



# THE SPIRIT OF THE TORCH

**"All Generations of the Hong Kong Family Remember with Pride"**

Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association of Ontario



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December 2005

## Regional Director's Message

This is my last opportunity to chat with you as the Regional Director of the Ontario Region. Many things have happened since I first became involved in HKVCA five years ago. In those intervening years, I must say that I think we have achieved a great deal.

Since we were just a fledgling organization in the year 2000, the first Executive was appointed rather than elected. Dave Murray was Regional Director, Wendy Campbell was the Regional Treasurer and I was the Regional Secretary. Our appointments took effect in 2001, and we held our first election in 2003. In those first two years we were starting from scratch. One of the first things we did was to divide the province into six areas, and set up Area Reps to help us keep in touch with the members across the province. We got our lists of veterans, our widows and our regular members from the National Office and began sorting out the areas to which members would belong. We began looking for ways to increase the public's awareness of the Hong Kong veterans, and decided that one way might be to try to arrange for a new wreath in each of the areas across the province. We set up what we called the "Spirit of the Torch" Fund, and members contributed to these new wreaths which were dedicated to the Hong Kong veterans. That early idea evolved into what we now call our "Honour Wreaths". With the passing of any veteran, we contact the family and arrange for a wreath for that veteran at our expense. Where possible, the community is chosen by the family, preferably in a location that has never had a Hong Kong wreath before. This way we can honour the veteran, but also make sure that more people are made aware of our veterans and their story.

In May of 2003, a chance meeting helped bring one of our first Executive's ideas to the fore. We were anxious to find a way to interest young people in learning more about the Battle of Hong Kong and what followed that battle. The story of the Hong Kong veterans needed to be heard in the schools. Having been invited to a meeting of the Memory Project group, I had the opportunity to meet Nick Brune, a history teacher whose students were assisting at the all-day meeting of veterans learning more about going to the schools to tell students about their war experiences. I was so impressed with what his students did that day that I reached Nick Brune later, only to discover that he was a top-notch teacher who had won the Governor General's

Award for the Teaching of Canadian History in 2002. I realized that he was just the person we were looking for to write some lessons that would feature Hong Kong and be useful in the schools. To make a long story short, he met with a number of veterans and Commemorative members, explained what he would like to do, and with HKVA's financial support, began almost immediately to write what we now call our Ten Lessons. People across the country have begun to use them in their schools, and we have just recently completed the French translation, which will broaden our reach to include Francophones in the majority of the provinces as well.

In the fall of 2003, we had our first Ontario Region election. At that time, Lori Smith joined as Regional Secretary, and Sandi Cameron as Regional Treasurer. These two dynamos did so much to organize our membership lists and our finances into a logical context that our Executive has become a really smooth-running operation.

It was in the fall of 2003 that we were first asked to take on the National Convention. As a new Executive, this was a real challenge, and we were somewhat reluctant to consider it. However, we had asked Mike Babin and Ken Skelton to join us on the team as Deputy Regional Directors, so we felt that we could give it a try. For any of you who were there I think you can agree that the Ontario Executive helped make the Convention the great success that it was. We had asked Sylvia Mason to assist us as well, and she became a Deputy Regional Director so she could do so. As the Secretary at all of the Ottawa meetings, Sylvia did a fantastic job, and she was also responsible for the engraved clocks donated by the Ontario Region that all the veterans received, as well as the gift bags for everyone else. Sandi Cameron was probably the hardest-working of all of us in that she had two hats if not three, as the Treasurer for the Convention, looking after all the aspects of Registration, and, at the same time, continuing to act as our Ontario Regional Treasurer as well. Mike Babin was also involved, attending meetings early on, and volunteering at the Convention itself. Lori Smith was unable to attend, but provided real support in preparing materials for the Special Ceremony associated with the AGM.

Before leaving the topic of the National Convention, we must not fail to recognize the tremendous effort made by the members of the Ottawa Committee in the preparation of the National Convention. Besides the Executive members mentioned above, Ontario Region members resident in Ottawa were involved in monthly

meetings held under the Chairmanship of Derrill Henderson as Coordinator of the Event. These meetings began a year and a half prior to the Convention, and included Ron McGuire, Ian Doull, Mitzi Ross, Rita Flanagan-Kuhn, Joanne Scaffidi, Jeremy Swanson, and numerous other volunteers who supported the Committee. The role of Terry Tobin, and the members of the Veterans Affairs' team, was of extreme importance as well. A great effort!!

In 2003, part way through the term of the first elected Ontario Region Executive, we realized that we needed a larger core group to deal with the many tasks we saw as necessary to our growth as a region, and we implemented the Deputy Regional Director positions. The first candidate to join us was Ken Skelton, who expanded our activities to include a very important connection to the Asian Heritage community. His wonderful displays were provided initially for events of the Asian Heritage Month's GTA Committee. We then asked Ken to mount an exhibit for our Mini-Reunion in Aurora, and, this in turn led to his display at the National Convention. Those who were able to see Ken's incredible collection of artifacts and memorabilia, as well as the other exhibits, certainly felt that they had a better understanding of what took place in Hong Kong, and the important part those events have played in Canadian history. Ken's contribution to the Ontario Region Executive was an important one.

Not too long after Ken became involved, Mike Babin offered to assist us in some of the projects we were undertaking. It was agreed that a second Deputy Regional Director would make good sense, and we asked Mike to join us. Mike has been involved in a number of initiatives, particularly in the last year or so. He has been working with the Port Perry teachers and their students in planning their trip to Hong Kong. He has also been responsible for organizing a trip to Hong Kong for the HKVCA members and friends who wanted a final pilgrimage there in addition to attending the National Convention. As this newsletter is going to print, approximately 35 people are making their final preparations for their Hong Kong visit, which will take place from December 1<sup>st</sup> to December 9<sup>th</sup>. We thank Mike for a lot of hard work in making this Hong Kong trip possible.

Sylvia Mason was asked to become a third Deputy Regional Director earlier this year. We were anxious to have more help with the Newsletter, and she agreed to give us a hand. She has been doing a great job of formatting the Newsletter and we have really benefited from her expertise. Helping her with the Newsletters, including this one, is Tim Hodgkinson, a real stalwart who, besides arranging for the copying and mailing out of the newsletters, has contributed the Third Generation articles as well. Tim has also been the first to finish a transcription of one of our veteran's videotaped

interviews, and it can now be seen on the HKVCA Website. Tim has been using interviews taped by the Hong Kong veterans in 1997 and 1998 by Veterans Affairs, and is just now completing his second transcription. We thank him for his diligence. Tim also spent many hours assisting us in the Hospitality Room at the Convention. And we all know how much of a success that was!

We mustn't forget the role that the Area Reps. have played in helping the Executive communicate with HKVCA members around the province. With such a large Region to cover, our decision early on to divide the province into six areas was a wise one. The six Area Reps looking after the interests of the members in their area are: Randall Ross, Area Rep Coordinator and the Area Rep for the GTA, Maureen Dwyer-Kline, representing Central & South East, Ron McGuire, the North East, Jackie LeDrew, the North, Leon Sokalski, West Central and our newest Area Rep, replacing the retiring Lori Smith in South West, is Barbara Cunningham-Drew. We do appreciate the many phone calls and the contacts the Area Reps have made on the Region's behalf, and hope that they will be happy to continue to do so.

Communication being as important as it is, we set up a special post early on called the Membership Liaison. This person was to keep track of e-mail members so that bulletins could be sent whenever important matters came up in the gap between the June and December Newsletters. Sandi Cameron filled that role in its beginning stages, but as the number of members with e-mail grew, it was felt that this should be a special assignment for someone outside the Executive. We have been delighted to have Janis Jennings take over the position. She has done an excellent job reaching our 90-plus e-mail members with special information that we have felt members would want to have. Many thanks, Janis!!

What has gone on in Ontario in the last five years has been a team effort, and these people I've mentioned have been the important players. Lori Smith, Sandi Cameron and I will not be continuing in our present roles, although Lori will continue as Membership Chair. Sandi, Sylvia and I feel confident that your new Executive, with Mike Babin as Regional Director, will do an excellent job and we wish them well.

These four years have been a very special time for me, and I do thank all of the members of the Executive for being such a hard-working, conscientious group. There will be many good things to remember. Our good wishes go to the Incoming Executive.

Cheers! *Pat Turcotte*

## HKVCA IN ONTARIO

This Association aims to perpetuate the memory of and to ensure the welfare of the surviving veterans and their spouses, and the widows and their families by:

- Enrolling all those in the Hong Kong family in the HKVCA
- Ensuring regular, periodic contact with those members
- Attending and participating in memorial services on Remembrance Day, V-J Day and other special occasions
- Orally proclaiming our link to the Hong Kong Veterans
- Educating and increasing the public's understanding of the sacrifice made by the Hong Kong veterans
- Organizing Reunions and National Conventions, as well as providing opportunities for social events for The Hong Kong Veterans of Canada

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### THE WORD FROM THE AREA REPS.

We thank all the Area Reps. for helping us to keep in touch with our members across the province, and for their contributions to this Newsletter, and we welcome Barbara Cunningham-Drew, our new Area Rep. in South West.

#### West Central Area: Leon Sokalski

The National Convention was a great success. Everyone certainly enjoyed themselves. Our region was well represented, as 50% of the veterans were in attendance. They included **Peter Gelley** of St. Catharines, **Don Geraghty** of Burlington, and **Ken Pifher** of Grimsby.

**Peter Gelley:** attended with numerous family members. Now, he is very happy because his daughter, her husband, and his granddaughter are looking forward to their trip to Honk Kong. August 25th was a real milestone for him, as he celebrated his 85th birthday.

**Carl Adams:** Is looking forward to celebrating his 87th birthday on November 22nd. Carl is still driving his car,

and will be applying for his driver's licence renewal this coming March.

**Don Geraghty:** Had a great time in Ottawa in August, even though he found the pace quite hectic, at times. (Didn't we all!).

**Ken Pifher:** Everything seems to be going well with him. He also enjoyed the trip to Ottawa, and still enjoys visits from his daughter who lives in Niagara Falls.

**Harold Smith:** Harold's getting around is limited these days, as he has to rely on assisted transportation, but I am sure this will not prevent him from doing his usual activities.

