

WASURERU-NAI

"Never Forget"

National newsletter of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association

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-Carol Hadley



President's Report 2015

Hopefully the warm sunny weather is being enjoyed in all your communities and you were able to attend the Convention in Ottawa.

I offer my deep gratitude to Mitzi Ross and her team for organizing the convention held in Ottawa in August. As we marked the 70th Anniversary of Victory Japan Day, we were pleased to see nine Hong Kong veterans there. Bruce Cadoret, Edward Campbelton, Frank Cooper, Phil Doddridge, Gerry Gerrard, George MacDonell, Ralph MacLean, George Peterson and Dempsey Syvret attended along with 16 Burma Star veterans. These men are extraordinary and a delight to talk with, to learn more about their lives. The convention team along with Veterans Affairs Canada did a great job to ensure they were comfortable and properly honoured.

I realize how valuable an individual's time is and appreciate your contribution to the HKVCA. I will begin by thanking everyone who was able to attend the convention, the National BOD and the Regions executive that keep this organization moving. We have been blessed to have some wonderful people let their names stand for offices on all levels to do the work that we have been tasked by the veterans when this Association was formed but also the work we can see that is needed.

At the Annual General Meeting held at the convention *a new Board* was elected and appointed *to move this organization forward*. Our new Board:

President – Derrill Henderson:

Past President – Carol Hadley;

1st Vice – Nancy Doddridge;

2nd Vice – Kathie Carlson:

Treasurer - Barry Mitchell;

Secretary – Ian Doull,

BOD appointed; Member at large and Education – Gail Angel;

Member at large – Mitzi Ross, and

Regional Directors: Atlantic - Emmie Flanagan; Quebec - Lucette Mailloux Muir; Ontario -

Mike Babin; Prairie – Kathie Carlson; British Columbia – Gwen Day.

Please take the opportunity to suggest ideas to them that might improve what we are doing or offering some of your time to work with the Association.

Since we were formed, we have accomplished much over the years of which we can be very proud. As you have seen by our financial statement that Barry has recently distributed, the Memorial Wall was a huge endeavour. This was accomplished by teamwork from all our members to ensure that the money was available when needed. We had inside and outside expertise that gave their time and resources to make our veterans' dream a reality.

Another part of their vision was to see that their stories would not be forgotten. This has been realized with the website that has captured the pictures and stories that have come forward from various resources. This has helped educators and students in their search for information for school projects and anyone who wanted to know the story of the Canadians in the Battle of Hong Kong.

There is a database on the website with all the members of C Force with their military record with as much information that can be gathered. This information has been gathered over many years and is helpful to families and friends of C Force. There is an article in this edition on how to find this information.

Most of the stories on the website have been translated into French or English as needed to allow access to all Canadians. This work has been done with the help of many people – members and non-members – for which we are truly grateful. In pursuing our mission of educating the Canadian public on the role this country played in the Battle of Hong Kong and its aftermath, we are building a legacy via our online presence. From our first website created by Linda May more than 15 years ago, our online presence has grown dramatically, based in no small part to our members' support.

Our accomplishments so far:

- A library which has become a permanent repository of our veterans' stories, diaries and media interviews; used by students, researchers, families, and a curious public.
- A database which focuses on the individual 'C' Force member, allowing visitors to produce dynamic Individual Reports featuring all we know about the person. (This is intertwined with the Monument Badge project which Lori will address)
- Our Teachers' Zone providing guidance for teachers as they assist students in their assignments, encouraging them to learn more about this part of our history.
- Guidance and support for those who wish to create their own tribute to a veteran.

- Our Suggested Reading page for a comprehensive list of books on Hong Kong, some from a Canadian perspective, others looking at the larger view.
- A photo gallery which documents our history and activities over the years. (That's where you'll find convention photos!)
- Online versions of Wasureru-Nai, our National guarterly newsletter.
- Our Facebook page which keeps us up to date on events, and allows everyone to submit their own insights and links. Very active!
- Links to other sites that have valuable information about the battle, POW experiences, and post-war efforts focused on giving this part of our history the attention it deserves.

What's next? We are looking into providing an online option for joining HKVCA including dues payments, and membership renewals. As well, our web sites need to be updated and reorganized. We continue to look for more personal accounts and images so that we can increase the value of our library. Lots of work yet to do!

