

THE SPIRIT OF THE TORCH

“All Generations of the Hong Kong Family
Remember with Pride”

**Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative
Association of Ontario**

Volume VII, No. 2 (13)



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Regional Director's Message—Mike Babin

Wow! Those Westerners sure know how to throw a party! Sunny and warm described both the weather in Calgary and the hospitality shown by the Alberta/Saskatchewan region of the HKVCA at this year's fabulously successful convention. Some 50 Ontario members, including 8 Veterans and 5 widows, made the trip west to join more than 200 of the HKVCA family from across Canada. From the Ceremony of Light, to the BBQ at Kananaskis Ranch, to the memorial service, to the Gala and to the pancake breakfast, every event the organizing committee staged was a resounding success. It was wonderful to be able to meet and chat with so many of our members in the Memorabilia Room, the Convention home of a mind-boggling array of keepsakes from many Vets and families.

The big news at the convention was the Memorial Wall. At the Annual General Meeting on Friday morning the room was electric with excitement over this project. More than \$20,000 was pledged on the spot, with members making their way to the front of the room to hand their cheques to Carol Hadley and Phil Doddridge.

This is the biggest project the HKVCA has ever undertaken, and to make it a success we need all of our members to be involved. I am making my personal request to you to donate, and to contact as many of your family and friends as possible and solicit donations from them.

....cont'd on page 2

THE MEMORIAL WALL

Your donations are needed! Please send your cheque to:

Mr. Mark Purcell
Treasurer, HKVCA Ontario Region
50 Richmond St. E., Unit #636
Oshawa, ON L1G 7C7

Please make out your cheque to HKVCA – Ontario, and note that it is a donation to the Memorial Wall. All donations of \$20 or more will receive a tax receipt. You can also donate using your credit card by going to the HKVCA web site at www.hkvca.ca and following the directions on “How to Donate”.

Please be generous in your support of this wonderful commemoration of our Veterans!

We have established a goal of raising \$25,000 in Ontario for the Wall. As of this writing Ontario members have contributed about \$16,000. Thanks to all who have donated! Please keep the donations coming in!

Recently, Pat Turcotte and I attended a fundraising dinner sponsored by the "Association for the Learning and Preserving the History of WW II in Asia" or ALPHA. This group's purpose is to ensure that the history of events that took place in Asia before and during WW II are accurately recorded and remain so, and that the history is taught in schools.

The dinner was to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the "rape of Nanking", during which between 100,000 and 300,000 Chinese were killed by the Japanese Army. ALPHA has sponsored a film, "Iris Chang: The Rape of Nanking" which tells the story of this terrible event. It will be released on November 11 and will eventually be shown across Canada and in other countries. Make a point of seeing it when it comes to your town.

It was very interesting and gratifying to see that there are other groups which are as passionate about educating Canadians on the events of WW II as are we in the HKVCA. It confirms that we are on the right track with our essay contest, lesson plans and other initiatives to raise the profile of the Hong Kong story with Canada's high school students.

Let me close by wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Mike Babin

AREA REP REPORTS

West Central Area:

I'm saddened to report that we have lost one veteran in our area since the last newsletter, Donald Geraghty, RRC, #B45551, who died on July 7, 2007. Several Hong Kong Veterans and HKVCA members attended his funeral in Burlington.

Also, Eleanor Ruth Pifher, wife of Arthur (Ken) Pifher, RRC, passed away October 24, 2007 in Grimsby. She and Ken were married for 61 years.

Now that the summer is over, we are getting ready for fall and the coming winter. Gerald Sunstrum, of Niagara Falls, is already keeping in shape raking his leaves.

Carl Adams, who is going to be 90 years old on November 22, says that he is really starting to feel his age, as he finds it harder and harder to give himself a pedicure.

Harold Smith, of St. Catharines, seems to be doing very well. At the present time, he is trying very hard to get his scooter back into operation after being in a wheel chair for awhile. He says he will try very hard not to break any speed limits, as he's been pushing too hard on the gas pedal lately.

Leon Sokalski

Central & South East Ontario Area

"Hello" to everyone on behalf of all of us here in Central & South Eastern Ontario. 2007 has just been flying by, don't you think?!!! For me personally, I had a "To Do" list and a "To Finish" list and I don't think I've scratched anything from either!!