**Gerald Sunstrum:** Looks forward to visits from his son who lives near him, as his wife is now in a nursing home.

I enjoyed talking with all of you, and look forward to getting in touch with you again.

Have a **Happy and Healthy Holiday Season.**

*Leon Sokalski*

## South West Area: Barbara Cunningham-Drew

There are 36 names on my list of members, 17 out of London and 19 in London. I've made calls to everyone on my list.

Wreaths will be laid on Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> by Lori Smith and her group in London, Lillian Gauvin in Kitchener, and the Killorans, including Janis Jennings, in Sarnia. We very much appreciate that, and hope that others will want to consider wreaths honouring the Hong Kong veterans in their communities.

Those from this area planning to go to Hong Kong in December include Doris Hocking, and Barry Fair. Marilyn Morgan had two uncles in Hong Kong, one of whom is buried there. She has arranged with a Port Perry student to take along some earth, brought from the family farm near Bathurst, NB, to be left on her uncle's grave. We look forward to details of her story when the student returns from the trip.

Elaine Calver Lawlis was pleased that a wreath was going to be made available in London as part of the "Honour Wreaths" programme that the Ontario Executive initiated last year. Due to a mix-up at the Ceremony last November 11<sup>th</sup>, the wreath, which had been purchased, was unavailable, so the Poppy Chair in London very kindly offered two wreaths this year, one for the Ceremony and one for Philip Lawlis' gravesite. The family opted for a wreath at Philip's gravesite, and the family has already picked up that wreath.

Hazel Martin was wondering if donations are acknowledged in the Newsletters. She will find a list of 2005 donors in the December Newsletter.

Two of the veterans in the South West area will be going into hospital in November to check on health concerns. Several wives mentioned not having too good a year with chronic health concerns. However, it was a pleasure to speak to everyone.

Members in the SW area should not hesitate to call me if you have any questions or concerns that HKVCA might be able to help answer.

Have a great Christmas season!

*Barbara Cunningham Drew*

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## GTA Area: Randall Ross

**[Editor's Note:** Randall Ross's father, **Lance Ross, RRC** has just come through successfully some very difficult surgery at age 94. We felt that as a tribute to Lance's determination and grit it would be worth repeating the report that Randall gave for the June newsletter involving a ceremony honouring his father.]

## HALL OF VALOUR

My father, Lance Ross, RRC has finally been recognized for his bravery, sacrifice and contribution to the war effort.

On April 23<sup>rd</sup> a ceremony was held in Ottawa at the Crowne Plaza Hotel to honour individual veterans who went beyond the call of duty, and had not previously been given proper recognition. The ceremony was held to redress this situation by inducting 19 veterans into the Hall of Valour. My father and 18 other war veterans now have plaques placed in the Hall of Valour. These plaques honour those who made incredible personal sacrifices. They will now not be forgotten but live on in our hearts and memories.

At the ceremony, a presenter who told what the individual had done to deserve this recognition, introduced each veteran. This was a very moving experience for family, relatives, close friends and me. There were many rounds of applause, tears and moments of silence as the stories unfolded. I thank Ron McGuire for his excellent presentation on behalf of my father.

Two of my father's close army buddies travelled a great distance to be with him, Mr. Bob Barter and Dave Doherty. When my father's turn came to receive his award, Bob and Dave proudly walked with him as his honour guard.

To be recognized late is better than not being recognized at all.

*Randall Ross*

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## North East Area: Ron McGuire

By this time, you will have seen the bulletin sent to you regarding my ninth Remembrance Month exhibit for the Nepean Museum. Hopefully, the poster I designed for that exhibit, which was at the museum during the month of November, will have attracted and informed people that do not know the Hong Kong Veterans' story, as well as ensuring they are Never Forgotten among those that are aware of this sad episode in Canada's history.

Since my last report, Lance Ross (RRC) has been staying with his daughter Mitzi. While I am happy to have Lance in my region I dearly wish, as I know he does, that he could be back in the home where he was born and raised in his beloved Hopetown, Quebec. Unfortunately, a series of health problems has him hospitalized but in typical fashion Lance is bound and determined to once again beat what has been thrown at him. I sincerely hope that in my next report I can tell you that he has fully recovered. In the meantime, please join Connie and I in wishing Lance total success in winning his latest battle.

It was an honour to be able to play a small part in the Ottawa 2005 Convention by being responsible for the Memorabilia/Sales room. I wish to thank Connie for her assistance and all those who brought their treasures to display.

I would be remiss if I did not extend special THANKS to Ken Skelton for all he had to go through bringing portions of his fantastic collection to fill ten tables plus an open corner of the room. Your efforts were greatly appreciated I assure you, Ken, as were the chats we had about our common interests.

I gave my slide-illustrated talk and while I did not take a count I've been told there were well over a hundred attending, including many of our veterans. My sincere thanks to Kim Brunet (wife of Michael, son of Lou Brunet, CPC-Brigade HQ, who was also in attendance with his daughter and mother, Lillian), Vince Lopata and Dick Maze (WG) for their "technical" assistance correcting a problem I encountered. It is obvious I must again enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century (I've just finally become "semi-computerized") and replaced my 1970s Kodak Carousel and slides with the modern equivalents. It is now on my never-ending list of "things to do".

There were many highlights for me at the Convention, but the one topping the list was seeing again the Veterans and their families that I knew and meeting for the first time, those I only knew by name. Like all attending veterans, Eric Maloney (RRC) was hoping to meet comrades he had not seen in years. He was having difficulty in locating some of those he knew were there and I was happy to be able to arrange for happy but touching meetings between Eric and Oswald "Toots" Clark, Arnold Ross and Gus Bitzer.

I think all attending would agree with me that the only real problem with this truly successful event was--- there was never enough time to do everything!

The weekend after was another busy one for me. I had an expanded version of my "C" Force exhibit, which was displayed on eight tables at our Convention, at the Military Collectors Club of Canada Convention held at the Chateau Laurier.

This event required twenty tables plus wall space where I mounted panels. It complied with the Convention theme and honoured "C" Force and all Canadians (there were over 8000!) who fought in the war against Japan and commemorated the real end of the Second World War on 15 August 1945. It never ceases to amaze me how many people I encounter think the war ended on 8 May!

To my surprise, the organizers entered this exhibit competitively. A jury of three military historians assessed all the exhibits and mine was given the five top awards, the first exhibit to do so at any of their forty-one Annual Conventions. I also had fifteen tables with four

non-competitive exhibits concerning: the art of war; Col. John McCrae and the importance of poetry during wartime; a tribute to another group of overlooked Canadians---those who fought in Korea 1950-1953, with a special mention of our veterans of Hong Kong who were involved; and a memorial to the sinking of the SS Caribou by a German submarine on 14 October 1942. (Many of the RRC with "W" Force traveled aboard this well-loved Newfoundland ship).

During a conversation with Lance Ross he told me his recollections of his trip. Admission to the Convention was free to veterans, their wives and widows. It was most gratifying to see how many of them spent so much time meticulously studying my exhibits, and particularly when they told me how many memories, good and bad my exhibits brought to mind.

From telephone calls to my area members I can report the following:

Thomas Jones (RRC) broke both shoulders in two unfortunate falls. He told me he is undergoing therapy and is optimistic that he will be fully recovered by Christmas. Join me in sending Thomas our very best wishes for a full recovery.

Mrs. Golden told me she and David (WG) are in the process of moving to Victoria, British Columbia. Lucky them, no more Ottawa winters!

As he does every year, Ken Ewing (RRC) distributed poppies on 29 October for his Branch 212 of the Kemptville Legion. On 16 November Ken represented the army and gave a presentation to the Probus Club in Kemptville. Two other veterans spoke on the part played by the Canadian air force and navy during the War. On 11 November Ken placed his wreath at the Kemptville Memorial accompanied by his granddaughters, Emma, Stephanie and Christina. Beginning in January he and Susan will spend three months in Brisbane, Australia with their daughter and her family. I wish them safe travel.

Whenever possible I arrange mini-reunions. One was had in July with Les Canivet (RCOC-Brigade HQ), his sister Joan, Sandi Cameron and I at Eric Maloney's home. In October, Ken and Susan, Eric and I met with Lance, Mitzi and Allan for a post-Convention get together. Connie and I visited with Les and Joan while he was in town in late October. During such sessions I hear new stories and learn facts about "C" Force that I did not know and it is always nice to see the lads together again.

Connie and I send everyone best wishes for a happy Christmas, 2006 and safe travel.

*Ron McGuire*

## **Central & South East Area: Maureen Dwyer-Kline**

I would first like to say that the National Convention in Ottawa was "outstanding". I have had such wonderful feedback concerning the Convention. My family and I had a fabulous time, not just in spending time together but in visiting with so many of our HK friends.

We met many wonderful individuals and their families. For example: Ross and Vivian Purse from B.C. who sat with us for both the major dinners and with whom we've kept in contact with since then. Ross has been sharing with us his "life", especially after the war and believe me it's very interesting.

For me, as an Area Rep, I was able to put faces to some of the names on my list and the voices from the telephone calls. This has made my job that much more meaningful.

I would like to apologize to all of you that I did not get to speak to or visit with. Another time, for sure.

Now to the Newsletter, I hope you are still sitting down!!!:

**Fred Mason:** As usual, Fred is always busy either with his family or running the roads with his seniors group. When I spoke with him Friday, Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>, he was preparing for a trip to the Seneca Casino in Niagara Falls, New York to do a bit of gambling. Of course I wished him luck and made sure he had the correct spelling of my name, in case he won big, you know!!

**Sylvia Mason:** She was a very busy lady, helping to get the Convention off the ground!! Along with the others, you did a fabulous job, Sylvia. We're all very appreciative.

Like many of us, Sylvia is wondering where the time has flown! Still so much to do and not enough time to get it done!! She and her Uncle Fred will be celebrating Fred's great grandson's 1st birthday soon. After he wins "us" some big bucks that is!

Right now I hope Sylvia has her feet up, getting some R&R and enjoying a glass of wine before all these Newsletters arrive, as she still helps putting it together. Never a dull moment, eh Sylvia!

**Muriel Warner:** Unfortunately, Muriel's husband, Howard, has not been doing well. Our thoughts are with you both. Muriel herself is doing well and plans to lay the wreath with granddaughter Shay on Remembrance Day in Uxbridge, in honour of her brother, Leonard Patrick, RRC and his comrades in Force "C".

