

HONG KONG VETERANS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

MANITOBA BRANCH
PO BOX 381
WINNIPEG, MB R3C 2H6

January, February, March 2005

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President's Report

I erred in typing my last report too early and not remembering to wish you all the best for the coming Christmas and New Year. So I wish you this now, belated but still most sincere and I hope everyone is in fair health. Another error that I made was not including in my report that I had the honour and privilege to present the long overdue framed certificates of Honourary Life Memberships in the Manitoba Branch of the HKVA to the members of our colour party (Tim Klumper, Stan & Vince Lopata, Don Thomson and our piper Craig Munnoch) at the August 15th VJ Day service hosted by our HKVCA at All Saints Church.

October 21st accompanied by Juliet, we were at the unveiling of the Canadian 25 cent piece depicting the red poppy. The Royal Canadian Mint assisted by Manitoba/NW Ontario Command of the Royal Canadian Legion at Minto Armouries to honour all past and present veterans hosted the event. It's unfortunate that the colour tends to fade quickly when the coins are handled.

October 23rd - our **59th Annual Reunion Dinner** was a huge success with thanks to Juliet and her willing helpers. It was gratifying for me to greet 9 of our HKVA members. I hope you all will try to attend our **60th Reunion** in October as Juliet is working to make this a very special occasion.

November 2nd I received a phone call at 9:30 am requesting my attendance for a meeting at 1 pm to discuss the unveiling of the Manitoba veteran's license plate, which took place at St James Legion RCL at 10 am November 5th. I attended both meetings. At the latter meeting, Bob Lytle was there and Vince Lopata paraded our colours. Any veteran who wants a license plate may obtain a form from any legion branch; fill it out, enclose \$5.00 and a copy of your discharge papers and mail to: Manitoba N.W. Ontario Command, 563 St Annes Rd, Winnipeg R2M 3L6. Also on November 5th, Juliet and I attended the War Amps Annual dinner, which was very enjoyable.

St Luke's Anglican Church rededicated their refurbished Memorial to the WWI 100th Battalion Winnipeg Grenadiers on November 7th. Our Colour Party, the Winnipeg Grenadier Cadet Corps Colour Party, with several cadets along with Juliet and I attended this service.

November 20th we attended our Commemorative meeting and November 24th I met with the Joint Veterans Council of Manitoba (JVCM) to review the Remembrance Day service for any needed changes.

November 28th our Memorial Committee held a meeting and we are still waiting to meet with City Council.

December 5th the Winnipeg Grenadier Cadet Corp held their Annual Battle of Hong Kong Memorial Parade. Carol set up a display, the Colour Party was in attendance and I had the honour of performing the duties of reviewing officer. Juliet arranged for donuts and coffee (that was paid by our Branch) to be served in the Officers' Mess after the parade.

December 17th Vince Lopata, Neil Bardal and Garry Hilderman were well received when they presented the proposal of the interpretive centre monument to the Last Post Fund members. I was in attendance to answer questions.

January 9th the Monument Committee held a meeting - still no word from the City. I mailed a letter to Carol asking her to form a sub committee of the HKVCA to look into the feasibility of erecting a monument in Ottawa.

January 15th I attended the Commemorative meeting. Juliet phoned to inform me of the passing of Cde Garfield Lowe, January 17th and on January 20th Carol phoned to tell me John Pollock passed away. Then on January 25th we were informed of Chick Query's passing. These three comrades will be greatly missed, may they rest in peace.

January 20th I, along with members of the Joint Veterans Council Manitoba (JVCM), attended a parade of Air Force cadets at Radisson School. I had the honour to present framed certificates to seven cadets, thanking them for services rendered.

January 23rd Juliet, Stan & Vince Lopata, Craig Munnoch and his wife and myself attended a luncheon meeting honouring Sir William Stephenson, spymaster of WWII. Sir William, known as Intrepid, was born in Winnipeg and became the head of British Intelligence under Sir Winston Churchill. The main speaker at the meeting was terrorism expert, Peter St John, a retired University of Manitoba professor. Craig piped the professor to the podium.

February 1st I attended a meeting with JVCM at Rockwood Branch ANA vets - the topic of discussion was upcoming parades. Following the meeting I flew to Edmonton to attend the Prairie Advisory Council to VAC on February 2nd. We had an excellent meeting with discussions on the VIP program for the widows and if anyone has any concerns with them please call

me at 256-7174. VAC paid for my room for 2 nights and I paid for my flight and meals.