We had very good weather here in Trenton for the Remembrance Day weekend. Our Legion, Branch 110, tried something new this year. They sold 1000 red candles in memory of veterans from all the wars, for family members, in honour of our troops over in Afghanistan, and held a special service Saturday night with an honour guard, flag bearers, pipers and then we all proceeded in line-ups to place these candles along the steps circling the cenotaph. I took three of my grandchildren, Hanna (7) who placed a candle in memory of my father, her great grandfather Terry Dwyer, Ethan (4) placed his candle in memory of Harry Atkinson and then two-year old Ryan (girl) placed her candle in recognition of all Hong Kong Veterans. What an awesome sight once all 1000 lit candles sat lighting up the cenotaph!! And these candles remained lit throughout the night, standing vigil with the four young cadets until our return the next morning for the Remembrance Day Service. Of course once the service was finished and we'd pinned our poppies onto the wreath for the Hong Kong Veterans and the HKVCA, the kids just had to go check out their candles. All Ethan could say was "cool". Hanna had learned to memorize the poem "In Flanders' Fields" at school so she recited it for me while there. It was all very moving. I know they're still a bit young to understand, but we have to start somewhere!!

Well, all of us here in Trenton are doing just fine. My Mom, Marjorie Dwyer, continues in good health. She and I will be doing some shopping this week trying to get a jump on our Christmas shopping while my husband Bob is north at the hunting camp for a week. The three of us attended the Calgary Convention this summer and had a fabulous time. Along with many veterans, their wives and families from the Central & South East Area, we too would like to congratulate all the organizers and helpers on the great job done with the convention. Mom, Bob and myself stayed behind 3 days to do some sight seeing, driving through the Rockies to the Columbia Ice Fields in Jasper Park, did the 8 minute gondola ride up 7500 ft to the top of Sulphur Mountain (what a spectacular view that was, and the gondola ride was something else too, eh Mom!!), took a relaxing boat cruise on Lake Minnewanka and then finished our trip with a good long visit with Don Nelson.

Fred and Delilah Cooper and their family were present in Calgary and are already looking forward to a repeat in 2 years, wherever it may be held. Fred has been keeping himself busy lately by doing the last of the gardening stuff, getting ready for Ole Man Winter!! It was great to see both of you in Calgary and to see how well you're getting around, Fred, since that hip operation.

Bruce and Rena Cadoret from Cobourg have had a busy year. Prior to the Calgary convention they spent one week in the Gaspé Bay area and after Calgary, just before Thanksgiving, they whisked off on a Mediterranean cruise with their two children to celebrate Rena's 80th birthday. The four of them flew to Rome, spent a couple of days there and then continued on to Greece, Sicily and Turkey. Apparently the trip was wonderful. And after the New Year it's off to Florida for a couple of months. It's always great seeing you both and I hope we'll see each other again soon. By the way, a belated "Happy Birthday, Rena" from all of us.

I was lucky enough to catch Flash and Jessie Clayton at home this time, but only just. They had just returned from Warminster, north of Orillia, where they were talking at the Legion, along with a soldier from Afghanistan, to a group of children from two area schools. As you all know, Flash and Jessie visit many schools and Legions throughout the area,

educating hundreds about the Battle of Hong Kong and what life has been like for Flash himself and his fellow comrades since their return, while Jessie explains the wives' and family's side of the story. The Friday following our conversation Jessie will be attending a parade with the Pipe Band and then both of them are participating in the Remembrance Day Service in Brechin. I'll tell you, I feel guilty for complaining of being tired after hearing how busy the two of them are all the time!! Many of you who attended the Calgary Convention saw Flash and Jessie there as well, and they've repeated on what a fabulous time was had by all and what a great job the organizers and helpers did on the Convention.

Doreen Fleming (widow of Jim Fleming) up in Peterborough continues to enjoy good health, but is not looking forward to the winter months, either.

Murdena Claricoates agrees with me that time has just flown by too fast and feels she hasn't accomplished much throughout the summer, either. Dena turned 80 this past August (happy belated birthday) and she too is a very busy woman. She enjoys driving her car about Kingston to get her groceries, and back and forth to her appointments. Plus, most days she drives into Amherstview to visit her husband Ron at the nursing home. Ron has had a rough summer this year; he's been experiencing a lot of weak spells and lack of appetite. But on good days, Ron is very alert and always looks forward to Dena's visits (especially when she brings chocolates, his ultimate favourite!!). Happy belated birthday to you as well, Ron, I hear you just celebrated your birthday in October.

Fred Mason, I missed you this time, you apparently were out and about with your senior's group, off gambling somewhere, no doubt!! Your niece, Sylvia and I had a long chat, as usual. Sylvia is also quite busy volunteering at the hospital in Newmarket, as well as preparing our newsletter, along with many other projects that keep her busy. Both are doing fine and also had a great time out in Calgary. Sylvia, I forgot to ask you when your next shopping trip across the border will be. Now that our Canadian dollar is doing so well, look at how much more you and the girls can bring back home, eh Syl!!