**Marilyn Wright:** is a new member of the HKVCA and is the daughter of Colin Blaver, RRC who died in 1951. On behalf of everyone, I'd like to welcome you. Marilyn and

her sister were only 5 and 3 years old when their father passed away and didn't really get to know him. Luckily, she found out about the Association and Website through a past co-worker. Goes to show that you never know who or how many people actually know about our extended family and us!! She and her sister attended the Convention and had a wonderful and emotional visit.

Marilyn even met up with an old high school friend while there. The friend turned out to be Flash and Jessie Clayton's daughter Rickie Edey. In turn, Flash introduced Marilyn and her sister to a gentleman (they didn't catch his name) who told them that their father had been his platoon leader. Both were very impressed. Maybe someone else remembers Colin Blaver and could tell the girls more about their dad. I'd be happy to pass on Marilyn's address/phone number. Marilyn also informed me of some exciting news. She is a first-time grandmother as of Sept 24th. Her youngest daughter had a baby girl, Morgan Jane. Her middle name is in memory of Marilyn's mother who passed away in 2000.

**Ron and Murdena Claricoates:** I received a very nice e-mail from Murdena telling me that she and Ron were able to enjoy some of the Convention and visiting with old friends - for a while. Unfortunately, their weekend in Ottawa turned into a bit of a disaster as Ron started to feel ill Saturday night after dinner. When he went outside to get a bit of air he luckily met with Dr. Snook who examined Ron and then promptly sent him to Ottawa Civic Hospital via ambulance. Turns out that Ron had suffered a small stroke, a TIA. The hospital ran a number of tests then released Ron Sunday morning to rest up before returning home to Kingston. Murdena says he is doing much better now though and things are fine.

**Barry Crawford:** Barry is another new member to the HKVCA. He is related to the Kelso family in that his grandmother's sister was married to Hong Kong veteran Allen Kelso's brother, Kenneth. Barry says he became aware of the Hong Kong veterans back in the mid 1960s when as a young boy he met Allen Kelso of Bury, Quebec, whom he remembers as a very gentle and quiet man. Barry has been able to track down some of the immediate family (Allen's niece, Lorraine, from Inverness Quebec) to get more information relating to Allen.

He decided to become a member of the HKVCA last year as a small way of paying tribute to men such as Rifleman Allen Kelso. Barry is currently looking into the Veterans Wall of Remembrance as another way to pay tribute to Allen. He also hopes that if any veteran has any memories of Allen they would like to share, they can e-mail him at [crawfam@sympatico.ca](mailto:crawfam@sympatico.ca) or contact him at: Barry Crawford, PO Box 79, Castleton, ON K0K 1M0.

We welcome you aboard, Barry, and hopefully you will get some response. Something else that Barry passed along to me was that the small town of Bury, Quebec, for its small population during World War II, enlisted more recruits per capita than any other town or city in Canada, and that these men enlisted with the Royal Rifles of Canada, who, of course, became involved with the defense of Hong Kong in Dec. 1941.

**Oda Barlow:** Had a very nice conversation with Oda this time. I generally miss her. Probably because Oda is so busy, what with her Legion friends, the Seniors group, playing cards, going to the slots or just spending time with family. In fact, she and her sister were having a very nice visit when I called. Oda's daughter Rosanne will also be visiting in the next little while.

We talked about the Convention this summer and what a wonderful time we all had. About how we enjoyed playing catch-up with everyone in the Hospitality room at the hotel and the jokes we shared with Sylvia. About how quickly the winter will be setting in on us and how beautiful the trees are looking right now. It was a conversation that I really enjoyed, Oda, and I hope that we'll talk again soon.

**Jim Fleming:** As Area Representatives we tend to telephone or e-mail the people on our lists as often as possible but rarely get the opportunity to meet face to face. Jim and I finally got that chance this summer while in Ottawa and what a wonderful get-together that was!! Pictures and all!!! Like a lot our veterans and their families, Jim hadn't attended a Reunion/Convention in many years. But I know that he (and his caregiver Courtney Lowe) had a great time and that it meant a great deal to Jim to meet and speak with some of his comrades, sharing those special stories. If some of you have never gone onto our web site ([www.hkvca.ca](http://www.hkvca.ca)) you should. There you will find pictures of Jim and his fellow comrades dressed as females, putting on shows for everyone. Just a way to help keep their spirits up, as Jim tells me.

I didn't know that Jim had taken a fall on the Monday we were all leaving Ottawa. He returned home to Empress Gardens in Peterborough and ended up in hospital for a couple of days. All is fine now though, nothing to worry about. Not only is Jim becoming computer literate these days, but he has a new pet now too! One that talks back!! Actually, it's a cockatiel, with an attitude no less!! Jim isn't sure if the bird is a male or female but it goes by the name of "Charlie" just the same.

**Alfred Mills:** over in Prescott is doing well, dreading the coming of winter like most of us are. Alfred keeps himself busy though. He finished that china cabinet he was working on for his daughter, and is now back to making doll cradles again. He thinks he must have made around 50 cradles over the years. When not wood working Alfred will often go out to dinner with his neighbour across the street, who is also a veteran.

**Marion Rowen:** The last opportunity that I had to speak with Marion she was watching quite a bad rain/hail storm out her apartment window, up there in Barrie. This time, the sun was shining bright and it looked like a nice fall day. Marion was telling me that she recently had laser eye surgery and how much it has helped her. The first eye treatment was this past June and she just had the other eye done in October. We talked about how she was starting to get ready for Christmas (Marion has a large family), and we were comparing Christmas now to what it was like during the depression. She remembers once receiving a not-so-nice pair of socks but was grateful just for having them. Big difference to today, that's for sure!!!

All the best to everyone!

*Maureen Dwyer-Kline*

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#### **North Area: Jackie Le Drew:**

Here is the report for the North Country.

**Gladys Brazel** (widow of Arnold Brazel) and **Sandra Brazel** (daughter of Gladys and late Arnold Brazel) both of Red Lake attended a reunion of the Winnipeg Grenadiers in Winnipeg on Oct. 22nd & 23rd, 2005.

**Rik Cormier** (grandson of James Mitchell - RCCS) of Garson is currently on a tour of Thailand, and Hong Kong with his family and was hoping to visit some of the areas where his grandfather was stationed.

**Mona Bell** (widow of J. Kenneth Bell - WG) of Thunder Bay wanted to say "thank you" to all who are involved with the Newsletter. She loves to receive them and reads them from cover to cover.

**Liana Frenette** of Thunder Bay attended the Convention in Ottawa with her children. She missed not attending with her grandfather, the late John E. James, WG. Both John James and his wife, Marcine James, are featured in this December Newsletter.

**James Mitchell** (Vet - RCCS) of Garson was very impressed with the clock and plaque received in recognition of service to their country from Canadian Veterans Affairs office and wanted to say "hi" to everyone.

**Bryce Craig** (Vet - RRC) of Callander attended the Convention in Ottawa with all his family, including his son Brian of Timmins. He thought it was well organized and had a wonderful time. He also won one of the draws at the Banquet on the Saturday evening.

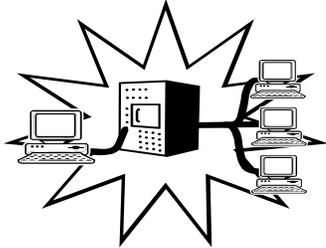
**Reginald Riddoch** (Vet - WG) of Thunder Bay accepted the invitation to lay the Honour Wreath sponsored by the Ontario Region of HKVCA at the Remembrance Day ceremony at the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #5 in Port Arthur. This is a new wreath honouring the veterans who lived in Ontario, and have passed away in the current year. The ribbon reads: Hong Kong POWs WWII POWs 1941-45. The wreath is being laid in memory of John Pollock, WG.

All the best to everyone in the Ontario Region of HKVCA for the Christmas Season, and a very Happy New Year to you as well.

*Jackie LeDrew*

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## **Membership Liaison Report: Janis Jennings**



Hello, everyone!

Our e-mail membership has increased steadily during the last year to 100 and we are always looking to expand this part of our service.

The bulletins we send out allow HKVCA to up-date members quickly with news of our veterans, special TV series involving HKVA, and veteran-related provincial activities you may want to attend. We can also let you know about special HKVA and HKVCA events

happening in other provinces.

We have had a number of inquiries ranging from attempts to contact a veteran whose location has been lost, or information about the different medals for which HKVA veterans were eligible. Our Executive has been quick to respond to such questions.

If you have anything you wish to share with our members - newspaper articles, school events in your area, special Legion events in your area, or anything you think our members would be interested in, please let us know.

We have had 29 bulletins since January about the National Convention, trips to Hong Kong and our Last Post information. Your opinions and comments are always welcome.

*Janis Jennings*

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## **NOTES FROM THE HONG KONG VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF CANADA, ONTARIO BRANCH**

Hello everyone,

You'll be reading the details about the National Convention in another article in this Newsletter but I wanted to thank the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association for a well-organized Convention. The Convention Committee, and the Ontario HKVCA Executive, with the help of Veterans Affairs, did a great job, and the veterans were very happy with the result.



Pat Turcotte, Phil Doddridge, Derrill Henderson and I attended the Annual General Meeting of the National Council of Veteran Associations in Canada (NCVA) on October 27<sup>th</sup> in Toronto. Cliff Chadderton was re-elected Chairman, and Les Peate from Ottawa, and I were re-elected Vice Chairmen by acclamation. The meeting was very well attended, and we now represent 56 Veterans' organizations with a total membership of 470,000 veterans.

On November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2005, I attended the Naval Veterans Club at Yonge and Bloor to commemorate the Year of the Veteran. Recognition of Remembrance Day seems to be becoming more and more widespread as time goes on, especially on the part of young people. I spoke to students at Jarvis Collegiate early in November. It seems that our veterans are doing more and more speaking on behalf of the Hong Kong veterans. We are also being asked to do more interviews in the newspapers, and magazines.



Somewhere along the line I traded my pillow for a bolster, which was canvas like a tube stuffed with coya off coconuts so I was more comfortable. I also used the heavy bathmat from Queen Mary Hospital as a towel for the whole time and kept my mosquito net the whole time. Our diet consisted of rice and whatever insects we could catch for protein.