February 4th I attended another meeting at JVC at Rockwood to discuss the May 8th parade for VE day at the Legislative Grounds at 0930. There will be a proclamation read giving the key of the province to the veterans. The parade will be similar to the D Day parade with vehicles for the vets to ride in.

February 10th I was presented with a birthday cake, to my surprise, at the monthly luncheon. A Big thank you to Juliet for arranging the surprise and everyone in attendance for the cake and card.

As this is the **Year of the Veteran** there will be some special events happening – one event is the special 60th Anniversary pin that VAC have produced. I have ordered some for our members.

I regret that I will not be at the next HKVCA meeting February 19th as a 97-year-old friend past away and I will be attending the memorial service. I have known this lady for 77 or 78 years.

On February 26 I will be attending a lunch with the Minister of VAC who will be presenting commendations to 3 Manitoba veterans – **John Gillis**, Korean Veterans; **Leonard Johansson**, Last Post Fund and from Brandon, posthumously, **Albert W. McKaig**.

Once again I wish you a smooth road to travel with the wind always at your back and the best of health to everyone.

In Comradeship and sincerity

George N. Peterson.

!!!

Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association

Hello to one and all, I am hoping you are all having a good 2005 thus far.

As this is the year of 60th anniversary for our veterans, there are many things happening around the country. Here in Manitoba we are still planning to have our VJ Day Aug 21 2005 and our Reunion Oct 22nd 2005.

We have lost several of our Veterans in the last few months Garfield Lowe, John Pollock, Edward (Chic) Query. As I sit and look at the Honour Roll of the ones we have lost in the last year, I ask myself what are we doing to keep the memory of "C Force" alive. The Monument committee have been meeting and have progressed quite well to date. They need your help and suggestions so please contact me and I will take your thoughts to the meetings.

George Peterson and I will be very busy this spring and summer attending parades and official functions. By the way George just celebrated his 84th birthday on Feb.8th.

We are planning on having another Tea & Tidbits for the Ladies on May 7th 1-4 pm. You will be sent notices with the date, time and place. The last two gatherings were great and hopefully more of you will be able to attend this event.

Phyllis Downie has begun the responsibilities of the museum project and will ensure that all Hong Kong Veterans memorabilia will be identified. Thanks Phyllis.

Judy Preston has notified me that her mom Helen Prieston is healing after her 2nd knee surgery. Keep up the good work Helen; we hope to see you soon. Sheila Lowe called to say that there were a few veterans who attended her father's service and she appreciated it. She said the internment will be in the spring.

Thank you to everyone who keeps me informed I like to pass on the information to the rest of the H.K.V.A & H.K.V.C.A. family. Bye for now, keep well and God bless.

Juliet Lafortune, 338-3354 or 294-9335

MB Regional Director H.K.V.C.A.

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Last Post

Elved G. Thomas, H-16349, WG, died Feb. 14, 2004

Ernest Ladds, E-30090, RRC, died August 23, 2004

Harry White, Capt. WG, October 28, 2004

Gerald Pentland, E-30214, RRC died November 30, 2004

Richard J. Grant, RRC, E-30275 died on December 25, 2004

Arthur Wright, WG, L-51098, died December 29, 2004.

Lloyd C. Doull, E-29875, RRC died January 10, 2005

Garfield W. Lowe, H-6942. WG died January 16, 2005

John D. Pollock, H-70277, WG, died January 20, 2005

Melbourne Carter, RRC B-74256 died February 18, 2005.

HKVCA

John C. Breen, HKVDC, died December 3, 2004

Margaret (Peggy) Doull, wife of Lloyd Doull, RRC, died December 14, 2004

Stockwell Day, Sr. passed away February 6, 2005

Our thoughts and prayers are extended to all the families and friends as we share in your grief.

We will remember them.

!!!

Notes from Barry Mitchell

Treasurer & Membership

Greetings to all HKVA members as well as those in the Commemorative Association. Manitoba has had a tough winter but we still hold out a warm welcome to our friends and comrades.

As I'm sure you are aware, this Treasurer is *always* looking for a few bucks to put in the HK bank account, so I'm asking that you check your purse or wallet and see if you can find a current HK membership card. If you can't, pick up your chequebook and quickly send me \$15.00 so that your conscience will be clear. It's a painless process believe me! I am still looking for 20 or so dues from 2004 on the Commemorative side, and you know who you are because I sent you a reminder. But for everyone, 2005 is upon us and I would really like to send out a whole bunch of membership cards with a shiny new decal. Everyone

pays the same and the address remains as P.O. Box 381, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2H6. Thank you in advance!

