

Baie-des-Chaleurs Military Museum
351 A Perron Blvd. West
New Richmond, Quebec
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Musée militaire de la Baie des Chaleurs
351 A, boulevard Perron Ouest
New Richmond, Québec
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May 30, 2025

Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association
Attention: Mike Babin, President

Subject: Museum Update & Invitation to 80th Anniversary Activities in Remembrance of VJ Day

Dear Members of the Hong Kong Commemorative Association,

I write to you today on behalf of the Baie-des-Chaleurs Military Museum to share a comprehensive update on our work since the passing of our founder, Philip Doddridge—a proud Royal Rifles of Canada soldier, Hong Kong Veteran, and former prisoner of war for 44 months. His legacy continues to guide every step we take, and it is with deep gratitude that we carry forward his vision of remembrance, education, and honour.

Institutional Progress and Milestones (2022–2025)

Governance and Leadership

- Transitioned leadership with Tom Eden as Executive Director and Nancy Doddridge as President, supported by André Moreau, a local military history enthusiast, as Vice-President.
- Strengthened governance with a diversified board membership (including youth and First Nations representation), enhanced administrative practices, and plans to update the bylaws to reflect our new way of operating.

Exhibits and Programming

- Launched a new permanent exhibit with multimedia interpretation, developed in collaboration with Félix Fournier, and the Musée de la Gaspésie.

- Two mobile exhibits launched in 2023; a third, focused on the Battle of Hong Kong, is in development and expected to be launched this season.
- Continued artifact cataloguing and preservation. New artifacts arrive weekly.
- Expanded programming with school partnerships, open houses, and veteran story profiling.
- 2025 will see the installation of four exterior information panels which will in QR codes leading to additional multi-media content.

Facilities and Infrastructure

- Major renovations included a new steel roof, air exchangers, interior upgrades, ramp repairs, new windows, and exterior painting.
- Outdoor improvements include poppy gardens, landscaping, and drainage enhancements.
- Safety evaluation and planned restoration of our German 77mm field gun.
- Ongoing work toward improved accessibility and exhibit space.

Outreach and Community Engagement

- 2024 welcomed over 225 visitors, including cadets, school groups, and local families.
- Website redevelopment underway (mmbdc.ca) to improve access and engagement.
- Local and national partnerships supported through funding from:
 - Veterans Affairs Canada
 - MRC Bonaventure
 - Town of New Richmond
 - Heritage Canada, Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network, and Quebec History Federation
- Fundraising strategies include Zeffy donations, museum merchandise, and special commemorative initiatives such as the Royal Rifles Salmon Fly.

The Royal Rifles Salmon Fly

One of the most meaningful symbols introduced since Philip's passing is the Royal Rifles Salmon Fly, a handmade commemorative item created in tribute to the regiment and its legacy. Each fly is meticulously hand-crafted, bearing the regimental colours, and serves as a reminder of the courage and resilience shown by the men who fought in Hong Kong.

The fly is both a fundraising tool and a symbol of remembrance, shared with veterans' families, educators, and supporters. Images and stories associated with the fly have helped us connect with new audiences and reinforce the museum's commitment to honouring the past in creative and heartfelt ways. You can view it here: [Royal Rifles Salmon Fly – Facebook Post](#).

Friends of the Museum & Memorial Garden

Now that our exhibits and building are safeguarded, we are shifting our attention to a project close to our hearts: the creation of a Memorial Garden on the museum grounds. This space will serve as a peaceful place of remembrance and education, open to all.

To help us bring this vision to life, we have launched the Friends of the Museum initiative — a volunteer and donor circle dedicated to supporting:

- Memorial Garden design and construction
- Public programming and exhibits
- Artifact preservation and curatorial work
- Outreach and education

We warmly invite your members to participate in this initiative in any way that feels meaningful — through partnership, storytelling, funding, or volunteer support.

Before we close this lengthy update, we are proud to extend an open invitation to all members of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association to join us in New Richmond, Quebec on the weekend of August 9–10, 2025, as we commemorate the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day.

Weekend Activities Will Include:

- A formal moment of reflection for all those impacted by the events of Hong Kong and World War II
- A Museum Open House showcasing the new exhibits and guided tours
- A Luncheon and Live Musical Gathering to honour our veterans

Your presence would deeply honour the legacy of the Royal Rifles of Canada, the Winnipeg Grenadiers, and all Hong Kong veterans. If you are unable to attend but expect to be in the region at some point during the summer of 2025, our museum will be open 6 days a week, Monday – Saturday, between June 24 and August 31.

In closing, the legacy of Philip Doddridge and all who served in Hong Kong lives on in the work of the Baie-des-Chaleurs Military Museum. From physical preservation to community education, every step we take is rooted in remembrance and gratitude. We hope to welcome you to New Richmond in August for a historic commemoration and to explore new opportunities for collaboration in the years ahead.

With sincere respect and appreciation,

Nancy Doddridge
President