About ¾ of a mile across the harbour we watched the Japanese cover and camouflage oil tanks and tankers. We had full view when the tanks were bombed by the British/American/ &/or Chinese. There was a huge explosion. The tops would blow off and go as high as you could see. They burned for at least 3 days. The Canadian POWs had to respond that we were happy or amused OR ELSE. Or Else meant that you could be beaten, bayoneted or killed. The Japanese took no mercy. They believed that it was dishonourable to be taken prisoner.

We moved in May 1945 to the Industrial School (East and South of the Kai Tak Airport). It was back to hospital beds. They moved all the amputees and people from Bowen Road here. We were here until August 1945 when the Japanese surrendered.

My job at the Industrial School was to work with Colonel Crawford. Americans dropped supplies after the surrender including chocolates and cigarettes. After that one of the POWs I cared for was up in a hammock so fluids could drip from the infections. I brought him some chocolate and helped him to a taste. He said, "It never tasted sweeter". I left him a pack of smokes too. The next morning my friend was dead but he knew the taste of freedom.

Private Hyacinthe "Chester" Page H6391 – A Grenadier from Red Lake was a big man with a black mustache. He kept busy knitting as a POW. He knitted socks for me for my amputated knee with Bamboo needles. He took apart machine knitted stuff. He used to knit for POWs – socks and stuff.

After the surrender, Ronnie and I were on leave for the afternoon and went out to visit a Chinese friend in town. On our way back we saw the British Hospital Ship "Prince Robert" dock. We met soldiers from the ship and told them we were Canadian POWs. They said they were there to get us. We were taken on board the ship and they were very welcoming. I gave directions and a map of how to get to the Industrial School where the rest of Canadian POWs were. I had a kit bag I think I still have that had white figures on it. I kept my "stuff" in there. There wasn't much, some wooden sandals and clothes. I left my mosquito net and mattress behind. I was at the ship again when a truck pulled up with a gang from the Industrial school. An orderly from the British Hospital Ship "Prince Robert – Oxfordshire" said "Don't worry Jim, I have your bag" but by then my bolster (mattress) was gone. I didn't figure I needed it anymore anyway.



Some Canadian POWs on the hospital ship, including myself, were ready to riot. Thirty or so of them were upset because they didn't want to go all the way around the Cape to get home. So then Major Crawford and Colonel Kivia from Kowloon said he would get the "important" people for them. Major Crawford said NO; he wanted to talk to these boys (Canadian POWs) here. Major Crawford had been our Senior Medical Officer and Colonel Kivia was with us before as well and had gone with the Chinese Army as staff. Crawford let us know we were only going as far as Manila and after medical inspection, we would be flown home or go some other way. We came home on the aircraft carrier, "Glory". The Army had pretty much converted it to a hospital ship for the Canadian POW area.

In Manila on September 8, 1945 I was part of 1<sup>st</sup> group of POWs to arrive at 248<sup>th</sup> General Hospital – US Army. I met my wife Lt. Elinor Marcine Hefner in Manila. "I had to go for physio."

Dr. John N. Crawford worked with the orderlies and helped with the sick POWs in Hong Kong – I say he really worked hard for the sick and dying. He should have had some special commemorative honour for all his hard work, but he never did.

Hong Kong Canadians aboard the "Glory" arrived home October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1945."

**John James, WG**



## THE LADIES' SIDE OF THE STORY

### Marcine Hefner James – (in her own words)

I was born at home. My Mother Ilo Hardin-Hefner and my Dad Robert Hefner and I lived with my Grandfather John Hefner. He had moved from a farm about 3 miles away into La Fayette, Alan County, Ohio. I think my Uncle Harvey Hefner lived on the farm with him. My Grandmother had died when my Dad was 8 years old. We lived in La Fayette for four years. My brother Willis and sister Caroline were born there. We had electricity in La Fayette but most farms had oil lamps. When I was 4 years old, we moved to Oxford, Ohio. My Dad taught Zoology at Miami University of Ohio. They had no kindergarten in Oxford in those days, so my Mother taught Willis and me with flashcards and pronunciation by sounding out words. We stayed in Oxford for 2 years, and then my Dad decided to get his Doctorate Degree at Ohio State in Columbus Ohio. We moved back to La Fayette with Grandpa.

I started school in La Fayette where there were two grades in one room. My cousin Louise was in grade two and I was in grade one. Since my Mom had taught me to read, after I got finished my work, I would copy Louise's class work from the board and do it too. When I was 6 we moved back to Oxford and rented a house next to a

farm on Chestnut Street. I started grade two at McGuffey School. I was soon moved up to grade three. McGuffey was a Grade One through Twelve school so I went to High School there as well. The last year of High School, in 1939, they were remodeling McGuffey, so we had to take our classes at the University. That made it easier for me when I went to the University of Miami in Ohio.



I remember the day the war started in Europe, when Germany marched into Poland and declared war. I was at supper at Wesley House, the Methodist Young Peoples Group. We listened to the radio on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1939. When my Grandson Brendan Hyatt was going to school in Thunder Bay, his history exam said the war started in 1941. I don't know why.

I took Zoology and Chemistry Majors at Miami University hoping to become a Doctor. I took the pre-med exam and made out as well as my male counterparts. But my Dad thought it would be waste of money for a woman to be a doctor. So I joined the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. In May 1943, I took basic training at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia for three months. While I was there I sprained my ankle and went to physical therapy to get treatment on it. That was the first time I had heard of physical therapy.

After basic training I was sent to Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland. They weren't sure where I would fit in there. I worked in the Central Supply where I drove the big three-ton trucks and hauled supplies from one part of the base to the other. I also worked part time as Charge of Quarters answering the phone. One night, I had Charge of Quarters and they had a recruitment officer from the Army Physical Therapy Schools, there were five schools at the time. The next day the Officer in Charge, asked me if I wanted to apply and I said yes. I was soon on my way to the University of Wisconsin at Madison, for six months of intensive training. There were some civilians, but the army group lived in a house with two to a room, with bunk beds and a table to study on. We marched to class, and were there from 8am to 5pm. We had to stay in to study every night. Friday and Saturday night we could go to the University dances and Saturday afternoon we could go to the lake in Madison. One weekend I went to Chicago and saw the museums there but most of the time was spent working or studying. We would learn a technique and practice on each other and the next day we were treating patients. After six months, we went several different places for further training. Actually, we were working under supervision on wounded soldiers and injured civilians.

I went to Billings General Hospital in Indianapolis. Many of our patients got better and went back to duty and war again. When we finished our three months there we were promoted to Second Lieutenant and I was sent to Camp Campbell Kentucky where we had mostly patients who had been injured in car accidents or sports. Soon I was asked if I would like to go overseas. Of course I said yes and went back to Indianapolis to go. As

far as I knew, I was the only Physical Therapist aboard the ship. We were on the SS General Blatchford, specially built as a troop ship. We were not in a convoy and we zigzagged all across the ocean. We passed Hawaii and didn't even stop. We celebrated crossing the equator and went on to New Guinea where we stopped for two days. No one got off except for the crew; they probably took on food and water. The ship was comfortable and we did not have many rough seas. I enjoyed watching the flying fish, whales and sharks.

We had left San Francisco on March 13, and we arrived in Manila on April 13, 1945, the day President Roosevelt died. They didn't know where to send me so again I was in charge of Quarters at a University in suburban Manila. While I was there I sprained my ankle quite badly and was sent to the hospital for a couple of days. A lot of the women who were there were prisoners-of-war of the Japanese. They were thin and many had horror stories to tell of Japanese cruelty. When a baby cried they took it from the mother and stabbed it. One ten-year-old American girl was an amputee who had been shot by the Japanese as the Americans came in. They said they would do this to the POWs in Hong Kong and Japan if the Americans landed in Japan. This is why former POWs say the Atomic bomb saved their lives, as they were nearly starved in Japan at that time.

Shortly after I left the hospital I was assigned to the 248<sup>th</sup> General Hospital. This was a series of tents, kitchens, with beds for patients and staff. Shortly after I got there we had to make up our own equipment and the soldiers built our tables. There were four physical therapists, but I can't remember any of them.

Around the first of September we got a group of 32 former POWs from Japan and Hong Kong who were originally from Canada. One was a curly-haired young man with crutches and a leg amputation. There were five other amputees in the group, three leg amputees and two arm amputees. They were the first patients who came to physical therapy. They were well fed at the 248<sup>th</sup> General Hospital. In fact, they said they couldn't eat all they were served. Some of the POWs ate till they were sick. We massaged their legs and arms that were left and exercised the muscles that had not been used for nearly four years. The patients thought we were pretty rough on them. John James (known as Jim or Jesse) said to me "the only way to get even with you is to marry you". I said that I couldn't do that, as I was an officer and he was just a gentleman, as an enlisted person.

Johnny (Jimmy) was shipped out home and arrived in Vancouver October 24<sup>th</sup> 1945 and I remained in Manila. I was shipped out for home on the SS Brazil, which had been a cruise ship and was much more luxurious than the SS General Blatchford was, but the bunks were not as comfortable. We left Manila on December 13<sup>th</sup> and arrived at an Army Base (I think it was Pittsburgh CA) in San Francisco on New Year's Eve. I hadn't heard from Johnny since he had left and there were very few long

distance phone calls. The only call I did get was from the Red Cross telling me that my brother had died on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October. I didn't know then that it was the same day that Johnny had arrived in Vancouver.

There is a good story Johnny told about his brother Bruce, who met him at the ship. Johnny had been hospitalized at the Vancouver military hospital and Bruce was in the bus talking to some of the POWs. Bruce said that his brother Johnny James was in Hong Kong and a man said "Look soldier, we did not have a Johnny James in our unit but I'll bet you a drink anyhow." Bruce then stated that Johnny was an amputee and the POW responded "Well why didn't you say Jesse James!!"

I stayed in San Francisco, went shopping and bought a dress to wear to my wedding. I would be out of the Army soon. I went by train to Des Moines, Iowa Army Base where I received my discharge papers and then went by train back home to Oxford, Ohio to see Mom and Dad. I arrived in Oxford about 7 p.m. and the station was closed so I walked home which was about a mile away. I hadn't gone very far when I fell and skinned my knee, but I kept on going and arrived home at 7:30 p.m. Mom and Dad weren't home but we never locked our doors, so I walked in and waited. They were glad to see me, especially since they had just lost my brother.