Leo Berard had a bit of a rough summer as well. He had to spend some time in hospital up in Barrie because of dizzy spells that resulted in a couple of falls. He was released to a long term care facility closer to Toronto, near his one daughter. But Barrie is home, and so Leo soon returned and now resides at Mulchester Mews Care Centre (Room 102, 705-797-0631) where he is doing much better and is again able get out to visit with his friends and comrades at the Legion a couple of times a week. We're all glad to hear you are doing better, Leo, and hope you continue to do well.

I had a pleasant conversation with Oda Barlow (widow of Ted Barlow) and found out that I had interrupted her packing. Oda has decided to move at the end of November to Richmond Hill, across from her daughter Kate and son-in-law. As much as she's loved living in her house in Innisfil the past 10 yrs, Oda feels it's time to be closer to her family. On behalf of all of us within the Hong Kong Family, I would like to pass along our most sincere condolences to you, Oda, and your family, on the passing of your daughter Rose Anne. We wish you well on the move and hope you will enjoy your new home.

Well, that about raps it up for me (never have been short winded!!). I hope this newsletter finds you all well. Have a safe and healthy winter. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us to all of you. And, see you again soon.

Maureen Dwyer-Kline

South West Area

I was able to connect with quite a few of our family in South West Ontario. Some of you have updated your records and agreed to read your HKVCA newsletters on line - thank you to Alfred Babin, Christina Babin, Joseph Killoran, Joan Northrup, Marc Sevigny, Lillian Osborn, and Dawn Stillwell. When Deborah Legg visits with her dad (Lawrence Ross-RRC), they read his newsletter together.

One of the comments I did hear a few times is to have the printed newsletter in larger print for 'these old eyes'. Maybe this is a good suggestion for our newsletter publishers to think about for the future.

Sometimes we miss out on updating our telephone and address information. Elizabeth Firlotte (widow of Elisee Cote - RRC) and veteran Austin Batley (RRC) are two members I have not been able to connect with for far too long. If any one of you has an update on either of these two members, please give Mike Babin a call. His telephone number is at the back of this newsletter.

Remembrance Day wreaths were laid in the South West area: London by Ruth Cunningham (widow of Winston Cunningham - CDC); Kitchener by Lillian Gauvin (daughter of Albert James Russell - RRC); Sarnia by Jean Killoran (widow of John Killoran - RRC) and Stratford by Grey Fair (veteran- RRC). If I have missed mentioning any South West wreaths, please call me and let me know.

I had a lovely chat with Lorraine Lawlis (widow of Philip Lawlis – RRC). I missed connecting with Dorothy Sauson (widow of Oliver Ray Sauson – RRC) as she was visiting her two sisters out east for four weeks. Dorothy sold her home and moved this past summer to an apartment.

Les Canivet (veteran – RCOC) and I had a long chat. He was “in headquarters” with my dad so it was a lovely reminisce. Les visits people in Ottawa quite regularly. He kept a diary while he was a POW.

All in all it was lovely visiting with you all. I wish everyone a healthy winter and much joy this coming holiday season.

Barbara Cunningham-Drew

North East Ontario Report

I am happy to report that all is well with most of our members in this region. However, Beverley Willis, daughter of Sgt. B. S. Gilbert, RRC has not been well and reluctantly, could not lay a wreath at the Perth cenotaph on the 11th. I know everyone will join me in wishing Beverley a speedy and complete recovery from her illness.

My two HK vets, Ken Ewing and Eric Maloney, both RRCs, are doing well and I keep in touch regularly. Ken and Susan hope to spend January to March 2008 visiting their daughter and her family in Australia. I wish them safe travel and a good visit.

I am very pleased and relieved to report that Bruce Cadoret's memorabilia, which was thought to be missing, had been misplaced and found. I had several opportunities to speak with Rena and Bruce and many others at the Reunion in

Calgary. It was an excellent affair and I commend everyone who was a part of making it such a success. I had my eight panel exhibit and other things that filled twelve tables. I also gave my illustrated talk. I finally had my original 105 slides converted to a DVD disk and, thanks to the Lapata Brothers; I was able to show them without problems. I guess I am finally in the 21st century. Now I have to buy a DVD player, since I can no longer get VCR tapes!

In my last report I told you that Bill MacWhirter was having a third operation on his foot. I am pleased to tell you that it has been a success. Bill was able to travel and attend the Gaspe-Maritime convention with Lynn in September and go on to visit their two children in Nova Scotia.

“Remember the Battle of Vimy Ridge” is the theme for my eleventh Remembrance Month Exhibit for the Nepean Museum. It has been very well received and can be seen until November 30. For more information check the museum web site: www.nepeanmuseum.on.ca.