These tasks have been done by our dedicated members – I applaud you all – well done.

We were sorry to hear that Sheila Forsyth (our previous editor) had to resign due to work and personal commitments. We sincerely thank Sheila for all her work on the newsletter and wish her well. We are pleased to have Marjorie Stintzi as our newsletter editor. We are grateful to have this essential means of communication to continue. Welcome Marjorie.

Flags have also been a topic with requests from our members – Barry Mitchell will have some information on that soon.

As we move forward we have the challenge of declining membership. As the veterans and widows pass on, the family falls away. We need to keep the Association moving forward by retaining present members, attracting new members and replacements for our aging executive. To do this we need to start with a fundraising chairperson to generate the funds needed for our programs and a publicity person to spread the word that our Association exists. We need members to take on the tasks that need to be completed and to generate or explore new areas to promote the story of the Canadians in the Battle of Hong Kong.

I look forward to the new Board of Directors taking the lead of the Association into the future with new ideas and opportunities. I wish to thank you all for the opportunity to serve this Association and sharing the many wonderful events with you. The new BOD will need all your support and enthusiasm to carry on the work that our veterans have begun. **

For all the Irish or want-a-bees - here is a wish for you:

May God grant you always:

A sunbeam to warm you, a moonbeam to charm you, a sheltering angel so nothing can harm you, laughter to cheer you, faithful friends near you and whenever you pray Heaven to hear you. God Bless!!

Please enjoy your family and friends as they are our greatest gift.

HKVA President



-Philip Doddridge, RRC

Konichiwa!!

Sheila very kindly persuaded me to continue writing short items for the newsletter so I submit these few words to our new Editor, Marjorie Stintzi. Welcome, Marjorie! I look forward to meeting you.



God Bless - Philip

On July 29, 1940, I joined the army in the Royal Rifles of Canada and remained a Royal Rifle until January 29, 1946. Thought you'd like to know. :) I had the honour of unveiling a statue of our beloved dog Gander at Memorial Park in Gander, Newfoundland. Everything went well except for the weather. It rained non-stop. I was impressed with the beauty of Gander, a town of some twelve thousand persons. When we were there in 1941 there was no town and only a few families who supported the operation of the huge airport, at that time known as the busiest airport in the world. It is still pretty impressive.

Be good to each other, and May

In Memoriam

Last Post

William C. Krohn, H 6872 WG, of Carman, Manitoba died June 16, 2015

Cornelius Nickel, H6112 WG, died February 1, 2015

Ken Pifher, B43098 RR, husband of the late Eleanor (nee Burton) (2007), loving father of Pamela Newhouse, died Apr 25, 2015.

John Russell E30316 RRC, August 2015

Daniel Thompson, H77461 WG, died April 12, 2015

HKVCA

Rebecca Bertulli, November 2013

Angie Bourbonniere, widow of Armand Bourbonniere, WG, July 31, 2015

Murdena Claricoates, widow of Ronald Claricoates, RRC, May 24, 2015

Ron Gordon Coughlan, son of Peter Coughlan, RR, June 18, 2014

Grace Cox, widow of Albert Cox, WG, October 14, 2013

E. Marcine James, widow of John "Jesse" James, WG, June 11, 2013 in Emo, ON

June Naylor, widow of Howard E Naylor Sr. RCCS, and mother of Lee Naylor, Apr 26, 2015

Claris Phillips, widow of Edward Phillips, RR, and mother of Constance Darling, March 17, 2015 in Quebec

Ward Stepanchuk, son of Nicholas Stepanchuk, RRC, June 19, 2015. Niagara Ontario region member

Ralph Wilford St. John Jr., son of Ralph St. John, RR, died the second week of June, 2015. He had been looking after his mother Evelyn, widow of Ralph St. John, RR,

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

We will remember them!

Commemoration Ceremony at Memorial Wall

Mike Babin



On June 18 the Embassy of China held a commemorative event at our Memorial Wall in Ottawa. The purpose was to recognize the 70th anniversary of the end of the World War II (the Chinese call it the "World Anti-Fascist War") and victory over the Japanese (the "Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression"). All of our Hong Kong Veterans were invited, but only George MacDonell was able to attend. I was there representing the HKVCA.