Johnny and I had written up an engagement agreement in Manila and Mom and Dad decided that was good enough to be our Wedding day, so they put it in the Oxford paper. I had several letters from Johnny and had given him my home address. It was great to hear from him and, after Christmas, I got on the train to Winnipeg. When I crossed the border they were very lenient with me and told me I could go down to the station the next day with my identification. It was Sunday! and things were closed.



Johnny had gone back to Lac du Bonnet on the bus to his old friends there. A friend of his mother's, Mrs. LaRoche, met me at the train and took me home. We stayed with the LaRoches for about a week and then we moved in with friends of Johnny's and shared their apartment. We found a little house for sale on the edge of the Pembina Highway on Warsaw Street. In fact, the corner of the house had been cut off once when they

were widening the highway. I used my army return from the state of Ohio to pay for the house; I think it was about \$2200.00. It was a two-bedroom house with no basement, cold running water, a toilet, kitchen sink and no cupboards. I moved into the house when Johnny was still in the Army. He told his C.O. that he wanted to get married, so the C.O. came to interview me. The C.O. told Johnny that he thought I was marrying him for his pension, which he didn't even have yet.

Anyhow, he got permission, since I was already officially discharged and on leave from the U.S. Army. My final discharge was on the 16<sup>th</sup> February, so we decided to get married on that day. It wasn't long before I had four children under the age of 5 to look after. We lived in Winnipeg for five years. Both Carol and Judy were born there. In 1950, we moved to Emo, Ontario, and that's where Bill and Bruce were born, and where all the kids went to school.

I still live in the house that we moved into at that time. It's been over fifty years now. When the kids got older, I went back to school and got my papers to be a Physiotherapist in Canada. I worked from home and traveled through the Rainy River District providing in-home physio to patients. I retired at 67, and at 83 have been enjoying my family since, as none of them live too far away.

Johnny and I enjoyed the many things that life has to offer in Emo. We were involved in all sorts of community programs throughout the years. Gardening and bird watching were among the pastimes we favoured in recent years. With Johnny having passed away in June this year, things have changed, but I have good neighbours and many interests.

When we got married, we did share Johnny's pension. With my occasional Physical Therapy work, his employment first as an elevator attendant, and then working in a grain elevator, we did all right. Finally, Johnny worked for the Ontario government at the Liquor store for 59 years. That's another story, and even longer.

**[Editor's note:** Many thanks for the assistance of Darren Hyatt, Carol Hyatt, Pauline Hyatt and Liana Frenette in helping get Marcine's story told.]

## IN MEMORIAM

Remembering the Hong Kong veterans who have left us in 2005:

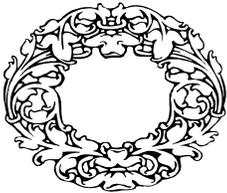
<b>John Beaton</b>	<b>RCCS</b>	<b>John E. James</b>	<b>WG</b>
<b>Melbourne J. J. Carter</b>	<b>RRC</b>	<b>Garfield W. Lowe</b>	<b>WG</b>
<b>Lloyd C. Doull</b>	<b>RRC</b>	<b>George Merritt</b>	<b>WG</b>
<b>James A.B. Fidler</b>	<b>WG</b>	<b>John D. Pollock</b>	<b>WG</b>
<b>Richard J. Grant (Dec,'04)</b>	<b>RRC</b>	<b>Edward Query</b>	<b>WG</b>
<b>Kenneth Hogarth</b>	<b>WG</b>	<b>Albert James Russell</b>	<b>RRC</b>
<b>Arnold Hunt</b>	<b>RRC</b>	<b>Adam Schnell</b>	<b>WG</b>
<b>Walter Inglis</b>	<b>WG</b>	<b>Arthur Wright (Dec.'04)</b>	<b>WG</b>

We shall also remember:

<b>Anne Axent</b>	<b>widow of William Axent, WG</b>
<b>Louise Coleman</b>	<b>widow of Glen Coleman, RRC</b>
<b>Peggy Doull</b>	<b>wife of Lloyd C. Doull, RRC</b>
<b>Betty Maloney</b>	<b>wife of Eric Maloney, RRC</b>
<b>Irene Mason</b>	<b>wife of Fred Mason, RRC</b>
<b>Marion Varcoe</b>	<b>widow of Sidney Varcoe, WG</b>

**“Our condolences to their families”**

**“WE WILL REMEMBER THEM”**



### **THE NEW HONOUR WREATH POLICY IN ONTARIO REGION**

The new Honour Wreath policy has, as its main focus, making arrangements for a special wreath to be laid in honour of each of the Ontario veterans who have died in the current year, that wreath to be laid on Remembrance Day.

The Ontario Region provides funds for the laying of a wreath in whatever community the family chooses, preferably in a location, which has not had a Hong Kong wreath. We want to be able to honour the veteran we have just lost, and all other Hong Kong veterans as well, for it is important for the public to become more aware of the role played by these gallant men in World War II. The particular person we are honouring is mentioned by name, and the ribbon on the wreath reads:

### **HONG KONG VETERANS WWII POWs 1941-1945**

If someone in the family wishes to lay the wreath, we are more than happy to have that person do so. The person in charge of Honour Wreaths will make all the arrangements with the appropriate Legion to have the wreath made and will notify the family as to the specifics of the Remembrance Day ceremony. In all of the situations that we have been involved with since we started the programme last year, the families have felt that this was a meaningful gesture on the part of the Ontario Region.

Those veterans who have been honoured thus far include:

<u>Veteran</u>	<u>Regiment</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Year</u>
Gordon Hutchinson	RRC	Barrie	2004
Elmer Denison	RRC	Brockville	2004
Philip Lawlis	RRC	London	2004
Allen Harper	RRC	Mt. Albert	2004
Melbourne Carter	RRC	Aurora	2005
John E. James	WG	Fort Frances	2005
John Pollock	WG	Thunder Bay	2005
Lloyd Doull	RRC	will be honoured	2006

We hope that all of the members of the Ontario Region approve of our policy. We have certainly felt that the families were appreciative of the opportunity to honour their Hong Kong veterans in such a special but personal way.

**“We will remember them”**

**WREATH SPONSORS FOR 2005**  
by  
**Ron McGuire, NE Ontario Regional Rep.**

Members are encouraged to lay a wreath honouring our HK Veterans in their community. Many thanks to all those who support this programme, one of the many ways we can ensure our HK Veterans are “Never Forgotten”.

Next year, please let your Area Rep. or a member of the Executive know if you are laying a wreath in your community and we will make sure you are included on the list in the appropriate area.

Following is the list of Wreath Sponsors for 2005, with the columns of: Sponsor Name, Location and “In Honour of”:

<b>CENTRAL &amp; SOUTH EAST AREA</b>		
Muriel Warner & granddaughter, Shay	Uxbridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leonard Patrick, RRC</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Constance Darling “Flash” & Jessie Clayton	Trenton Brechin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edward Phillips, RRC</li> <li>• All Hong Kong veterans</li> </ul>
Matthew G. Evans	Cobourg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matthew Evans, RRC</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Fred Mason	Sutton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Major John Russell	Kingston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
<b>GREATER TORONTO AREA</b>		
Glen Lee & Family	Oshawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• William J. Lee</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Barbara & Lacey Montgomery	Ajax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bob Barter, RRC</li> </ul>
Audrey Murray & Dave Murray & Family Laid by John McCarron	Pickering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matthew Murray, RRC</li> <li>• Ron Inche, RRC</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
<b>NORTH AREA</b>		
Darren Hyatt Marcine James (Mrs. John)	Fort Frances Emo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John James &amp; all HK veterans</li> <li>• John James &amp; all HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Carol Hyatt Bruce James	Barwick Atikokan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John James &amp; all HK veterans</li> <li>• John James &amp; all HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Jackie LeDrew & Family	Chelmsford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Augustine Cyr</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
<b>NORTH EAST</b>		
Irene Cameron & Sandi Cameron	Nepean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ken Cameron, RCOC</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Mavis Martin Joanne Parkes	Merrickville Prescott	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Martin, RRC &amp; all his comrades</li> <li>• Walter Parkes, RRC</li> </ul>
Len Cotton	Stittsville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leonard Cotton, RRC</li> </ul>

Hudson Allison, grandson of Elmer N. Denison	Brockville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elmer N. Denison, RRC</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Ken Ewing, RRC assisted by his granddaughters Emma, Stephanie and Christine	Kemptville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All HK Comrades</li> </ul>
Michelle Fleming & Leisa Connelly	Orleans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roger Cyr, RRC</li> </ul>
Sheila Forsyth	Metcalfe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eursal Kaine, RRC</li> <li>• John Kaine, RRC</li> </ul>
Natalie Gibb-Carsley and 11year old great-grandson Alexander "Zanier" Machine with Beverley Willis	Perth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. John Crawford, RCAMC</li> <li>• Sgt. B.S. Gilbert, RRC</li> </ul>
Joy Hodgkinson	Beckwith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R.W. Queen-Hughes, WG</li> </ul>
Stanley Lasenba	Smith Falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earl Lasenba, RRC</li> </ul>
Ron McGuire	Medex Nursing Home, Ottawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nov.10 - 11: am</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
	Carlingwood Shopping Centre, Ottawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nov.11 - 11: am</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
	Westboro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nov.11 - 2 pm</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Laura, Sarah & Jo-Anne Scaffidi	Kanata	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stewart Henderson, RRC</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Conrad Lyons of Greely traveled to Campbellton, NB to lay a wreath with his father Henry Lyons, RRC	New Brunswick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Derrill Henderson laid the wreath at the National War Memorial	Ottawa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
<b>SOUTH WEST</b>		
Mrs. Marion Farmer Wendy Campbell	Woodstock Meaford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All HK veterans</li> <li>• Howard Naylor, RRC</li> </ul>
Grey Fair	Stratford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Lillian Gauvin	Kitchener	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Albert J. Russell, RRC</li> </ul>
Jean Killoran, John Killoran & Janis Jennings	Sarnia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Killoran, RRC</li> </ul>
Lori Smith & Family	London	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harold Atkinson, WG</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
<b>WEST CENTRAL</b>		
Doug Auld & Family	Oakville	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• George Auld, WG</li> </ul>
Leon Sokalski	Hamilton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• George Sokalski, WG</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>
Pat Turcotte	Mississauga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leonard Corrigan, WG</li> <li>• All HK Veterans</li> </ul>

**SOME MOMENTS TO REMEMBER AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION**



The ceremony is about to begin



“Flash” Clayton, RRC, as Parade Marshal



The 73 Hong Kong veterans on the march

Photographs – courtesy of Murray Doull



The Colour Party prepares to move out



**Some of the veterans get to ride**



**Lance Ross, RRC, as feisty as ever**



**The Governor General reviews the troops**



**A relaxing Sunday afternoon visit to Rideau Hall**



**The Governor General chats with Marcel Mondou**

## **NATIONAL CONVENTION WRAP-UP**

What a weekend it was!! From the Hospitality Room conversations starting Thursday night to the closing breakfast chats on Monday morning, the Lord Elgin Hotel in Ottawa was an exciting place to be.