The inductions of Jessie and Flash Clayton and Lionel Speller MM into the Canada Veterans Hall of Valour took place on May 26, 2007. Ken Ewing and George MacDonell, both RRCs, attended, as well as over twenty five members of the Clayton and HKVCA families.

Next year’s induction banquet will be held on Saturday, May 24, 2008. If you plan to attend I suggest you make your reservation now by sending your cheque, for \$60 per person, payable to the CVHofV, to: Robert Campbell, 2084 Naskapi Drive, Ottawa, Ont. K1J 8M3. If you are unable to attend, you can cancel the reservation no later than April 24, 2008 and receive a full refund.

In addition to Harry and Ron Atkinson, WGs, George MacDonell, RRC, who was recommended for the Military Medal, and received a Mention in Dispatches (MID), will be inducted. I am pleased to tell you there will then be eleven people connected to “C” Force inducted into the Hall.

As a member of the Memorial Wall Committee, I encourage you to support this project. Of all the things the HKVCA is doing now, or in the future, I believe the Memorial Wall will be one of the most important and visible. It will not only help ensure our veterans are remembered and never forgotten, but will encourage visitors to the Wall to learn more about their stories and the history of “C” Force.

I have been assisting Nathan Greenfield who will be writing a book on the “C” Force. At present he is promoting his latest book on the Canadians in the Second Battle of Ypres during the First World War but plans to begin his interviews early next year. If you would like to be interviewed, please contact him at: 613-837-4166. He is very interested in speaking with Hong Kong Veterans, their wives, widows and children.

Well, I am sure I’ve bored you enough so I will close off. Connie joins me in wishing you all a Happy Christmas and New Year, with safe traveling.

Ron McGuire

Northern Ontario Report

Here it is the end of another year. The weather has been great in Northern Ontario; at least we haven't seen any of the white stuff yet! Things could change however by the time we all receive our newsletters. Hope everyone had a great summer. Hold that thought!

Just a little news to share from our area members:

George Hallada is heading south in February for a family reunion and to attend the Daytona 500. Hope you have a great time, George! Stephen James, grandson of Marcine James has returned from his tour in Afghanistan and received a bravery citation. Congratulations, Stephen! Daphne Caruso is on the mend after knee surgery. We wish you a speedy recovery, Daphne.

Most of the veterans were going to make the Remembrance Day ceremonies to lay wreaths at their respective Legions or community cenotaphs. Our Legion, Branch 553 in Chelmsford, held our parade and ceremony Saturday, November 3rd outside in front of the cenotaph. I find it very moving every year and it gives us a chance to reflect on those who died during wars, have died since, those who still live with the pain and memories, and those who are now serving. I am so grateful for the freedoms we have today. We pray for the time when there will be Peace on Earth.

I apologize for not getting to speak to all the members on my list; I'll start earlier next time. I wish to take this opportunity to wish everyone a blessed and joyous Christmas and may you always have love to share, health to spare and friends who care. May God bless each and every one of you.

Jackie Le Drew

GTA Area

My immediate link to the Association is through my father, Robert Sullivan, who was a Rifleman with the Royal Rifles of Canada. In his later years my father suffered through many medical conditions, many of which were directly attributable to his years of confinement. My father passed away almost 21 years ago. However, I can still recall how proud he was to be associated with so many brave comrades-in-arms.

As you know, many of the Royal Rifles were volunteers from Bonaventure County in the Gaspé and as a result, my affiliation to the Association extends through many other branches of my family's tree. My Uncle, Seymour Allison, was a member of "D" Company under Major Maurice Parker. He survived the internment to return home and raise a family of his own that has grown and expanded through 3 generations (so far). Other familiar Association names include family branches such as Fair and Keays; and names from my youth: Mann, Pentland, Court and Fleming to name a few.

The military has also played a role in my personal life. I spent eight years in the Reserves here in Toronto with the Royal Regiment of Canada and attained the rank of Captain. I still maintain active contact with the Regiment as the Secretary of the Officers' Association. While my friends and colleagues were fortunate enough not to have had to go into combat, I forged some extraordinary friendships that allowed me to better understand the bonds that existed between my father and his comrades.

Today I spend most of my time trying to balance raising three children (Adam - 17, Kelly – 16 and Shannon -11) and a career in telecommunications.

I am currently working on a project to transcribe my Uncle's war diary from those years spent in service and confinement. It is my hope to upload this to the HKVCA web site once it is complete.

Someone once said that life is what happens when you're planning something else. When I first started as the HKVCA Area Representative for the GTA, I thought it would be easier than what I have come to learn. It is not so much that the responsibilities of the role are so demanding, it is the amount of time that the rest of one's life takes out of every day.