Are you looking forward to the convention in Ottawa? I know I am. Santa Claus gave me a HUGE suitcase for Christmas, so maybe this is a hint that I should arrange for a lengthy stay in Ottawa and vicinity. On the other hand, maybe I'm supposed to take a ton of merchandise to sell on behalf of the Manitoba Region, as is usually the case in all functions I attend. Perhaps a bit of both is in order—stay a little longer and sell a few goodies while I'm there.

Speaking of selling, all Regions have the opportunity of spreading our message through the sale of books. We have increased our inventory considerably in the last few months and now have hundreds of copies of "One Soldier's Story" (\$20.00) and "No Reason Why" (\$37.00), two excellent accounts of the Defence of Hong Kong. You can order your copy now by dropping me a note at P.O. Box 381 in Winnipeg R3C 2H6. By the way, shipping is extra, so please add \$7.00 for postage.

We received a really nice note from **Olive Peat** in **Kindersley, SK**, along with dues for herself and husband **David**. Olive is the sister of **Cliff & Alf Matthews** of **Winnipeg** and the late **Charlie Matthews**. Olive tells the story of how she went to the train station in Calgary to try and greet Cliff and Alf when they were on their way to Hong Kong from Winnipeg, but missed them on what she describes as one of the saddest days of her life. However, she joined the Service herself and the two brothers were able to greet her when she returned to Winnipeg from overseas duty at the end of the war. And all three are with us today.

As usual, **Pearl MacPherson** of **Richmond, BC**, sent us a warm note when renewing the family's memberships. I think it's great that our members want to keep in touch and remain well informed of local events after they move away from their home Province. Welcome back to the MacPhersons. I was also gratified to receive a note from **Tom Dewar** of **Winnipeg**, one of the vets I got to know a little as a regular attendee at the monthly lunches here in Winnipeg. Tom doesn't get out as much as he used to and when he does, he tells me his diet is restricted, so the luncheons just aren't what they used to be. However, he still manages to get out and about a little bit with the use of a cane and walker. Thanks so much for the note, Tom!

Once again, I am impressed with the orderly fashion in which the **Sinclair Family** of **St. Andrews, MB** takes care of their business. We received a neat envelope containing the annual dues for **Mary, Thomas, Cheryl and Karen** and even a little extra to help us with our work. Well done and thank you!! Next we heard from way out on the West Coast from another former luncheon regular, **Harry Gyselman** in **Comox, BC**. Harry likes to call it "Bananaland" and yes, we know it as "the land of nuts and fruits". Thanks for keeping in touch. Finally, we have a note to remind us of the small role we played in bringing a smile to the face of **Wilma Thom**, here in **Winnipeg**. Her good friend **Debbie Winterburn** looked us up as a possible source of an HK item that would serve as a gift to Wilma. This thoughtful gesture was greatly appreciated

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by Wilma and the smile arrived at a time when she needed it. Good work Debbie, and thanks for the note.

Our appreciation to those who have sent in their dues as well as to those who have taken advantage of the opportunity to purchase quality merchandise. We would like to make some good headway on the memberships, so if that's a chore you haven't yet taken care of, make a note to yourself to send us a cheque. Thanks for keeping in touch with your organization; we love to hear from you.

Cheers to all

Barry Mitchell

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THE 'C' FORCE MEMORIAL PROJECT

The establishment of a memorial to the men and women of 'C' Force, the Canadian Army Brigade that fought at the Battle of Hong Kong has been in the back of minds of veterans, family members and friends for years. At the Victoria 2003 Convention of the Hong Kong Veterans Association, a motion was passed authorizing a study to be carried out and recommendations put forward for such a memorial. The motion had set the criteria for the type of memorial to be established:

- a. *to determine the focus of the Memorial as desired by the HKVA membership*
 - *strictly military presentation*
 - *to include the historical aspect*
 - *to give individual recognition, etc.*
- b. *to seek alternative designs and potential locations, and*
- c. *to prepare feasibility report on the choicest options.*

The motion is very restrictive, based on "to include the historical aspect" and "to give individual recognition". These two criteria presented a challenge to the committee as to what was the best design for such a memorial. It was apparent that a traditional memorial such as a statue or cairn would not meet the criteria. A statue or cairn presents a great many difficulties for telling the historical aspect. The story of 'C' Force is too big and complex for a statue or cairn type structure. The other drawback for a statue or cairn was the requirement for individual recognition. Canadian tradition allows only those that were killed in action, missing in action and who died as prisoners of war to be placed on statues or cairns. Therefore the inclusion of all 1977 individuals of "C" Force could not be placed on a statue or cairn. The committee concluded the best memorial to meet all the criteria would be an Interpretative Centre.