The activities began in earnest on Friday morning. Even if you hadn't signed up to see the Changing of the Guard, or the tours on Parliament Hill, the Governor General's Foot Guard Band passed the hotel that morning, and every morning, so that the guests were able to enjoy the marching and the music as they went by. What a colourful way to start the day!

Friday afternoon involved four different sessions. The first was the HKVA luncheon for the Veterans, so the veterans were able to get together at the very start of the weekend. The second was the Board of Directors' meeting, held in the Penthouse Suite – a most relaxing atmosphere.

The third session was a very stimulating talk by Nancy Hamer–Strahl, explaining the trip that she and over 200 students and their teachers will take to Hong Kong in December to honour the soldiers who fought at Hong Kong. They will be involved in ceremonies there in the first week of December, one of which will be the burying of a memorial capsule just outside Sai Wan Cemetery containing works created by the students who, as part of their course work, have researched a Hong Kong veteran and have reacted to his story with poetry, songs put on CDs, stories, videos and art work of various kinds. All their thoughts and ideas have been transformed as a permanent memorial near the spot where many of the Canadian soldiers are buried.

The fourth and final session of the afternoon was an inspiring lecture by Vince Lopata, giving those present a very clear picture of the Interpretative Centre which the Organizing Committee based in Manitoba has projected as the home for all the information out there that could relate to the soldiers who fought in Hong Kong. The plans are quite exciting and the presentation is very well-organized. Those who were able to see it were very impressed. There is much to look forward to in the future.

On Friday evening, everyone boarded buses to the National War Museum for the official presentation of a plaque honouring the soldiers who fought in Hong Kong. The plaque will have a prominent place in Ottawa to help ensure that the Battle of Hong Kong and those who fought there are well remembered by Canadians. We were well-represented by Phil Doddridge, National President of HKVA and Carol Hadley, National President of HKVCA, speaking on behalf of all of us.

Saturday morning the Annual General Meeting of the Association (HKVCA) was held in the Pearson Room at the hotel. With the Remembrance Protocol as a preamble to the meeting, the reading of the Honour Roll,

the skirling of the bagpipes, and the trumpeter's "Last Post" and "Reveille" reminded everyone present why we had gathered there. The meeting itself gave members of both associations, HKVA and HKVCA, an opportunity to welcome the attendees and to bring them up to date regarding ongoing activities.

Special meetings were held in the afternoon, with Ron McGuire giving a slide presentation involving "C" Force, and the Treasurers from all six Regions getting together with our National Treasurer, Barry Mitchell, to compare notes and discuss the challenges facing an organization as large as HKVCA.

Saturday evening was an opportunity to recognize all the veterans present at the Convention with a special gift provided by the Ontario Region. There were 71 Hong Kong veterans present, as well as 64 other veterans of the fighting in the Far East, including Burma Star, Burma Bomber, Merchant seaman and sailors from the HMCS Uganda. All were honoured, and all seemed very moved by the occasion. The gift each man received was a clock with a special plate on it naming the veteran, and his unit, and in the case of the Hong Kong veterans, the Hong Kong insignia was there. Our guest speaker, following the dinner, was Cliff Chadderton who is Patron to both organizations, HKVA and HKVCA. He has been active on behalf of the Hong Kong veterans for many years. John Spearn then provided musical entertainment, and introduced the song he had written especially for the Hong Kong veterans called "Christmas in Hong Kong, 1941". Lively music by "Assembly Required" had many up dancing, and a Cash Draw was held at various points during the evening. The list of winners will be posted on the Website when all those who won prizes have been reached.

The most important occasion of the weekend took place on Sunday morning at 11 a.m. at the National War Memorial Cenotaph. Governor General Adrienne Clarkson spoke, many wreaths were laid and prayers were offered. The soldiers who fought in Hong Kong and other areas of the Far East were honoured, as were those who died in the prison camps of Hong Kong and Japan. There was a touching moment when a group of children offered large poppies to each of the veterans attending. The flypass and the parade, which followed, was the finale, with the veterans themselves taking the salute.

Following the Memorial service, the families and friends of the veterans were invited to a luncheon in the Convention Centre at which the Minister of Veterans Affairs, Albina Guarnieri socialized with those attending. The veterans themselves, their wives, the caregivers and the widows were then bused to Rideau Hall for a reception with the Governor General, at which she spoke most movingly about her special connection with the Hong Kong veterans. After a motorcade through the city in 10 articulated buses, with police escort, the veterans were ready for the evening's Gala at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Before dinner, Minister of Veterans Affairs Guarnieri spoke to the group about her focus for the present and for the future in Veterans Affairs. The meal was followed by Terry Kelly's entertaining video, which he combined with a live presentation that many in the audience found very special. The Gerry Helke Orchestra provided great music for dancing, and the evening concluded in a lively fashion, with many of the veterans "strutting their stuff".

As everyone prepared to leave the next morning, there was no doubt that the Convention had been a great success, and many were heard discussing meeting again in 2007.

On behalf of the Ontario Region, may I thank all of those on the Ottawa Committee, in particular Derrill Henderson as its Chair, all those working with Terry Tobin in Veterans Affairs, such an important part of the celebration, and all of the many volunteers who helped look after our 719 registrants so well.

Cheers! See you in 2007!

Pat Turcotte  
Regional Director  
HKVCA, Ontario Region

### NATIONAL CONVENTION POSTSCRIPT

It is now just over four months since the National Convention in Ottawa reached its conclusion. We wanted to be sure that all our members knew the results of the Cash Draw at the National Convention. We had posted them on the Website – but for the sake of those who don't have access to the Internet, we're posting them again here.

On the Saturday night a series of Cash Draws took place at the Banquet, and later in the evening. Some of those present were winners, but others had to be notified by mail, as they weren't in attendance that night. It took quite awhile to contact each person, but we finally managed to do so. All of the money has now been distributed, and the names of the recipients are listed below. We hope they have enjoyed their good fortune!

#### Cash Draw Winners

Bonnie Boudreau, Fredericton, NB	\$300.00
Anne Labar, Beaconsfield, QC	\$200.00
Lillian Osborn, London, ON	\$100.00
Arnold Ross, New Richmond, QC	\$100.00
Margaret Ford, St. John's NL	\$100.00
Bryce Craig, Callander, ON	\$100.00
Grant Wood, Mississauga, ON	\$100.00
Muriel McDavid, Thornhill, ON	\$100.00

### A 3RD GENERATION POINT-OF-VIEW

by *Tim Hodkinson*

My very first Convention. Being a naturally helpful person, I volunteered for a number of things but spent most of my time in the Hospitality Room. I thought the Hospitality Room would just be a place to sit down for a few minutes, drink a coffee, and leave with a street map of Ottawa. I also thought it would be on the ground floor of the hotel.

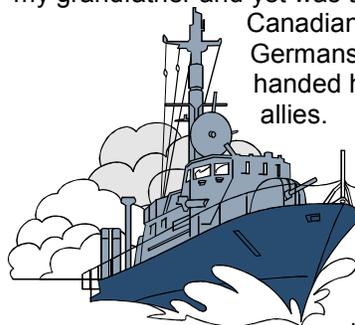
Being a regular churchgoer and a teetotaler, I needed some help adjusting to my new job of bartender to thirsty veterans. I was given a quick demonstration of how much liquor goes into a drink. It didn't look like very much. I was a little more generous and the veterans, being a polite bunch I guess, not once corrected me.

I came to the Convention to meet veterans and other members of the HKVCA and that room was the best place to do it. And besides, Jesus turned lots of water into wine, a thought that came back to me when we actually ran out of wine again and again.

I discovered that Conventions are good not just for the veterans, but for the whole HK family. One woman told me that it wasn't until she attended a Convention that she really began to understand what her father had gone through and why his life continued to have so many challenges to it.

One highlight was listening to a group of veterans discussing their own experiences, in prison camp and after the war, with each other. Most conversations about HK that I've heard revolve around the questions posed by non-veterans, so it was refreshing to hear the veterans talking just by themselves.

I learned much more about WWII in general. I sat for dinner one evening with a veteran of the Merchant Marine who had been in prison camp almost as long as my grandfather and yet was treated as a civilian by the Canadian Government. The Germans took him prisoner and handed him over to their Japanese allies.



Meeting a few of the crew of the Uganda who were there as part of the Far East veterans' contingent deepened my understanding of the military consequences of bad government policy. I couldn't help but wonder how I would have voted if I was a sailor in WWII and given a chance to go home early. Mackenzie King sure made a lot of bad military decisions.

I got to meet the man whose video interview I transcribed. I'm not joking, but after working on the transcript of that video interview for so many hours, having dinner with Bruce Cadoret and his family was like meeting a movie star. Maybe better, since movie stars only pretend to be soldiers but people like Bruce are the real thing.

It was a special honour for me personally to be involved in the Remembrance Ceremony at the Annual General Meeting as the third generation representative. I also had the opportunity to carry the HK colours in the parade

after the War Memorial ceremony, although I wasn't sure I really belonged there since I wasn't a veteran. It may sound strange, but the Convention was like a family reunion. And that's the way all the other HKVCA events have been for me too.

**[Editor's note:** Tim has just completed his second transcription of a HK veteran's videotape. We hope to have it on the HKVCA Website soon. Tim has also contributed in other ways, visiting a hospitalized HK veteran, printing and distributing the Newsletter you're reading now. Many thanks, Tim!!]