I have been making inroads in contacting the members around the GTA, but I do apologize for not getting to everyone so far. I have reached a little over half of the members in the area through e-mails or letters and will be making a concerted effort to reach everyone before the end of the year.

If you have "surfed" the HKVCA web site you may have seen information under the "Teachers Zone" about a new initiative taking shape at Oshawa Central Collegiate in Oshawa, Ontario under the guidance of History teacher, Flora Fung. With her advisor and our ardent supporter, Nancy Hamer Strahl, she is putting in place a series of events and strategies that will honour the soldiers who fought in the Battle of Hong Kong in 1941, paying particular attention to the nine Hong Kong soldiers who were from the Oshawa area.

As Nancy related to me, many children of Oshawa-based Hong Kong veterans have been trying to get some sort of commemoration for the men in Oshawa. Dave Murray and Glen Lee have been lobbying the City to do something about this for years. They have attended meetings with the Mayor of Oshawa to have street names for the men and their efforts have been rewarded by having two streets in Oshawa named in honour of our veterans. But a formal plaque was still nowhere to be seen.

Nancy had the thought that a school in Oshawa might wish to adopt the soldiers and have a plaque made to hang in their school. One evening over dinner, Flora and Nancy discussed the idea and Flora accepted the challenge.

As Flora writes, "In the school year of 2007-2008, Oshawa Central Collegiate will formally adopt the veterans who fought in the Battle for Hong Kong. This project is special for two reasons; one because Oshawa Central Collegiate is located in the neighbourhood where many of these Oshawa men lived and raised their families after their return from Asia, and secondly my family is of Hong Kong descent, which makes this project one of personal significance for me."

In November of 2007, Grade 10 history students will receive a biography of a veteran that fought in the Battle for Hong Kong. Students will create a tribute to their soldier.

On December 4th, 2007, a reception will be held at Oshawa Central Collegiate to remember the contribution of these men. A plaque will be unveiled at this time to show that the students of OCCI do care and remember the sacrifices of these men. One student will be chosen to speak about the veteran for whom they created a tribute. A student will also be asked to unveil the plaque with a veteran who served at the Battle for Hong Kong.

Flora has asked Robert "Flash" Clayton to represent the Hong Kong Veterans.

I will be attending the reception and I will be preparing a more in-depth article around the entire project for the next newsletter.

In my first report I mentioned that I am working on a project to transcribe my Uncle's war diary from those years spent in service and confinement and that I hope to upload this to the HKVCA web site once it is complete. The project is proceeding along nicely, but it is emotionally difficult at times. We (my cousins) recently found some additional letters and notes to go along with the ones we knew about and that was exciting.

As always, if you have a pressing need, please don't hesitate to contact me at home at 905-837-5680, on my cell at 416-407-8441 or drop me an e-mail at roy.sullivan@rogers.com.

Peace and Respect.

Roy Sullivan

Veteran Profile: Clifford McDavid

By Muriel McDavid (daughter)

Clifford McDavid was born May 3, 1923 at home on McDavid's Mountain, Matapedia, Quebec. His mother and father were Price and Doris McDavid, and he had four sisters and four brothers. Cliff attended school in Quebec, and became active in the North Shore Militia in Cambellton, N.B. in 1940. Twice a week, after finishing his farm chores, he traveled to town to attend the militia meetings. When the Royal Rifles of Canada began recruiting nearby, he was quick to join, so quick that he forgot to tell the militia group that he had done so, and they considered him A.W.O.L. till it was discovered that he had been recruited by the Royal Rifles. Training with the Royal Rifles took place at Val Cartier, P.Q.; Sussex, N.B.; Botwood, Nfld.; Gander, Nfld.; and St. John's, Nfld. For a brief period, Cliff served as a guard for the Lieut. Governor at the Citadel in Quebec City, but it wasn't long before he was shipped to Hong Kong as a member of "C" Force in October of 1941.



Following the Battle of Hong Kong, those who escaped death on the battlefield became prisoners-of-war, and Cliff was among those sent to Japan to work as slave labour in the shipyards of Yokohama and the coal mines of Sindawan. Cliff weighed just 130 pounds when the war ended, and, following a long journey from Tokyo to Honolulu to San Francisco and Vancouver, he was able to regain some of his weight he had lost. Once back in Canada, he spent fourteen days in a military hospital, and was then able to return home to Matapedia in October of 1945.

Clifford was discharged from the army on March 26, 1946 to begin a new chapter of his life. He returned to farm work, and married Etta, someone he'd known from childhood, on November 7, 1946. With few job opportunities locally, Cliff moved alone to Toronto in September of 1948 to find a home and a job. He was joined by Etta in October, along with their first child, Muriel. Cliff started working with Swifts Canada Meats in 1949, and in the years that followed, two other children were born; John in 1950, and Vedra in 1952.

