ Day. Barbara is looking forward to seeing long time friends and family of Hong Kong Veterans.

Donna Drimmie, Victor Oliver Fehr, RRC, still enjoys making her special cards but with the mail strike looming it is hard to get her cards in circulation.

Grace Thornton, Howard Thornton, WG, was taken to hospital with a broken pelvis after a fall. Her daughter says Grace will be back to her own home when the break is healed, probably in June.

Susan Ewing, Kenneth Ewing, RRC, is feeling well and enjoys family who live close by and visit regularly. Her residence has good programs which help to keep her well.

Esther Jane Geraghty, Donald Geraghty, RRC, celebrated her 90th birthday with good health with her grand and great grandchildren which made it a very special day. Esther

continues to be interested in the newsletter and the people involved. When I mentioned the coming event, the 80th Anniversary in Ottawa Esther's daughter Kelly says they will be looking for all the information on what was happening.

Jim Hurd, Edmund Lionel Hurd, RRC, keeps up to date on things while at home convalescing. His family keeps him comfortable with good meals and visiting. Thank goodness for telephones.

Jean Killoran, John Killoran, RRC, had a good report from her eye doctor who says she doesn't have to make another appointment. Jean's daughter took her to the appointment. Otherwise, she is fine but not too enthusiastic about all the rain.

## The Heroes of Hong Kong

Hong Kong, an island far away, we thought of it as such,  
And then it seemed but overnight, it came to mean so much.  
An enemy besieged its shores, and bombs were raining down,  
Among the guards defending it were boys from our hometown.

They are the Heroes of Hong Kong, who dared refuse to bow,  
Like valiant men of other days, they have made history now.  
"Still standing firm these soldiers brave", read each communique  
Until it seemed our hearts could break, at close of each long day.

We had no helping hand to give, none but the hand of love,  
The same bright stars were seen at night, looked on them from above.  
And so, we whispered to the stars, this mission to fulfill,  
To tell the Boys, when all is dark, that we were loving still.

It seems after a few short weeks ago, they smiled and waved goodbye,  
Prepared to fight for Britain's flag, and if need be – to die.  
A soldier asks but this reward, not that the fight be won,  
But in the darkest hour to know, the joy of duty done.  
They offered all – have given much, that it might right a wrong,  
And may we welcome home again, the Heroes of Hong Kong

*Written by B.C.*

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