John Spearn, a songwriter and singer from Edmonton who specializes in events in Canadian History, and in particular the exploits of Canada's military entertained at the Convention Banquet on Saturday evening. Among the songs he performed, the highlight was one he wrote specifically to commemorate the Battle for Hong Kong, titled "A Hong Kong Christmas, 1941".

Many thanks to John for being part of this very special event.

### HKVCA & THE TRAVELERS TO HONG KONG by *Mike Babin*

By the time you read this, a group 35 strong will have traveled to Hong Kong to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the release of Canada's Hong Kong Veterans from Japanese POW camps. Most of those in our group are sons, daughters and grandchildren of Hong Kong Vets, although there are also a number of friends and even a few who have no direct connection, but have found the Hong Kong Vets' stories to be incredibly compelling.

Two other groups will have been in Hong Kong at the same time: over 210 high school students and teachers from several schools in Durham Region, east of Toronto; and an official delegation sponsored by the Canadian Government.

The high school students have been studying the Battle of Hong Kong and the subsequent internment of the surviving soldiers as part of their history curriculum. Most of them have "adopted" a Veteran, with the objective of learning as much as possible about what he did before and during the battle, what happened to him in the POW camp, and his life after returning to Canada. Some of the students adopted Vets who perished in Hong Kong or in camp. And one or two even "adopted" Gander!

Every student has turned what he or she learned into something lasting: a story, poem, song, piece of art, video, etc. And these have traveled to Hong Kong and stayed there. The students have buried a memorial capsule at Sai Wan War Cemetery, which contains their works.

The Canadian Government decided to send an official delegation to Hong Kong a few months ago. Six Hong Kong Veterans and their caregivers were invited to be part of the delegation: Robert "Flash" Clayton, Phil Doddridge, Gerry Gerrard, George MacDonell, Doug Rees and Ed Shayler. Although at the time this article was written we did not know for sure, we were hopeful that the Minister of Veterans Affairs would be traveling to Hong Kong with the delegation as a show of respect to our Veterans.

VAC's web site has extensive coverage of the delegation, as does the HKVCA's own site. Click on <http://www.hkvca.ca/> to see stories and photos, and link to the VAC site. And, of course, in the next newsletter we'll give you a complete rundown on the events in Hong Kong!

## ONTARIO REGION FINANCIAL STATEMENT

### 2005 Income & Expense Statement January thru October (in \$ dollars)

	Year to Date	Totals
<b>Balance Forward</b>		8,067.49
<b>Income</b>		
Membership Dues	1,545.00	
Sales - Ten Lessons	763.00	
Sales - One Soldier's Story (#1)	340.00	
Sales - One Soldier's Story (#2)	360.00	
Sales - Membership Pins	435.00	
Donations - Charitable Status	1,640.00	
Donations - General	10.00	
Reimbursement Loan - Nat. Convention 2005	6,000.00	
Revenue - National Convention 2005	17,759.67	
Bank Credits	40.21	
- Total Income	28,892.88	
<b>Expense</b>		
Corporate Membership Dues	(1,030.00)	
Ten Lessons – Shipping	(59.70)	
Membership Pins	(310.00)	
One Soldier's Story (#1) - Shipping	(120.38)	
One Soldier's Story (#2)	(388.00)	
One Soldier's Story (#2) - Shipping	(14.12)	
Corporate Rebate – One Soldier's Story (#2)	(126.00)	
Newsletter	(518.10)	
Spirit of the Torch – Wreaths	(194.50)	
Regional Director	(355.20)	
Secretary	(151.22)	
Treasurer	(59.69)	
Administration	(550.67)	
Veterans – Interviews	(162.78)	
Loan - National Convention 2005	(6,000.00)	
Elections	(365.70)	
Honorarium - Nick Brune	(3,000.00)	
Bank Charges	(70.00)	
- Total Expenditure	(13,476.06)	
- Income over Expenditure	15,416.82	
<b>Closing Balance</b>		23,484.31

Prepared by: *Sandi Cameron*  
Regional Treasurer

## **SPECIAL NOTE TO ONTARIO REGION MEMBERS RE OUR FINANCIAL SITUATION**

We learned just recently, when all expenses were finally cleared, what the financial picture was relative to the National Convention held in August in Ottawa. The Financial Statement above gives us the final figure of \$17,759.67 as the profit from that Convention. We feel that it is important for you to know that we had no idea that the result would be such a positive one. When Ontario Executive members discussed the possible outcomes early in our preparatory meetings, there was some concern that we might not even break even. The fact that Veterans Affairs, Canada Remembers Division, became involved made a huge difference to our plans.

As you can see by the Income and Expense statement we have included in this Newsletter, if we didn't include the Convention result, our bank balance would be a reasonably modest one - \$5724.64. The fact that Veterans Affairs assisted with many of our expenses and that we had over 700 participants rather than the 400 we were planning for made all the difference. It was amazing to us that the final amount was over \$17,000.

We understand that the Incoming Executive will have a major responsibility to ensure that these funds are used wisely. For that reason, the current Executive has spent much its discussion time in the last few weeks considering how to use these funds wisely.

One of our first decisions was to offer the HKVA in Ontario a cheque for \$1500, as a "thank you" for their past support in assisting us financially, with the Convention and in earlier situations. We felt that they deserved to be compensated in some way for their help.

We also felt strongly that whatever we could do to further the Port Perry group's attempts to reach their goals in their quest to make possible the sending of 220 participants on their trip to Hong Kong would ultimately benefit our organization as well. To that end, we provided 50 of George MacDonell's books to students involved in the trip (value if sold - over \$1000.) and paid for the plaque (cost: \$500.) which will be placed over the Memorial capsule to be buried outside Sai Wan Cemetery. The capsule will contain the originals of all of the creative efforts of students, not just in Port Perry, but also from across the country, who have been a part of this special project initiated by the staff and students of Port Perry High School. It will be a permanent reminder of Canadian students' efforts to ensure that the Hong Kong veterans are remembered.

We also plan to offer to return to the National organization of HKVA, the amount that was offered in support of the Convention. Much help was provided in order to make the Convention the success that it was. That amount was \$500.

Knowing that these efforts just skim the surface in terms of the money available to us from the Convention, the Ontario Executive felt it important to develop a series of ideas for the future which would be helpful to the Incoming Executive – and give that group some idea of our goals and dreams for the future.

Some of our suggestions are listed below:

1. We hope that the Incoming Executive will be able to continue to support the distribution of George MacDonell's books so that there are copies in every High School library in the province of Ontario. When that has been accomplished, we would like to see the Executive work with other worthy books that have been written about the Hong Kong story.
2. We feel that it is important, at a time when fewer and fewer Hong Kong veterans are able to do so, that we develop a Speakers Bureau whereby members of our Ontario Association are trained to speak in the schools, using PowerPoint presentations, or other means, to continue to tell the Hong Kong story.
3. We want to assist those who follow Ontario in hosting the next National Convention in whatever way we can, with volunteers, and whatever financial assistance we can manage, to make that Convention a great success.
4. We would be happy to contribute our regional share in the production of a brochure to be given to new members and others outside the HKVCA organization, explaining our Association, and the importance of the Hong Kong story taking its proper place in our History textbooks in Canada.
5. We urge the Incoming Executive to recognize the need for continued stress on the importance of education of our youth in various ways so that they do not forget the role of the Hong Kong Veterans in World War II, and their example, in showing us what courage and determination can accomplish in the face of great odds.

These are ideas put forward by the current Ontario Executive, and we wish the Incoming Executive much success in implementing these and other plans for the future.

Pat Turcotte	Regional Director
Lori Smith	Regional Secretary
Sandi Cameron	Regional Treasurer
Mike Babin	Deputy Regional Director
Sylvia Mason	Deputy Regional Director

## **PUBLICATIONS OVERVIEW**

We have been involved with two publications since the year 2003. We commissioned the writing of the Ten Lessons, otherwise known as "Canada in Hong Kong 1941-1945 The Forgotten Heroes". This publication is, of course, for use in the schools. However, many of our members have been interested in buying copies, and we thank them for that. We have had quite a lot of success with the Ten Lessons, having distributed them to various interested organizations, and educational institutions across Ontario, and farther afield, as interest continues to grow. In the early stages, the Ontario Executive made a decision to provide complimentary copies to all of the veterans in Ontario. Without the financial support of the HKVA in our province, we would never have been able to afford to publish the lessons. For this, we certainly thank the Veterans, and each one in Ontario now has his complimentary copy.

We have reached a new stage in our work with the Ten Lessons. We came to realize that it was important to consider a French translation, as requests had been made in several parts of the country to have that happen. With the fact that a large number of the HK veterans were French-speaking, we began to understand the necessity of undertaking this initiative. As we were without the funds to do so, we applied to Veterans Affairs Canada, Canada Remembers Division. Ultimately, we were able to receive a grant, which would cover 300 copies of a French translation, as well as 200 more copies of the English version.

We are pleased to announce that as you receive this Newsletter the 300 copies of the French translation are being delivered to educational institutions in every province and territory. This will also be the case with the

English copies, which have been printed. Because of Veterans Affairs' assistance, all of these copies are provided without charge. Should more copies be requested, we will consider printing additional copies in Ontario, and reverting to a paid price for those ordered. Nonetheless, the 500 copies in French and English sponsored by Veterans Affairs will definitely be available very shortly in all parts of the country.

We have also been involved in promoting George MacDonell's book, "One Soldier's Story". This is a wonderful book, very well told, worth a read by students, teachers and the Canadian public at large. George has a very special gift. He makes us feel that we're sharing his experiences with him and he has a broad view and understanding of the events he discusses. We have plans for the future whereby George's book will be in all high school libraries across the province. With the support of the Rotary Club of Mississauga, and the Rotary Club Foundation of Toronto, this goal has already been reached in these two cities. "One Soldier's Story" is most certainly a story to be heard, and the Incoming Executive will decide the future direction this endeavour will take.

The objective from the beginning has been to encourage our members and the public to learn more of the Hong Kong story. I think we have begun to realize that objective.

*Pat Turcotte* - Publications Chair

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## **MEMBERSHIP CHAIR'S REPORT - *Lori Smith***

**VETERANS- HAVE YOU ASKED YOUR CHILDREN- ARE YOU A PAID UP MEMBER OF THE HKVCA? IF NOT, WHY NOT!**

It is membership time again - time to renew your membership, update our information and time to get our family and friends to join the association. Membership is \$15.00 per calendar year.