The event was hosted by Mr Luo Zhaohui, the Ambassador of China to Canada. Mr Luo praised Canada and the selfless dedication of the soldiers who helped defend Hong Kong. He also spoke about Dr Norman Bethune, and his commitment to the Chinese people. George spoke very eloquently of his experiences in Hong Kong and of the bravery of the Chinese military who fought alongside the Canadians. Mr Frank Ling, an Ottawa resident for 47 years who was four years old and living in Hong Kong when the Japanese struck told of some of his own memories of the battle and the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong.



After the speeches and laying of wreaths, the Ambassador presented George MacDonell with a Certificate of Appreciation which read "In recognition of your extraordinary bravery and dedication in the Battle of Hong Kong against Japanese aggression."

Trip to Hong Kong and Japan

MIke Babin

Commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of the War in the Pacific with a pilgrimage to Hong Kong and Japan. Details <u>here</u>. Prices increase Oct. 1, so sign up now!

Mike Babin is organizing a trip to Hong Kong and Japan for HKVCA members and non-members interested in the Battle of Hong Kong and the POW experience. The trip departs Canada on December 1. The focus will be on commemoration, and the history of the Battle of Hong Kong. Participants will spend six days in Hong Kong to participate in two commemoration ceremonies, tour the battlefield, visit museums and spend free time exploring this fabulous city. There is an optional four day extension to Japan for a commemorative ceremony, a meeting with a group of Japanese who have studied the POW experience in Japan, and an exploration of the culture and sights of this fascinating country.



The New 'C' Force Web

Jim Trick Webmaster

We're excited to announce an upgraded 'C' Force web site featuring a new service - Dynamic Reports. Now you can access 'C' Force Unit lists that have active links to the individuals who were members. As an option, you can enter the name of the individual into a form and be presented with a detailed report of all the information we have available online. The report displays photos, personal and regimental information from Vince Lopata's library, and incorporates the results of the Monument Badge project that Lori Atkinson-Smith has been developing. If you want a printed copy it's easy to print the results right from your browser.

You'll find additional information and the input forms at: http://www.hkvca.ca/cforcedata/. Give our new service a try and feel free to get back to us using the contact information found

there. We look forward to your comments, and most importantly, receiving your additional information on the veteran of interest.

Take a look at the figure (above) to see how to access the report page from our main site.

This is a work in progress, and the development team is continuing to add information as we find it. Thanks to all who have sent in corrections and additional details.

Commemoration 2015

by Mitzi Ross

The Commemoration was held in Ottawa from Thursday August 13 to Sunday August 16. We were blessed with the attendance of eight of our Hong Kong Veterans: George Peterson, Philip Doddridge, George MacDonell, Bruce Cadoret, Gerry Gerrard, Ralph Maclean, Dempsey Syvret and our oldest veteran, at the age of ninety-seven, Edward Campbelton. Also joining us on this special occasion were seventeen Burma Veterans and their families.

All events except the memorial services were held at the Westin Hotel, in downtown Ottawa, minutes from the National War Memorial.

On Thursday, the first day, registration was held just outside the ballroom and the Memorabilia Room and the Hospitality Suite were open for all to visit.

On Friday we again had the registration table staffed all day while in the morning many attended the Annual General Meeting. Following lunch there was a tour of the National War Museum. Again the Memorabilia Room and the Hospitality Suite were open and well attended. The Dinner/Dance was held that evening during which a special ceremony was held inducting all the Veterans in attendance into the "Order of St. George".

Saturday there were two memorial services. The first was at the Hong Kong Veterans Memorial Wall with Ted Terry emceeing. The second was at the National War Memorial in recognition of VJ Day. Both went extremely well. Once again the Memorabilia Room and the Hospitality Suite were open and well attended. That evening there was a Dinner/Gala during which all veterans that were in attendance were presented with commemorative jackets, each bearing the insignia of their respective designations.

Finally, on Sunday morning we said our goodbyes and well wishes during a very well attended Farewell Breakfast.

