



WASURERU-NAI

"Never Forget"

National Newsletter of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association

Autumn 2016

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President's Message



Gail Angel

Greetings

Along with the new board, there are other changes to report.

Upon accepting the role of President, I asked Emmie Flanagan to take Education. We are happy to report that the Portraits of Valour writing competition is back. We've increased prize amounts, selected an online email service, and created tools that can be re-used to make it easier each year.

Thank you to Tom Eden, for his short but meaningful tenure as editor. He brought new ideas and a fresher look; sadly for us, he is just too busy to continue. We are lucky that Jim Trick has stepped into the vacancy.

Welcome to Gerry Tuppert as a first time member to our board. We love having new voices!

Changes to the Charitable Corporations Act necessitated changes to our By-Laws regarding the method of appointing the Executive Committee and limiting the term of office to one year. In summary, the membership is asked to nominate and elect persons to serve on the Board and the incoming Board appoints the Executive Committee -ie President; Vice-President, 2nd Vice-president, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Our Board consists of ten (10) persons. This year only ten individuals of those nominated have agreed to serve, therefore the Board is elected by acclamation. There is no need for an election to be held - 10 candidates, 10 positions.

The incoming Board met on August 16th and appointed the Executive. The effective date for the incoming Board was September 1st. Members are listed below:

- President: Gail Henderson
- President HKVA: Phil Doddridge
- 1st Vice: Nancy Doddridge
- Treasurer: Barry Mitchell

- Secretary: Ian Doull
- 2nd Vice: Mitzi Ross
- Regional Directors
 - Atlantic: Emmie Flanagan
 - Quebec: Lucette Mailloux Muir
 - Ontario: Mike Babin
 - Prairie: Carol Hadley
 - BC: Gerry Tuppert

(Visit our [Meet the Board](http://www.hkvca.ca/aboutus/meet%20the%20exec.htm) page ([http://www.hkvca.ca/aboutus/meet the exec.htm](http://www.hkvca.ca/aboutus/meet%20the%20exec.htm)) to see photos and read bios -ed)

Remembering



Last Post

Dempsey Syvret, RRC, on Aug 12 [Obituary](#) (scroll to bottom of report)

In Memoriam

Lillian Osborn, widow of Gerald Osborn (son of John Osborn, VC), on July 21

Ruth Cunningham, widow of [Dr. Winston Ross Cunningham](#), on June 28. [Obituary](#)

Marjorie Chatwell, widow of John (Hap) Chatwell, WG, on June 10

Remembrance Corner

Phil Doddridge



Pte Joe Furey, H6384, Winnipeg Grenadiers

Joe Furey and his brother, Jim, were in the Winnipeg Grenadiers, both from small-town Manitoba and both one generation removed from Ireland.

Before hostilities in Hong Kong, the Rifles and Grenadiers did not meet often in the short three weeks we shared the British barracks in Sham Shui Po. For that reason, I did not become acquainted with the Furey brothers until after our ignominious return to Sham Shui Po in 1942.

Joe served as an orderly in the SSP hospital where I was admitted because of a heart condition. That's where I got to know him and his up-beat, jovial personality, always willing to share time and jokes and reminisce about his boyhood on the Manitoba Prairies.



H6384 Pte Joe Furey

Joe moved out of my life when he was sent to Japan on what I think was the second draft of POWs, to work in the coal mine and the shipyard.

He was housed in a building that collapsed under the weight of snow in Northern Japan. He was one of the fatalities. A young life, surviving the battle, the diphtheria epidemic, the effects of diseases caused by malnutrition, only to die in a freak accident.

I will remember him.

Editor's note: Joe Furey died as a prisoner of war on New Year's Day, 1944. An island near the town of Pinawa, Manitoba is named in his remembrance. [Read more about Joe Furey](#) both at [HKVCA.ca](http://www.hkvca.ca) and in the Prairie region report in this issue.

Memories

Gerry Gerrard

The First Canadian POW's Sent to Japan



It was Jan 19/1943, my 21st birthday and I was the first one of 500 Canadians to go aboard the ship, the Tatsuta Maru. I noticed it had a faded red cross on the side and a Jap soldier with a full cast on his leg so I

assumed she was a hospital ship. We were sent down into the hold which was wood lined and completely bare. If we all wanted to sit down it had to be on the deck, with each man sitting between the legs of the man behind. No food until we got ashore in Nagasaki the next evening.