Clifford retired from Swifts in 1981. For years he and Etta and the family enjoyed their cottage and winter trips to Florida. They have two grandchildren, Robert and Deborah and two great-grandchildren Sommer 5, and Christian Clifford 1; the latter being named after his great-grandfather. Etta and Clifford now reside in Thornhill closely surrounded by family and friends, and just recently celebrated 60 years of marriage. They continue to enjoy relatively good health and enjoy family outings as well as the many activities of the local Seniors Centre.

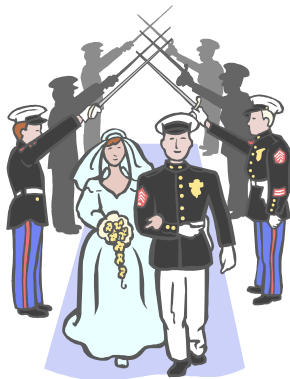
In November, 2006, Clifford was one of four veterans honoured by the Town of Markham at its Remembrance Day Ceremony by special presentations recognizing each individual veteran, and his contribution to the peaceful society we now enjoy. Our thanks to you as well, Clifford. We hope for many more years of happy retirement for both you and Etta!

The Ladies' Side of the Story: Marjorie Dwyer

By: Shelagh Purcell (daughter of Lieut. L.B. Corrigan, WG)

The licence plate on Marjorie Dwyer's car is a perfect description of Marjorie herself. It reads HK WIDO. Her husband was Private Terrance W. Dwyer, of the Royal Canadian Dental Corps with Brigade, who served and was taken prisoner-of-war in Hong Kong.

Marjorie was also the first widow to come forward when the veterans started making donations for the Memorial Wall at the National Convention in Calgary. She challenged other widows to match her donation of \$100. As she said at the time, "The veterans are giving cheques of \$1,000 but we widows aren't as well off – so my donation will be \$100." Several other women followed her example. (The next cheque topped her amount by \$1.00.)



Marjorie and Terry had known each other in Port Arthur where they both grew up before the war. Marjorie had joined the army, as Terry did, in Winnipeg, and she worked in Ottawa with the Repatriation Department, sending material to all the Depots and to war brides. Terry signed on for a "mysterious journey" - no one knew where they were to be sent – and ended up going to Hong Kong and life as a prisoner-of-war. When he came back, at war's end, and was in hospital, Marjorie decided to go and visit her old friend. Visiting led to dating and then to marrying in 1947. Both were retired from Manning Depot in Winnipeg. Terry went to work in Port Arthur (now Thunder Bay), first with the Department of Lands and Forests and then with Canadian Car and Foundry. But he missed the military, and decided to re-enlist, this time with the Air Force. His career took the family to Moose Jaw, Sask., Camp Borden, Ontario, France and Baden-Baden,

Germany.

Marjorie said the European traveling came at a good time for their three children – Richard, Maureen and Roxanne – who were old enough then to remember the places where they lived. They came back to Canada in 1966 to Trenton, where Marjorie still lives. The family has grown to include eight grandchildren and 13 (and one half) great-grandchildren.

There were no stories from Terry in the early years after the war – unless you knew the questions to ask, Marjorie said. Like most of the Hong Kong veterans, Terry felt no one would believe what had happened and how the men were treated. He did talk to Marjorie's father, but not to many other people. Terry died in 1978 at the age of 55 after suffering a series of strokes and a heart attack.

After his death, Marjorie was invited by Oda and “Red” Barlow to a corn roast at their home. Oda invited all the ladies into the living room, at one point, and suggested they form a Ladies Auxiliary. It was an idea that had been tried right after the war in several places in Canada, but soon fell apart. This time, the ladies were determined to continue meeting and it was with the Auxiliary that Marjorie found the most comfort and support as a widow. The women began attending every meeting held in Toronto when the veterans met.

It was at these meetings that Marjorie learned more of the Hong Kong stories and how differently each man handled his experience. Whereas Terry insisted that every Christmas be celebrated with a properly decorated tree and all the trimmings, Marjorie learned that some men couldn't face Christmas Day – the day Canadians had to surrender in Hong Kong – and would sometimes lock themselves away from their families to get through the terrible memories.



Marjorie took on the role of President of the Ladies Auxiliary. As many widows found out, her civilian friends were disappearing after Terry's death. But the Hong Kong women knew what she, and they, needed was a group of friends who didn't have to have the war situation explained to them. They had lived with the experiences of their returning husbands, and so all the widows felt very welcomed into the Auxiliary. Families were included at picnics on Toronto Island and so the children of the veterans also grew up knowing each other.