HKVCA Monument Badge Committee Report

by Lori Atkinson Smith, daughter of Harry Atkinson, WG

One of the HKVCA goals is to have a Monument Badge mounted on every single HK Veteran's gravestone. The Monument Badge makes the gravestone a distinct and unique tribute to the Hong Kong Veterans. Please consider this purchase. You can go on line to the HKVCA store for ordering information. Also- We are always looking for HKVCA members to volunteer to help search for our veterans' information. Let me know if you are interested.

Writing Contest Update

Gail Angel, National Education Coordinator

We need a Writing Contest Coordinator. Pat Turcotte, Ontario Region, ran the contest for many years. When she "retired" from the post two years ago, I had the idea that this is too important to have only in the hands of one person, with all the knowledge and experience that you gain from it. Our next coordinator was Emmie Flanagan, from Atlantic Region. Last year, Sheila Forsyth from Ontario rose to the occasion.

Please consider taking this role for the coming year. The bulk of the effort happens in September and in the spring. The rest of the time it's quiet, with smaller tasks here and there. If you can send an email, you can do this. Contact me for more information.

Veterans Stories for 2015-16

The following veterans stories have been selected for the 2015-16 school year: Private Frank Christensen, WG, Lieut. C. Douglas Johnston, RRC, Rifleman Ralph MacLean, RRC, Corporal George Peterson, WG and Private Larry Stebbe, WG.

Writing Contest Judges needed

We are grateful for our judges who are full-time teachers for taking on this extra work, especially as the judging period happens to coincide with a very busy time in the classroom.

Over the years, we learned it is a good idea to have a few extra judges available as replacements or to lighten the workload. We only have one French Language judge, and I would dearly love to find at least one more. If you know of someone, please approach them on our behalf and give them my contact details.

We are looking for History teachers (full-time, part-time, occasional, supply, or retired), with intermediate computer skills, and of course, interest and ability to support our organization in

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this way, for one year. Our judges are from BC, Ontario, and New Brunswick. I would like to have judges from other provinces. Ideally our judging panel should be identified and confirmed a few weeks before the contest begins, especially if they are new to our contest. Recruiting over the summer is ideal but it may not be possible for everyone. To quote the Cub Scout motto: Do Your Best. Thanks for your help.

gail_angel@ca.ibm.com ga@angelsys.ca

Order of St. George inducts HK Veterans

All the Hong Kong Veterans and Burma Star Veterans in attendance at the Commemoration in August were inducted into the Order of St. George.

"The highlight of the convention for me was the induction of our Hong Kong veterans into the Order of St George. It was a most dramatic moment. Seeing these noble men each being touched on the shoulder by the Queen's sword to honour their service to Her Majesty was



impossible to put into words...an accolade painfully won for their more than four years of inhumane treatment following the surrender to Japanese after the battle of Hong Kong. "BC Region Director Gwen Day

The Order of St. George was established in 2003, a registered charity, contributes funding in support of Canada's wounded or fallen military personnel and their immediate families as well as other worthy causes. Its patron is General (Ret'd) Rick Hillier and vice patron is MGen (Ret'd) Lewis MacKenzie. Membership is considered an honour and privilege as it recognizes the member's contribution to their community or to humanity. For more information, go to www.orderstgeorge.ca



Across the Nation

BC Banter

by Murray Doull

The VJ Day Committee in Vancouver made up of the Veterans' Commemorative Association, the Chinese Canadian Military Museum and Army and Air Force veterans in the Canadian Pacific Unit sponsored a commemorative event at the Chinese Culture Center on Pender Street in Vancouver on August 15. Lee Naylor attended and set up the BC Region educational display which was viewed and well received by hundreds of people. Lee talked to as many of them as he could, answering questions and promoting the story of our HK vets.

A well attended Remembrance Service was held on July 4 to intern the ashes of Bill Doull (RRC) and his wife Claire Doull at the family cemetery in Cherry River, QC. Many thanks to Derrill Henderson for officiating and to Lucette Mailloux-Muir and other members of the QC branch of the HKVCA who attended bearing the HK flag. The Service was followed by a reception at St. Paul's United Church in Magog.

