

March, 2008

This letter brings best wishes and news from our Association to all of our BC Region Hong Kong veterans and their families, widows of HK vets, and HKVCA members.

We have some very good news to pass along regarding the Hong Kong Veterans' Memorial Wall. After a lengthy process, our project has been approved by the National Capital Commission in Ottawa. The Memorial Wall Committee has been meeting on a regular basis for over 7 months and now that approval has been granted, we are prepared to move forward. We have been offered several prominent sites in Ottawa to choose from and the Committee will select the one that is best suited for the Memorial after considering all pertinent factors.

We will be working closely with the NCC every step of the way. Although the NCC will assist with the site preparation, the HKVCA will be responsible for design and the cost of materials and construction. We set a goal to raise \$100,000.00 at the Calgary convention to cover these costs. Due to the generosity of so many of you, we are well on our way to meet our goal but we are not there yet. Please consider this project very important when reviewing your gifts for charity. Charitable tax receipts will be issued for donations over \$20.00. This project is currently the number one priority for our Association and we are anxious to see it completed. Please make your cheques payable to the HKVCA and note "Memorial Wall" on the bottom. Please visit our website at www.hkvca.ca for updates as the Memorial Wall moves forward towards completion. There will be more information to follow in the March edition of the National newsletter which you will be receiving soon.

It has been decided that four National newsletters (instead of two) will be issued per year starting in March, 2008. The Wasureru –Nai will now be distributed in March, June, September and December in order to provide more news from National and each Region. For those of you who have computers and an internet connection, we would appreciate your assistance to help us save postage costs by agreeing to receive your newsletters and other communications electronically. All you have to do is send an e-mail to Murray Doull at mdoull@shaw.ca indicating your approval and I will put your name on the electronic mailing list. You will be helping us to cut costs while being environmentally friendly at the same time.

For those of you that have an internet connection, I would encourage you to visit our website on a regular basis. Jim Trick, a BC member and our National Secretary, is also our Web Master. Jim does an excellent job keeping the website informative and updated. The website is a key component of our Association and once you have visited it you will be drawn back again and again because there is so much to see and learn. The site has

proven to be a valuable educational tool. Please encourage your family and friends to visit www.hkvca.ca and learn more about our Hong Kong veterans and the HKVCA. You may discover that you have related material at home which would be a welcome addition to the site. If you do, Jim would be glad to hear from you and he can be contacted at hkvca@shaw.ca

The Hong Kong veterans and their widows will find their membership card and HKVCA decal for 2008 enclosed. The HK vets and widows are lifetime members of our Association and are not required to pay dues. Regular memberships are due for renewal on January 1 of each year and they still only cost \$15.00 annually. \$10.00 of that amount is forwarded to National and \$5.00 stays in the Region. While the by-law states that “members in arrears by one month cease to be members in good standing”, for reporting purposes those who remain in arrears as of December 1 of the year (11 months in arrears) will be removed from the membership list. Although there are some of you that are receiving this letter, you will not be receiving further National newsletters or Regional communications unless you renew because you did not pay your dues for 2007. Perhaps you forgot or were too busy, but I urge you to renew while it is fresh in your mind. Thank you to those of you who have already renewed and to those that have sent donations to both the Memorial Wall Project and the BC Region.

For those of you that were current in 2007 and have not already done so, please submit your 2008 dues to me at your earliest convenience. I encourage you to consider paying your dues 2 years at a time if possible. It is important for us to keep our membership strong in order to fulfill our mandate. Please encourage family members and friends to become new members. Currently the first priority of the HKVCA is the Memorial Wall, the second is promoting educationally the story of ‘C’ Force, and the third is to increase membership. It is also important to keep us informed of your new address and phone number if you have moved in order for us to stay in touch with you. Thank you for assisting us to achieve our goals.

The BC Region will be holding elections for officers this year. The positions that will be available are; Regional Director, Secretary, and Treasurer. Currently the Secretary and Treasurer are combined into one position. It has been proven in this Region that the position of Membership Chair is best filled by the Treasurer who receives the dues, makes the deposits and transfers to National, and sends out the new membership cards and decals as dues are received. The election process will start once a committee has been formed consisting of a Collector, Scrutineer and two Counters. An appeal for nominations outlining the process will then be mailed out to Regional members in good standing. Once people have been nominated and accepted, the membership will then receive a short bio for each nominee accompanied by a ballot which will have to be returned to the Collector within specified time limits. It is important to note that anyone

wishing to run for office or vote in this Regional election must have a current membership. We encourage members to step forward and run for office.