The location for the memorial presented many difficulties for a number of reasons. The reasons that weighed heavily on the committee's final decision were:

- a. timeline for completion (target for completion is set for summer 2007)
- b. cost
- c. availability of land, and
- d. public awareness

Initially the HKVA proposed erecting two statue-type monuments, one in the Quebec Eastern townships area (home area for the Royal Rifles of Canada) and one in Winnipeg (the home of the Winnipeg Grenadiers). The Royal Rifles group stated that they would not support the erection of a monument in Quebec. Their recommendation was a monument in Ottawa.

Many members of the HKVA and HKVCA suggested Ottawa as the place to erect a 'C' Force memorial. The committee investigated this suggestion based on the above criteria. At first glance Ottawa would appear to be an ideal location. It is capital of the country. The National War Memorial, The War Museum and many other places of national importance attract many visitors annually. The committee contacted people responsible for the National Capital Region providing information on the type of structure being considered and asking questions related to the above reasons. The response received was that Ottawa would not be an ideal location for the memorial. Public awareness and potential for visitors to the memorial would be extremely low. Attractions such as The House of Parliament, The War Museum, The National Art Gallery, The Museum of Man and Civilization draw thousands of tourists each year and would take away from any 'C' Force memorial located there. The cost of the project would be considerably higher because of various permits, purchase of land and generally doing business in the region. The National Capital Commission restricts the use of suitable land in the region. The type of memorial being proposed would present additional difficulties because of parking requiring additional land. Because of the bureaucratic procedures for such a project the timeline would be lengthened considerably resulting in an undesirable delay if a reasonable number of veterans were to participate in the opening of the memorial. Because of the above reasons the committee rejected Ottawa as a location for the memorial.

Because the original suggestion from the HKVA was for a memorial in Quebec and Manitoba, the committee investigated locations in Manitoba primarily in Winnipeg. Other reasons for considering Winnipeg were that one of the largest contingents (853 personnel) came from Winnipeg and the surrounding area. Winnipeg is also the geographic centre of the Canada and is easily accessible from all parts of the country. Land is available adjacent to the largest military cemetery in Canada that contains the largest number of 'C' Force members in a group outside of Sai Wan and Yokohama cemeteries. There also are potential partnerships with other local veterans organizations, Regimental associations and the City of Winnipeg in the development of the grounds and interpretative centre reducing the cost and making it potentially increasing public awareness..

Brookside Cemetery was been chosen as the optimum development site because it had land available. The proposed land is adjacent to one of Canada's oldest and largest military cemeteries. This would complement both the military cemetery as well as memorial. The site is close to the centre of Winnipeg and the Winnipeg International Airport. The quality of

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the existing site features can be incorporated to compliment the centre. There is water, vegetation and room for expansion at the chosen site. Future development with footpaths along Omand's Creek for all season activities would bring potential visitors to the centre.

This is the first instalment on the Establishment of a 'C' Force Memorial. I would recommend visiting the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association Monument Discussion Group website for more details. In the next newsletter a description of the Memorial / Interpretative Centre will be given. Also at the Convention this summer, people will be given a presentation on the project as well as have access to various databases such as the Personnel that provides details of each soldier from the time they left their home base to their return home. This database will become an integral part of the project when complete.

Vince Lopata, CD - Secretary,
HKVA 'C' Force Memorial Project

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From the Editor

Wow! Convention time will soon be upon us. **Ontario Region** has invested much time and effort to make this special **60th Anniversary**, one to be remembered. VAC has been very generous with their involvement and assistance in the planning of this Convention. This is the **Year of the Veteran** and our vets, who are special to us always, will receive higher esteem in this unique year. You will know all the details soon as the packages are being prepared and will soon be mailed to you. Please start your plans to attend the Convention to be held in Ottawa, August 12 – 14, 2005. You won't want to miss it.

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Biannually we hold our **HKVCA National elections** – this year is the same. The election information and the Call for Nominations will be in the mail soon. Please give this your immediate attention.

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In previous articles we have reported that on special occasions we have prepared certificates that have been presented to communities where many of our 'C' Force members have lived. We would like to continue this project to recognise the men and the towns from which they came. Please contact us with information that we may do the same in your area. So far the certificates have been placed in the town's Legion hall but community clubs or schools would also be appropriate.

!!!

John Pollock passed away on January 20th on his 85th birthday. We will be holding a brief graveside service at Brookside Cemetery on March 10 at 11 am with the assistance of Neil Bardal Inc. and our padre, Rev Gordon Shields. We will marshal at 10:45 am at 3030 Notre Dame Ave and proceed together to the site.