"We Will Remember Them"

Prairie Prose

Prairie Region Executive

Greetings from the Prairies! The Manitoba Area of Prairie Region has monthly meetings at St James Legion on the 2nd Thursday at noon. Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings and the building is accessible. The next meeting will be **October 8**, **2015** at noon. Please come.

In April we had a Ladies Tea and Tidbits with about a dozen lady members who attended to socialize and see some of the articles that we have available. The August Tea & Tidbits was not so well attended due to holidays, etc so we hope more will come out on December 12, 2015, at 1 p.m.

The Heritage Fair was held on Thursday, May 7, 2015 at the University of Winnipeg where almost 300 students display a diorama on a topic related to the heritage of Canada. The HKVCA participated with a display manned by Stan Lopata, Alex Taylor and Carol Hadley with Gord Crossley of the Fort Garry Horse Museum judged students' entries relating to our military heritage. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to give information on our website and the teacher's zone and inform students of the Essay Contest.

VJ Day was held on Sunday, August 23 at Neil Bardal centre with about 70 people attending. We were very pleased to have Lieutenant Governor Janice Filmon and her husband Gary Filmon, attend and bring greetings.

Reunion Dinner to be held Saturday, October 24, 2015 at Neil Bardal centre, 3030 Notre Dame at 2 p.m. with dinner buffet at 3 p.m. at cost of \$25.00/person. Invitations will be mailed shortly.

At a monthly meeting George Peterson reported that he had worked at the Mint and received the coins to become currency. Carol Hadley will contact the Mint to see when the dedication of the Battle of Hong Kong coin is happening. It couldn't be arranged for August at the Convention but one of the events coordinator was looking at October and it was suggested to do it in conjunction with the Reunion Dinner. More to come on this.

The Winnipeg Grenadier monument for Brookside Cemetery Memorial Park has been stalled as we wait for the Winnipeg Council to decide on the structure of the park relating to the size of the each plot as it would determine the size of the monument.

At the Annual Inspection in May of the Winnipeg Grenadier Cadet Corps there were 30 cadets on parade and with good displays. It's wonderful to have the Winnipeg Grenadiers carry on in the cadet corps.

Veterans Affairs asked our Association to contact the veterans to see who was able to attend the Convention - vets in the Prairie region were called and their info was forwarded to VAC. We were unable to reach **Harry Hawryshok** – don't know his status. So if anyone has some information please let us know.

We were happy to have **George Peterson and Ralph MacLean** attend the 70th Anniversary of the end of World War Two.

Take care everyone.

Ontario Offerings

Mike Babin et al

Royal Hong Kong Regiment Foundation Day Dinner

Mike Babin

On May 23 the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers) held its annual Foundation Day Dinner at the Markham District Veterans Association, which I attended representing the HKVCA. The Volunteers were a regiment composed of mostly Europeans established in 1854. More

than 2,000 members of the regiment were involved in the Battle of Hong Kong in 1941, and nearly 300 of these were killed or listed missing.

The dinner was a classic regimental affair, with roast beef and all the trimmings, toasts with port and speeches by some of the officers. George MacDonell was seated in a place of honour at the head table.

Niagara Region Report

Pam Newhouse, daughter of Ken Pifher, RRC

In late spring, June 6, I hosted the West Central Area's fifth annual luncheon at Betty's Restaurant in Niagara Falls. It was well attended by 24 people. Gerry Sunstrum (RRC) was present who is now our area's one remaining veteran since my father, Ken Pifher (RRC), passed away in April. For the first time, at Lori Atkinson's suggestion, we held an abbreviated form of the HKVCA Opening Ceremony used before meetings. Gerry Sunstrum, Pat Turcotte, Jill Newhouse and Jordan Newhouse participated. Its purpose is to honour and remember our veterans who fell in battle or those comrades who have since died. What a great way to remind ourselves of the reason the HKVCA exists and why we, as its members, must ensure that it continues. Thank you Lori. I think we should create the tradition of holding the ceremony before each of our luncheons.

Pam Newhouse, West Central Area Rep., pamnewhouse@hotmail.com

Kingston/Trenton Report

Shelagh Purcell, daughter of Leonard Corrigan, WG

I have been sharing with all the wonderful HKVCA Ottawa Commemoration experience with all. Bruce Cadoret, RRC, was one of our veterans who attended with his daughter Anne and son Richard. He really enjoyed himself. I recently connected with Irene Firlotte, widow of Lawrence Firlotte, RRC. We always enjoy our chats.

