

HKVCA AGM – April 25, 2023

President's Remarks

Thank you for joining us this afternoon.

You've heard from your Regional Directors about what each region's members have been doing. Before we open up for your questions, I'd like to make a few remarks about what the national component of the HKVCA has been up to since our last AGM exactly a year ago.

Although the pandemic now seems to be more or less behind us, we have still been feeling its effects in our work. There is still something of a reluctance to attend public gatherings, and this has resulted in fewer face-to-face events than we have seen pre-COVID. Hopefully the pace will pick up as everyone becomes more comfortable in get-togethers.

If anything good has come from COVID, for us it would be the introduction of virtual events. We have now run more than a dozen of these on topics which, I hope, have been interesting to our members and friends. It has enabled us to reach people who otherwise would not be able to attend an in-person event due to travel or other constraints. We will continue these in the coming year.

Also in the "virtual" arena, Jim Trick has begun a redesign of our already excellent web site. This will make it even easier for those seeking information about the Battle of Hong Kong and "C" Force members to find out what they need.

Linked to this will hopefully be the proposed introduction of a QR Code at our Memorial Wall in Ottawa. QR Codes are the small squares that can often be seen on advertisements that can be easily scanned with a mobile phone and link automatically to further explanatory information. This is perfect for the Wall, which receives visitors who may not be especially familiar with the story. When operational, hopefully within the year, visitors will be able to quickly access a wealth of information about "C" Force and the Battle. Gail Angel and Derrill Henderson are leading this project.

Carol mentioned, and as I announced last year, we have initiated a project to identify "C" Force members who have Indigenous heritage and to document their stories. We applied for a grant from the Métis Veterans Legacy Project to fund this work, and I'm very pleased to announce that our application has just been approved, and we will be receiving \$119,000 from them to pay for this work. Pam Heinrichs is leading this very important project.

Our regions have been doing stellar work in spite of the COVID restrictions I mentioned earlier, and I'd particularly like to single out the Prairie Region under Carol Hadley's leadership. They have held a number of large, well-attended events over the last year and in my opinion are leading the country in commemoration!

This is not to minimize what other regions are doing, and I ask each of you to continue to do your utmost to keep our veterans' memory alive.

Summer is rapidly approaching, and I wish everyone a very safe and enjoyable one.

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Respectfully submitted,

Mike Babin

President

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