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From Ontario Region - The purpose of this message is to ask for your feedback on a possible trip to Hong Kong later this year.

Many of the HKVCA had hoped that a government-funded pilgrimage to Hong Kong would

The station owner said, "Sorry, the correct number was 3. You were close, but no free sex this time."

As they were driving away from the gasoline station, Jim said to Bill, "I think that game is rigged, and he doesn't really give away free sex."

Bill replied, "No it ain't rigged Jim. My wife won twice last week."

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A successful rancher died and left everything to his devoted wife. She was a very good-looking woman, and determined to keep the ranch, but knew very little about ranching, so she decided to place an ad in the newspaper for a ranch hand. Two men applied for the job. One was gay and the other a drunk. She thought long and hard about it, and when no one else applied, she decided to hire the gay guy, figuring it would be safer to have him around the house than the drunk.

He proved to be a hard worker who put in long hours every day and knew a lot about ranching. For weeks, the two of them worked, and the ranch was doing very well. Then one day, the rancher's widow said to the hired hand, "you have done a really good job, and the ranch looks great. You should go into town and kick up your heels."

The hired hand readily agreed and went into town that Saturday night. One o'clock came, however, and he didn't return. Two o'clock, and no hired hand. He returned around two-thirty, and upon entering the room, he found the rancher's widow sitting by the fireplace with a glass of wine, waiting for him. She quietly called him over. "Unbutton my blouse and take it off," she said. Trembling, he did as she directed. "now take off my boots." He did as she asked, ever so slowly. "Now take off my socks." He removed each gently, and placed them neatly by her boots. "Now, take off my skirt." He slowly unbuttoned it, constantly watching her eyes in the firelight. "Now, take off my bra." Again, with trembling hands, he did as he was told and dropped it to the floor. "Now, she said, "take off my panties". By the light of the fire, he slowly pulled them down and off. Then she looked at him and said, "If you ever wear my clothes into town again, you're fired."

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On a golf tour in Ireland, Tiger Woods drives his BMW into a petrol station in a remote part of the Irish countryside. The pump attendant, who obviously knows nothing about golf and completely unaware of Tiger's identity, greets him in a typical Irish manner.

"Top of the mornin' to ya, sir," says the attendant.

Tiger, who is familiar with Irish custom, responds with, "And the rest of the day to you, sir!" He gives a quick nod and bends forward to pick up the nozzle of the gasoline hose. As he does so, two golf tees fall out of his shirt pocket onto the ground.

"What are those?" asks the attendant.

"They're called tees," replies Tiger.

"And what on the good earth are they fer?" inquires the Irishman.

"They're for resting my balls on when I'm driving," says Tiger.

"Holy Jaysus," says the Irishman, "BMW thinks of everything!"

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Reminders

Monthly lunches are held at St. James Legion on Portage Ave. at NOON - 2nd Thursday of the month. Fully accessible.

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HKVCA meetings at St James Legion at 1300 hrs on March 19, April 16, May 12, June 9, 2005

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Parades – April 10 – Vimy Ridge Memorial at Vimy Ridge Park; May 8th VE Day at 0930, Legislative grounds; May 29 - Memorial parade at Birds Hill ; June 5th Annual Inspection at Minto Armouries at 1330 hrs, WG Cadets; June 12 - Lac du Bonnet Legion Memorial parade 1230 hrs

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LADIES TEA & TIDBITS, May 7, 1 – 4 pm, at St James Legion

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Convention 2005 – Ottawa August 12 – 14, 2005

Registration packages will be mailed in April 2005 – mark your calendar now and plan on attending.

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MEMBERSHIPS ARE DUE.

***** Check your membership card today. Please make sure you are a paid up member. Also when you remit your membership, indicate if Manitoba is your primary region or just for newsletters. Thank you. *****

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Your HKVA Branch Council Phone Numbers - Keep Them Handy:

George Peterson, President	256-7174
Carol Hadley, Secrtry/Newsletter	837-6754
Barry Mitchell, Treasurer/Membership	269-1497
Juliet Lafortune, Social	338-3354
Terence Jackson, Memorials	452-1460
Phil Doddridge, Nat'l President	418-392-5838

**PLEASE REMEMBER:

SEND US ANY ADDRESS CHANGES – WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU AND CHEQUES FOR BARRY'S EMPORIUM SHOULD BE PAYABLE TO HKVCA**

Have a wonderful day and be safe!