### **Who is a member of HKVCA?**

- We have various types of membership in the HKVCA. These include the HK veterans, and HK veterans' widows both of who do not pay fees.
- We also have a Regular membership, consisting of persons who pay the annual membership dues to the HKVCA.

## Who can pay a membership?

- Any friend or family member (including the spouse) of the HK veterans.

## What does membership give you?

- A choice of voting on HKVCA issues.
- 2 National and 2 Regional newsletters a year.
- A HKVCA decal

## What does membership accomplish?

- Maintain and support the connection with the Hong Kong veterans still living and with their widows and families
- Ensure that the service and sacrifice of all Hong Kong veterans involved in fighting for their country will be understood and appreciated by more and more Canadians as time goes on.

## What does membership cost?

- The yearly membership for HKVCA is \$15.00
- This membership fee is set at the Corporate level - meaning the National Board of Directors for the HKVCA decided this amount a number of years ago.
- Of the \$15 membership fee, the Ontario Region receives \$5 with the remaining \$10.00 going to Corporate the National HKVCA.

## Membership details to keep in mind:

- The Association's **Membership Year is January through December.**
- We would request that you **complete the Membership Information form every year in December. You'll find it on the last page of your December Newsletter.** Whether you are a **veteran, a widow, a new or a renewing member**, we need to keep updating our Membership database. We now have over **260 members** in the Ontario Region, and it is important for us to have accurate information about all our members to be able to communicate with everyone.
- **New and Renewing** member dues are **\$15.00** per year.
- **Veterans and widows** do NOT pay dues. Their memberships are **free.**

Membership gives every member the chance to share their concerns and to speak with one voice on behalf of the Hong Kong Veterans.

Please take a moment and complete the attached Membership Information form. Send it and your cheque in the amount of \$15.00 per year to the address on the form.

Send your membership to:

### Membership chair:

Lori Smith  
143 Highview Ave. West  
London, Ontario  
N6J 4C7

**A hearty Welcome to all our new Members for 2005!**

Mike	Axent	Son of	William Axent	WG
Julie	Babin	Granddaughter of	Alfred J. Babin	RRC
Shelley	Babin	Granddaughter of	Alfred J. Babin	RRC
Dorothy	Chatwell-Felix	Daughter of	John W. Chatwell	WG
William F.	Cooper	Son of	Fred Cooper	RRC
Dianne	Day	Daughter of	Fred Cooper	RRC
Michael	Fleming	Son of	Robert James Fleming	RRC
Wendy	Gilbert-Rees	Daughter of	James Gilbert	RRC
Shirley	Harper-Goodwin	Daughter of	Kenneth Royden Jackson	WG
JoAnne	Hayes	Granddaughter of	Donald MacPherson	WG
Debbie	Lee			
Bruce	McLachlan	Son-in-Law of	P.A. Gelley	WG
Danielle	McLachlan	Granddaughter of	P.A. Gelley	WG
Richard	Phillips			
Lorraine	Poitras	Niece of	Fern Poitras	WG
Douglas B.	Rees	Veteran		
J. Norman	St. Auburn			
George A.	Stepanchuk	Son of	Nicholas Stepanchuk	RRC
Nellie	Stepanchuk	Widow of	Nicholas Stepanchuk	RRC
Ward	Stepanchuk	Son of	Nicholas Stepanchuk	RRC
Sandra	Strom	Daughter of	Augustin Cyr	RRC
Robert F.	Sutcliffe	Nephew of	Raymond Stoddard	RRC
Randy	Wing	Son of	Peter Wing	RRC
Marilyn	Wright	Daughter of	Colin A. Blaver	RRC

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May we thank the following members who have made special donations to the Ontario Region of HKVCA this year:

**OUR SPECIAL DONATIONS FOR 2005**

- **Les Canivet**
  - **Jessica Clayton**
    - **R.J. "Flash" Clayton**
  
- **Brian Craig**
  - **Donald Geraghty**
    - **Wallace "Red" Harrington**
  
- **Shelagh Purcell**
  - **Lawrence Ross**
    - **Pat Turcotte**

**ELECTION INFORMATION**

Just recently, Nomination forms were sent to everyone in the Ontario Region. When Nominations were received, the Acceptance of Nomination forms were sent out to those who had been nominated. The forms that were returned showed a rather surprising response. The letter all members received after that response explains the situation, and is shown following this note.

**The important point is that we are searching for members who would consider being appointed to the positions, which are still available.**

Those positions are listed below. Only the Secretary, Treasurer and Deputy Regional Directors would attend the regular Executive meetings, which are held on the Internet in the HKVCA Chat Room every two weeks. If you can assist us, please get in touch with Pat Turcotte or Mike Babin as soon as possible.

Cheers! Pat Turcotte

October 31, 2005

To all the Members of HKVCA, Ontario Region

We are pleased to announce that the new Regional Director of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association in Ontario for the coming two-year term will be Mike Babin. Mike has been acclaimed for this position and we congratulate him.

Regarding the remaining positions on the Executive which were open, the Election Committee has notified us that the necessary Acceptance of Nomination forms as provided for under the Association's By-Laws were not received. This means that no one chose to run for these positions, so they remain vacant.

We clearly cannot run the Association without having a strong Executive in place. Therefore, the Incoming Regional Director and Outgoing Regional Director will approach Association members regarding the vacancies. Once an individual has agreed to accept one of the vacant positions, that person will then be appointed. This process is provided for under the Association's By-Laws.

The open Executive positions include Regional Secretary, Regional Treasurer and Deputy Regional Director. Members who are interested in taking one of these positions should contact either Pat Turcotte or Mike Babin.

*Pat Turcotte*

Regional Director  
Ontario Region  
Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association

**Roles which need to be filled:**

**Secretary:**

- To take minutes at all meetings of the Executive, or General Meetings of the members. The Executive meetings are usually held on the Internet.
- To use a processing program such as Word to distribute minutes electronically (and in hard copy for those without e-mail) to the Executive and others on the distribution list.
- To notify Executive members, and members at large, of all meetings for which they should be in attendance.
- To acknowledge by letter all correspondence received by the Ontario Region which is not covered by the Regional Director.

**Treasurer:**

- To keep full and accurate accounts of all receipts and disbursements of the Ontario Region in proper books of account.

- To deposit all monies in the name and to the credit of the Ontario Region in such bank or banks as designated by the Executive.
- To disburse the funds of the Ontario Region under the direction of the Executive, taking proper vouchers thereof and rendering to the Executive, at regular meetings, an account of all financial transactions as Treasurer, and of the financial position of the Ontario Region.
- To collect membership dues, send rebates, and provide regular reports to the Corporate Treasurer as well as the Regional Executive.

**Deputy Regional Directors:**

- To assist and advise the Regional Director as members of the Executive in order to ensure the best administration possible in the Ontario Region.
- To choose the area or areas for which he/she feels best suited in order to effectively co-ordinate the activities of volunteers in that area. Examples: Area Rep. Coordinator, Publications Chair, Newsletter Editor, Veterans & Widows' Liaison.

- To represent the Regional Director when he/she is unable to be present, in such situations as chairing a meeting or speaking on behalf of the Ontario Region.
- We need between one and three to help coordinate the efforts of those working on the projects listed below.

The object, ultimately, would be to work toward becoming the Regional Director at some point in the future, gaining valuable experience along the way.

**The following areas offer specific opportunities for assistance** (not Executive positions)

- 1 **Publications Chair:** To assist in the distribution of the Ten Lessons and George MacDonell's "One Soldier's Story" in the schools in Ontario, and across the country – with the possibility of other publications about Hong Kong being added somewhere down the line.
- 2 **Newsletter Editor:** To continue the tradition already established in the nine Newsletters, which have been published since 2002, there are two other members who work with the Editor. Currently, Sylvia Mason looks after the formatting and Tim Hodgkinson oversees printing and distribution. Both are doing an excellent job.

- 3 **Wreath Chair:** This is a post that is evolving. The person doing the job would be in touch with the Area Reps. to finalize the list of wreaths which are acknowledged in the December Newsletter each year. He or she would also be in charge of the newly established Honour Wreaths. Begun last year, the Honour Wreaths involve contacting families whose veteran has passed on so that the Ontario Region can honour that veteran with a wreath in the community of the family's choice in the year of his passing.
- 4 **Membership Liaison:** This position is currently held by Janis Jennings. She is doing a fine job, reaching out to e-mail members, and providing information bulletins as needed. She may well wish to have someone assist her.
- 5 **Area Reps:** The province of Ontario is divided into six areas. We do have Area Reps. in all of these six Areas, and very much appreciate what they do. These are the current Area Reps.: Maureen Dwyer-Kline in South East, Ron McGuire in North East, Jackie LeDrew in the North, Leon Sokalski in West Central, Barbara Cunningham-Drew in South West and Randall Ross as Area Rep Coordinator in the GTA area. These Area Reps. keep in touch with members in their section of Ontario, especially with the veterans and widows. You could certainly offer to assist your Area Rep. That person may well need help in contacting everyone in the area.



**GET INVOLVED!**

**Your assistance as a Volunteer is vital to the health of the Ontario Region Organization.**

**Three Important Sheets follow.**

- **Please be sure to send in your Membership Information Form, and unless you're a Veteran or a Widow, include your Membership Fee**
- **Support your Ontario Region Publications**
- **Note your Area Rep and your Executive Members on the Ontario Executive Council List. Do Keep in Touch!**

*All of us on the Ontario Executive Wish you a Happy and Healthy Christmas and may 2006 be a Wonderful Year for you and yours!*



Canada in Hong Kong: 1941 – 1945

The Forgotten Heroes  
Ten Selected Lesson Plans

"Canada's involvement in Hong Kong during World War II is a largely ignored or discounted aspect of Canadian history. This is unfortunate if not tragic. The story is a compelling one and in many ways emerges as Canada's Gallipoli, Holocaust and Vietnam all rolled into one. Canadian Hong Kong veterans were the first to fight in World War II and the last to come home. A myriad of interesting topics emerge: the controversy surrounding Canada's decision to get involved, the logistical problems, the courageous fight, the brutal POW camps, and compensation. This work will explore all of these issues, and more."

Nick Brune – Author

"One Soldier's Story"

This is the story of a seventeen-year-old boy who ran away from home to join the Canadian Army at the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939.

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