During the two days by train to Tokyo, we were



fed a little wooden box of rice and another box with six items about the size of a quarter: 1 fish 1 meat 1 insect 3 vegetables. Then from Tokyo to Yokohama by electric train, then a march to the camp Kawasaki. The camp was new, two long buildings with a cook house

at the front and a row of Jap style toilets plus a row of sinks. One tap, no hot water. A whoop went up when we saw the Jap style bath about 30 feet long and 10 wide. We only had four baths due to lack of fuel, same with the pot bellied heater which only got used three times. We were issued a jacket and a pair of pants (did not know they were to last to the end of the war), also four blankets but they were made from wood fiber so it was like sleeping between boards. The walls of the building were boards less than one half inch thick. The weather there was similar to Victoria; if it snowed we had to march to work one way and another on the way back.

Of course on arriving we had to listen to a speech by the camp commander; we were to start work in the morning and he gave us all the rules and punishments, He said and I quote "some of you will never see Canada again, in fact I do not think any of you will." He also added that Canada would be divided up and a Japanese ruler would be head of each section.

This really struck me, and I am sure everyone else. Right there I swore to myself that I would make it home. I said to myself many times "if someone told me people were surviving in these conditions I would not have believed them and here we were doing it." Whenever I got into a depressed state I would think of that speech and it would lift me out of my depression.

When the University finished for the summer a big splash was made about the students volunteering to work in the shipyard for their Emperor. Of course they wanted to improve their English because they had been promised a big piece of Canada. I suggested they ask for land in the northern BC mountains, I didn't mention the bears.

Later on while I was working in the blacksmith shop, one of the men I would say early thirties with a loud voice and big mouth wanted to know what his title would be when he became a commander in Canada. I pointed to his chest and said "me big son of a bitch". Well his chest swelled up and he stood a little taller as he walked around the shop repeating this.

I just walked away telling myself if he runs into someone who speaks English I have a problem. A few months later, about three weeks before the end of the war, he still did not realize they were losing. We all knew.

H. (Gerry) Gerrard RCCS

(Read [Gerry's personal account](#) on our web site -ed)



Postcard of the Tatsuta Maru circa 1931. The ship was sunk by an American torpedo on February 8th 1943, less than one month after transporting Mr. Gerrard and his comrades from Hong Kong to Japan.

(For more on the Japanese Hellships which transported Canadian POWs to Japan from Hong Kong, visit our ['C' Force website](#) -ed)

The Power of Social Media

Dan James (danequin@yahoo.ca)



Hello I am Dan James, grandson of PTE J.E. James (aka Jesse). I have been the admin of our Facebook page for about the last year and a half. Since working on the page we have managed to reach 500 likes on Facebook. Quite often posts reach 1200-1500 people though because people share them etc. We can use social media to advertise events, make announcements, and continue to tell the stories of your veterans.

Please make sure to like us on [Facebook](#), feel free to post pictures, and stories and I can share them. You can message me, there or e-mail me at

danequin@yahoo.ca. Feel free to message me events, deaths, and anything related to our Hong Kong Vets, or the battle of Hong Kong. Please, feel free to share the stories anytime.

I would also like people to post something about a veteran, even though they have passed on their Birthday.

Every Day Every Month we Remember, not just in November.



Honouring a Grandfather and His Comrades

Kohal Flanagan

Dear Hong Kong Veterans and HKVCA members;

My name is Kohal Flanagan. I'm 12 years old and live in Fredericton New Brunswick. I am the youngest grandson of RRC James Andrew Flanagan E30353, who fought in the Battle of Hong Kong in 1941.

As a member of the HKVCA, I heard that the Canadian Mint would be producing a Commemorative coin marking the departure of the Royal Rifles of Canada and the Winnipeg Grenadiers on route to Hong Kong in the fall of 1941.

In May of 2016, I was one of the top presenters at the George Street Middle School's Heritage Fair in Fredericton. My project was about the Defense of Hong Kong and my Grandfather. I also included some information about a little known hero "Sgt. Gander" their Newfoundland dog and mascot.

I was surprised to learn how little Canadians know about the Defense of Hong Kong and I feel very strongly that the battle and the following struggle as POWs should be taught in schools throughout Canada.

