

Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association

Annual Report for 2013

Thank you to all the Region Delegates and members for attending this National Convention in Winnipeg. We appreciate your support and interest in the Association which is dedicated to memorialize the Canadian men and women who were sent to Hong Kong in WWII.

We are proud of the accomplishments that we have achieved since our beginning in 1995 to carry on the projects and wishes of the Hong Kong Veterans Association. However with their guidance, support and input we feel that we have ``paid some dues`` to them who sacrificed so much for us.

Membership - We have 5 Regions nationally with 817 members since June 2013 – 598 regular, 38 vets, and 181 widows. A new region was formed with the amalgamation of AB/SK and Manitoba. Logistically this has made it impossible to have all provinces represented in the monthly meetings but with the aid of Norma Fuchs who stays in touch with her members we still report on any information that happens.

Question: Good news or bad news first – I will begin with the bad news – our membership is dropping. This is understandably because of our senior members – the vets and widows passing on. In the last 2 years we lost about 30 vets; about 40 widows and about a dozen regular members. However sad that is we also lose the family members as their interest wanes and gradually falls away. I am not sure what we can do about this but I am open to suggestions. Thank you to our members who continue to inform others of our Association in discussions or by laying wreaths or leaving their newsletter in a public place when they are finished with it. This all helps to make people aware of us.

The **good news** is that we continue with our mandate to connect with our members through the quarterly newsletter and online through the website which is updated as needed and more current as the information is distributed by our webmaster, Jim Trick, through the Regional reps to the members who share their email address. Regions have reps that stay in touch with their members and report this in the newsletter.

Projects - We are progressing with the **Memorial Wall** corrections and hope to have this completed soon. The delay has been due to the reorganization of government departments so the National Capital Commission is now under Canada Heritage. Derrill Henderson has been attending and organizing meetings in Ottawa with government people

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and the fabricator to expedite the completion. We have just completed a package that will be given to the NCC to deliver to the Canada Heritage committee with our recommendations for the project. We hope to hear in the fall of the results.

More good news is the **Education program**. A big thank you is extended to Pat Turcotte who chaired this committee for many years. We welcome Gail Angel who is the daughter of Derrill Henderson and granddaughter of Stewart Henderson, HK vet. She has continued with Pat's work and will have a report for you on her progress and future projects in education. Pat also looked after the Essay Contest that was sponsored by Ontario Region for which we were very grateful as she communicated with the Provincial Departments of Education promoting the contest. This gave our Association national exposure to educators. We are pleased that Emmie Flanagan has consented to chair this project as it is now under the National Executive.

The **Canadian Museum of Human Rights** project has been quiet for a couple of years as we gather more information to change the minds of the content committee. When the convention is finished we will continue our efforts.

Our Charity status has enabled us to solicit funds to aid in our projects as well as benefit the donor and we are truly grateful for the generous members and friends that have used this process. We encourage the regions to use this process in their local fundraising for their projects like education or other promotions/awareness of the Association.

Our **next Convention in 2015 our 20th Anniversary of the HKVCA** – please give your attendance to this event some consideration. Traditionally we go East then West – so our next convention should be in the East but we are open for suggestions.

In closing, I will share this wonderful Irish blessing:

*May love and laughter light your days, and warm your heart and home.
May good and faithful friends be yours, wherever you may roam.
May peace and plenty bless your world with joy that long endures.
May all life's passing seasons bring the best to you and yours!*

God bless!