John Russell, son of Albert James Russell, RRC, is going to speak at The Hague about the Bosnia war story and will update us on his return. This is his second time appearing there.

Northern Ontario Report

by Jackie Le Drew, Northern Ontario Area Rep

I'm forwarding something I received from Howard Raper to add to my newsletter submission:

"I had a brief visit with Gabe Lapointe in St. Catharines recently. He is the musician who regales me with stories of his good times at Royal Rifles reunions where he was asked

to entertain the veterans. He was looking forward to a visit with his good friend living at the Gaspe, Bill MacWhirter, a Royal Rifles veteran. Gabe is taking a copy of the book Hoping in Hell on the life of Bob "Flash" Clayton to Bill.

Gabe was amazed to find out that "Flash" was Bill MacWhirter's platoon Sergeant. Bill said that "Flash" was the bravest man he'd ever met, seemed to fear nothing. Gabe's poem about the Hong Kong veterans was written for his friend, Bill MacWhirter and is in the book, Hoping in Hell.

Gabe is celebrating his 80th birthday by travelling with his wife Shirley to visit family and friends where he grew up. He told me he will be sleeping in the same room where he was born 80 years ago at the family home.

I thought it was quite interesting and quite a coincidence that I happened to run into Gabe, a neighbour of my son Stan in St. Catherines. Gabe and Shirley came to our home and entertained the folks at the Brechin Legion, singing and playing guitar with the same songs he sang for the Royal Rifles many years ago.

Flash Clayton's book **Hoping in Hell** has a <u>Facebook page</u> and purchasing information is on the page.

For Now, Howard Raper"

Quebec Quotes

Lucette Mailloux Muir, Quebec Regional Director

Greetings all from a sunny very warm Quebec.

Since the spring 2015 edition of the Wasuseru-Nai newsletter, the Quebec region has been fast at work for the new year. We held our executive meetings with the presentation of all our reports and the closing budget for 2014. Following changes to the Election procedures, our decision was to adjust our local procedures to reflect the national ones. Dues Notices were sent to a few delinquent members and with great success, Thank you. We also welcomed new members in our group.

I attended the National Convention in Ottawa and would like to thank Mitzi Ross and her hard working team for a very nice Convention. Thank you All.

The Commemorations were very well planned and well attended by all. I would like to say thank you to the outgoing BOD for all their hard work and say congratulations and welcome to the new Board of Directors. Many projects and plans are on the table and all are already at work.

Our Region is back working on plans etc for the upcoming months.

That is it at this time. Happy Thanksgiving everyone and take care.

Eastern Breezes

Emmie Flanagan, Regional Director

My HKVCA highlight this year was attending the National Convention - 70th VJ Day Anniversary in Ottawa. It was an honour to have so many Hong Kong Veterans in our presence. Thank you to Mitzi and her wonderful team of volunteers who participated in the making of this year's National Convention. Our table was graced with the eldest HK Veteran at the convention, 97 year young Eddy Campbelton. He told us this was the first HKV convention he had ever attended, and he looks forward to many more! Photo is of Eddy Campbelton and HKV widow



Clara Flanagan dancing up a storm.

On VJ Day, a display at the Fredericton Museum depicted the life of a Hong Kong Veteran in WWII. Andy Flanagan delivered a presentation, part was broadcast on CTV Atlantic News.

Mayor and Council from the Village of Belledune, NB will have an unveiling of their 'Memorial Park on September 19, with a stone erected and dedicated to our Hong Kong Veterans.

New Editor Introduction

I am a retired journalist/editor/ freelance writer. My British grandfather was a superintendent in the Hong Kong police when captured by the Japanese on Dec. 25, 1941. He was interned in Stanley Camp along with his brother-in-law who was a police accountant. I volunteer as the Service Officer/Historian for my local Legion. There I "discovered" two Winnipeg Grenadiers

from our area who both died as POWs and who rekindled my interest in Hong Kong and the Canadians who served there.

DUES

Dues are \$20 annually (January to December) and should be sent to your Region Membership person

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