With the release of the coin, I think it would be a great opportunity to take the same trip across Canada that these soldiers took in 1941. I would be honoured to represent the Hong Kong Veterans and HKVCA, in taking part in such a trip to inform Canadians about the significance of the Defence of Hong Kong and the Commemorative Coin.

Please find attached a photo of me and my Heritage Project display, I also have an essay that ties into the project. This material would accompany me if I were to go on the trip.

Thank you, Kohal Flanagan

Prairie Region Report

Carol Hadley



We were disappointed that Kathie Carlson didn't let her name stand for re-election to the Board of Directors; however she will continue her interest in Alberta and we are pleased

to have her in place to promote the HKVCA in Alberta.

In Manitoba – we will be having a presentation of the Battle of Hong Kong Coin on September 29 in Winnipeg at the Legislature. We would be pleased to have any veteran, widow or HKVCA member attend. Invitations will be sent out as we are in the preliminary stages of planning and don't have a time yet. George Peterson, WG, HK vet will be involved in the ceremony as he is the only Hong Kong veteran to work in the Mint in Winnipeg when he received the coins in the vault to make them currency.

Carol Hadley was pleased to be able attend the round table discussion with the Minister of Veterans Affairs and his staff recently to have a general discussion on the budget. MP Terry Duguid was the Chair of the meeting with representatives of many veteran associations in this area. The HKVCA wanted to ensure the programs for our veterans and widows would stay in place and we were told they would.

On August 14 Manitoba held a service to acknowledge the 71st anniversary of VJ Day with over 65 members, representatives of veteran's associations and dignitaries including guest speaker, Philip Lee, former Lieutenant Governor of Manitoba.

On August 20 we attended the 100th anniversary of Deer Lodge hospital, as it was a military hospital for several decades before coming under the province. Many of our veterans spent considerable time in this facility after they returned from their service, as well in their later years. John Osborn, VC is recognized in the foyer with a monument as well in the chapel (stain glass window) for his service. So we are definitely part of their history.

In September we will have a plaque unveiling in Pinawa Manitoba for French Island (in memory of Lt. Charles Duncan French) and Furey Island (in memory of Pte. Joseph Furey) for their service.

We will be promoting our Education information and Essay Contest at the Manitoba Social Science Teachers conference at the end of October.

We hope everyone is enjoying their summer and travel safe.

Ontario Region News



Ottawa

Mitzi Ross

There will be a memorial service held at the "Memorial Wall" here in Ottawa at

the corner of Sussex Drive and King Edward Avenue on Saturday, December 10th. The service begins at 11:00 and ends at 11:30 followed by a luncheon at noon (place yet to be determined) After the luncheon, at 1:30, there will be the "Annual General Meeting" for all who wish to attend. If you wish to place a wreath please let me know 1 week in advance so as to get it into the program. Also, please let me know if you require a chair for the service. I can be reached at: mitziross@rogers.com or [613-225-5105](tel:613-225-5105).

Southwestern Ontario

Marilyn Morgan



HK Veteran Lawrence Ross with his daughters Deb, Lana, and Pat and his sons Mike and Brian.

Lawrence Ross, our area's only surviving HK veteran, lives at Parkwood Institute in London. One day while searching the library, his daughter, Pat, noticed there was not a single article on the Battle of Hong Kong. Unusual in a residence for veterans! Pat's sister, Deb, decided to write a short article about the Battle which was published in the Parkwood newsletter. This led to the establishment of a permanent plaque by the HKVCA in the veteran's wing at Parkwood.

On August 23, 2016, our Regional Director, Mike Babin, welcomed about 40 people to the dedication ceremony. In anticipation of the presentation, Mike covered the plaque (see photo on next page) with our new HK flag. Dorothy Sauson, widow of Ray Sauson RRC, attended the ceremony as well as Lori Atkinson Smith, our Regional Membership Chairperson. Poppies and "Canadians in Hong Kong" booklets were handed out by Sloan and Nolan, great-grandchildren of Harry Atkinson WG.

As you can imagine, this was a very moving and emotional time not only for Lawrence who is 96 years old, but for everyone present. Lawrence's daughter, Deb, spoke on behalf of her father. (You can read [Lawrence's personal account](#) on the C Force page on the HKVCA website.)