Marjorie traveled to Hong Kong in 1990 to see first-hand where the battle had taken place and where the Canadian men were imprisoned. For many years, a lot of the veterans had found it too expensive to try and attend reunions and pilgrimages. In 1990, traveling with the veterans and their wives was very meaningful for Marjorie. It also brought home how important it was to continue the work of the Auxiliary. There are 250 widows of the Hong Kong veterans alive today across the country. Marjorie has been active many years in the Ontario group, and even though there are no longer meetings, remains as busy as ever. She is the last member to hold the title of President. But as she has said before – “I am going to retire!” Her children have supported her work with the widows and they themselves have volunteered with the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association. So the contribution of the Dwyer family continues.



Hong Kong Veterans Association of Canada, Ontario Branch

Hello everyone - I'd like to offer a special word of thanks for the excellent job done by the folks who planned and carried out the wonderful National Convention in Calgary we had this summer. In particular, I'd like to give a personal thank-you to those who drove us to and from the airport.

Recently, Jim MacMillan, George MacDonell and I appeared on television. On two occasions, on channel CP24 with the host, Peter Silverman, we were asked to speak about the Hong Kong Veterans.

On December 4th, 2007, a reception was held at Oshawa Central Collegiate Institute to commemorate nine of our Hong Kong veterans who came from the Oshawa area. It was a wonderful event, and I thank Flora Fung, the OCCI teacher who organized it.

I wish all our members, including our sons and daughters in the HKVCA and their families, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. And may the good weather continue.

John Stroud

President, HKVA – Ontario Branch

Membership Report

Hello from Sherkston Ontario. My husband and I have recently moved to the Niagara region. Due to the wonderful age of the internet and computers, I will be able to continue to be the membership liaison for the Ontario Region of the HKVCA.

Since moving here, I have been able to connect here with Ward Stepanchuk. Both he and his mother, Nellie Stepanchuk, live in Port Colborne which is the closet town to my new 'digs'. Nellie is the widow and Ward is the son of Nicholas Stepanchuk of the Royal Rifles of Canada. I say this because it brings home to me again how far reaching our HKVCA family ties reach. Here I am, moved to a new area of Ontario and already I am meeting HKVCA 'family'.

I would like to introduce to you our Ontario HKVCA area reps. They play a vital job keeping our 'family' connected and up-to-date. Our area reps are:

1. North Ontario - Jackie Le Drew - daughter of Augustin Cyr [RRC]
2. Central & South East Ontario - Maureen Dwyer-Kline - daughter of Terrence Dwyer [CDC]
3. South West Ontario - Barbara Cunningham-Drew - daughter of Dr. Winston Ross Cunningham [CDC]
4. GTA Ontario - Roy Sullivan - son of Robert T. Sullivan [RRC]
5. North East Ontario – Ron C.R. McGuire – friend of the HKVCA family
6. West Central Ontario - Leon Sokalski - son of George Sokalski [WG]

These 6 people have the huge undertaking of connecting with each and every one of us. If you haven't received a call or an email from your area rep - could it be possible we have the incorrect contact information? If you haven't received a contact from your area rep - please contact one of your Ontario Region Executive and update your information with them. They will pass it on to the correct area rep.

We really are hoping all members with emails will accept the proposed viewing of the National newsletter on the HKVCA web site. You can well imagine the time and energy of our volunteers and the cost to each of us as members of each posted newsletter, so please confirm this proposal with your area rep when they connect with you. In fact, all address changes should be updated when they call.

I wish you and yours all the best for this Holiday Season. Keep in touch!

Lori Atkinson-Smith

HONOUR WREATH CHAIR REPORT

Greetings from the Honour Wreath Chair. Over this past year, we have endeavoured to connect with local Legions regarding laying memorial honour wreaths at Remembrance Day Services. The original plan was to have a wreath laid by the veteran's family, in honour of their loved one who had recently died. Unfortunately, this process has become

increasingly more complicated. We are now endeavouring to revamp the Honour Wreath Project. The new project would include the following: a package containing these items would be sent to the family (if possible to the funeral home).

1. A 20" wreath with purple ribbon and gold lettering: Hong Kong Veteran WWII POW 1941-1945
2. 2 copies of the HKVCA brochure that explains the role of the soldiers in Hong Kong, the mission of the Association and its current activities as well as referring to the HKVCA website
3. Possibly a Nominal Roll of Soldiers who fought at Hong Kong

In this way, we could honour the Veteran and provide the family with a wreath that they could either lay at the appropriate time of their choosing at the graveside or contact the local Legion to inquire about laying it at a Remembrance Day Service. The information package would help them share with others the role of all the Canadian soldiers who served with their loved one in Hong Kong. To assist with this project, we ask for each Veteran, or member of his family to provide us with a contact name, address and phone number.