We are also seeking volunteers to form two separate committees which we feel will be very effective to help us move forward in this Region. The purpose of the first committee, the "Phone Pals" will be to maintain regular contact, either by phone or in person, with the HK vets and their widows that live in BC to ensure their well being. We have some HK vets and widows in care facilities that might enjoy visits. Members who live in their communities could be contacted by the committee to see if they would be willing to help out by visiting with the vets and widows in these facilities. Home visits could be arranged for HK vets and widows that are interested. We are hopeful that a committee of 3 or 4 members, including a chairperson, will be established as soon as possible. Linda and I will be available as much as needed to help the committee get started and evolve by supplying information and assisting in whatever way we can. Our contact information is at the end of this letter and we look forward to hearing from you in order to get this committee up and running expeditiously.

Secondly, we would like to form an education committee with 3 or 4 members including a chairperson. We are very fortunate in this region to have Graeme Stacey as a long time member. Graeme grew up in Victoria and is currently a high school history teacher in Westbank. Graeme learned about the Hong Kong veterans when he was in university and was fascinated by their story. He interviewed several HK vets in the late 1990's (Lionel Speller, Don MacPherson, Larry Stebbe, Flash Clayton to name a few) and wrote his Masters degree based on the history of 'C' Force. Graeme has worked hard over the years to successfully have the HK story included in the grade 11 social studies curriculum throughout our province.

The purpose of the education committee will be to look at new ways to ensure the story of 'C' Force is presented to British Columbians. This could be accomplished by timely press releases prior to Remembrance Day and Christmas. Another way would be to speak in schools and to other organizations about the Hong Kong veterans. One of the roles of the new Secretary will be to chair this important committee and help it move forward. Again, Linda and I will assist in any way we can to provide input and guidance, especially in the initial stages.

Enclosed you will find a page containing all the particulars about the upcoming HKVCA luncheons in Victoria and Vancouver in June. We hope that you and your family members will be able to attend one or both of them. Over the years the luncheons have proven to be a time when those of us that don't see each other as often as we would like can get together and renew old friendships and make new ones. Veterans Affairs Canada

will be represented at both luncheons as well as special guests. Please mark the dates on your calendar and follow the contact information to RSVP beforehand.

The BC Region of the HKVCA will be participating in a BC Day event which will salute our veterans. This year's event will be held at the Burnaby Village Museum on August 4 and will showcase Canada's proud military heritage and say "thank you" to our veterans on the 150th birthday of our province. This celebration is a free family focused event which will be held on the 10 acre museum site. Linda and I will be setting up a 'C' Force display and talking to those in attendance about the role Canadians played in Hong Kong and their subsequent internment as prisoners of war. Please mark this date on your calendar and we hope to see you there. Linda will be providing more details in the June edition of the Wasureru-Nai.

Our hearts and prayers go out to those of you who have recently lost family members and loved ones. To those of you who have been ill, we hope that you will recover soon. Please do not hesitate to contact Linda Stewart our Regional Director, or myself, if you know of a Hong Kong veteran or widow who is need of assistance. We will do what we can to help. Linda can be reached by phone at 250-294-6747 or by e-mail at lindaontheisland@shaw.ca My phone number is 604-465-0579 and my e-mail address is mdoull@shaw.ca If you are sending in your membership dues or donations, please mail a cheque made out to the HKVCA c/o Murray Doull, 20368 Kent Street, Maple Ridge BC V2X 1A6. I look forward to the postman keeping me busy. Linda and I also look forward to hearing from volunteers so we can get the BC Region committees outlined in this letter up and running as soon as possible.

I have never heard an HK vet say goodbye to a comrade. Rather, they say "See you again" or "Until next time". Keeping that in mind, we wish you well until we meet again.

Warm regards,

Murray Doull
HKVCA Secretary-Treasurer, BC Region