Four generations of Lawrence's family proudly took in the afternoon's events. It was a very special time for all of us to honour and show our love, support and thanks to Lawrence for his service.

Following the ceremony, a reception was held at Parkwood's Iron Duke Pub where we were treated to refreshments and musical entertainment, courtesy of Parkwood Institute. Many residents and staff joined with us at this time.

Lori Atkinson Smith, along with the Ross family and the staff at Parkwood deserve our heartfelt thanks for setting this project in motion.



*Battle of Hong Kong Plaque
Parkwood Institute London, ON*

Quebec Region Report

Lucette Mailloux Muir



Greetings all from a very warm and sunny Quebec. Hope you are all enjoying and continue to enjoy a beautiful summer. Fall is on our doorstep and nature is already showing signs of changes in colour.

The summer was on a slower pace as for the activities of the HKVCA and the May ceremonies in Quebec City to honour the RRC Veterans with the exception of our monthly meetings of the BOD and the General Election for 2016-2017. I take this opportunity to thank the out-going BOD members for their dedication and hard work during the last year and congratulations to all new and re-elected members.

Yours truly was re-elected and will remain the Quebec Director. Our Treasurer Allan Marshall and Secretary Debbie Batley Everett will continue to serve for another term as well as our Deputy Directors. Philip Doddridge remains our faithful representative of the HK Vets and appreciated adviser to us. Thank you all.

Full results given elsewhere in this edition.

We recently held a meeting of our executive for reading of all reports, we also hold teleconference meetings. All is well with the region.

Unfortunately, we recently lost two of our RRC Veterans, Eric Batley and Dempsey Syvret after both having health problems for some time. We will remember them!

We and many members are preparing to pay our respects during the Veterans' Week and November 11th ceremonies and especially during this year of the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of Hong Kong. Take the time to remember and to thank a Vet for their sacrifices.

From our Book Corner, the Royal Rifles of Canada in Hong Kong book is a great Christmas gift idea for some of our younger generation or anyone else. Good way for them to learn more about the history of our Hong Kong Veterans, Dad, Grandfather, Great-Grandfather or just a friend and the sacrifices they made for a better world we enjoy today.

The RRC book by Grant Garneau is available, at this time and in time for Christmas, through the Quebec Region at the cost of \$ 50.00 per copy, including shipping and handling. Just contact Lucette (HKVCA, QC Region, 18 rue Barre, Granby, QC J2H 2E6) with your order, mailing address and cheque.

That will be it for this time, take care and Happy

Thanksgiving Wishes to all.

Atlantic Region



Emmie Flanagan

As of September 1, 2016, I have accepted to take on the position of National Education Program Manager.

Although very green and new to this position, I will do my best to ensure our Hong Kong Veterans stories are shared and learned throughout Canadian schools. My predecessors, Pat Turcotte and Gail Angel have worked tirelessly over the past few years to see that our National Writing Competition will continue.

Gail has involved new associates to help with procedures, technical support, and translation of text, etc... Thank you Pat and Gail, for your dedication and unwavering support to this project.

I wish to welcome our new Writing Competition Coordinator, Adma Hashem, and extend a sincere thank you to her for taking on this very important position.

Annual Reunion

Please join us at our annual reunion, being held from Friday, October 14th to Sunday, October 16th in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Using Limited Funds Wisely



We all know that postal rates continue to climb. What you may not know is that a significant portion of your membership dues (you **are** paid up, aren't you?) go toward mailing our quarterly newsletter. Our mission is one of education, and we need to use our limited funds wisely in support of it. Have you thought about checking out our digital edition? If you like it, you could ask us to cancel your paper version, helping us to fulfill our mission.

Don't forget – you can print or view an exact copy of the paper version yourself, as we always include a link to it at the end of the digital version.

Don't like the digital version? Let us know why, so we can improve it.

Our Latest Editor



We don't seem to be able to hang on to our newsletter editors for long. Unfortunately Tom Eden has been forced to resign due to the work he is doing on other Veterans' projects. I have volunteered to take on this task, and I hope that you'll contact me (hkvca41@gmail.com) with your suggestions and criticisms. I will be doing the online work, but my wife, Anne, has volunteered to take care of the paper compilation and mailing. We call this our "in house" solution.

Jim Trick (son of HK Vet Charles Richard Trick)