Another, long term goal is to have a memorial page on the website. We will update the membership, as we continue to work on this project. We continue to serve those who have served their country with honour and valour.

Sincerely,

(Rev'd) Vicky Hedelius

Wreaths laid in North East Ontario –by Ron McGuire

I encourage members to purchase and lay a wreath on behalf of their loved one and/or the HKVCA at your local cenotaph. My thanks to those who are laying a wreath. It is one of the many ways we can ensure our HK Veterans are "Never Forgotten".

Last year and this November 11th the following wreaths were laid in this region by:

1. Dempsey Syvret, RRC, escorted by Derrill Henderson, laid the wreath at the National War Memorial this year and in 2006 for all Hong Kong Veterans
2. Ken Ewing, escorted by his son Steven and grandson Bill at Kemptville, for his comrades
3. Sandi Cameron and Mitzi Ross at Nepean, for Ken Cameron, RCOC-B-HQ and Lance Ross, RRC
4. Mavis Martin at Merrickville for John Martin, RRC and his comrades
5. Joanne Parkes at Prescott, for Walter Parkes, RRC
6. Leonard Cotton Jr. at Stittsville, for Leonard Cotton Sr., RRC.
7. Hudson Allison, grandson of Elmer Denison at Brockville, for Elmer Denison and his comrades.
8. Michelle Fleming and Leisa Connelly at Orleans, for Roger Cyr, RRC.
9. Natalie Gibb-Carsley and 4 year old Anna-Maude Carsley-Jones at Perth, for Dr. John Crawford, RCAMC- WG.
10. Shiela Forsyth at Metcalfe, for Eursal and John Kaine, RRC.
11. Joy Hodgkinson at Beckwith, for R.W. Queen-Hughes, WG.
12. Stanley Lasenba at Smith Falls, for Earl Lasenba, RRC.

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13. Jo-Anne Scaffidi at Kanata, for Stewart Henderson, RRC and all HK Veterans.
(Jo-Anne's daughter Sarah was ill and could not accompany her mother and Laura was singing at the Canadian War Museum with the Cantiamo Girls Choir.) In 2006 Jo-Anne and her two daughters laid the wreath together at Kanata.
 14. This past Remembrance Day's weather in Ottawa was the best I can remember. For the first time since I began laying a wreath in 2001, I served as an escort. I was pleased to have Edward Terry Jr., son of Captain Edward Terry Sr. RCAPC, attached to the WG, who unfortunately died as a POW, lay my wreath at both the Carlingwood Shopping Centre 11 a.m. ceremony and at the Westboro Cenotaph 2 p.m. ceremony. I hope to escort Ed again many years in the future. Last year I laid the wreath at both locations myself.
 15. In 2006 Beverley Willis and her grand- daughter Taylor Jordan laid the wreath at Perth for Sgt. B. S. Gilbert, RRC.
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Remembrance Day in Port Colborne -by Lori Atkinson-Smith

What a moving service here in Port Colborne, Ontario. This is the first time a wreath has been laid in memory of the Hong Kong Vets in Port Colborne.

The wreath was donated by Nellie Stepanchuk and her son Ward. Ward Stepanchuk and his son Derek laid the wreath in honour of all Hong Kong Veterans and special memory of their father/grandfather, Thomas Stepanchuk RRC.

The service was held at the Cenotaph at the Knoll Park overlooking the shores of Lake Erie. The service was put on by the local legion #56. It was attended by many community groups of all ages and affiliations. All three governments (Mayor, MP and MPP) were represented and spoke clearly to the subject at hand. I do not think I have ever heard a scripture reading so in tune to the going of the Canadians to War and tying into Remembrance Day.

IN MEMORIAM

Remembering the Hong Kong Veterans who have recently left us:

Peter Alain, RRC	James "Jim" Badger, RRC
Dr. S.M. Banfill, RRC	Charlie Cardinal, WG
Don Geraghty, RRC	Thomas Forsyth, WG
Lloyd W. Hanna, WG	



We will also remember:

Alma Friesen, widow of Ike Friesen, WG,
 Hazel Keays Campbell, widow of Charles Campbell, RRC
 Kate Irving, widow of Morton Irving, RRC
 Dorothy McKay, widow of Andrew J. McKay, RRC
 Eleanor Pifher, wife of Ken Pifher, RRC

Our condolences to their families

'WE WILL REMEMBER THEM'

Education Committee & Resource Fair in Ottawa: Oct. 30, 2007

On Tuesday, October 30th, the Ontario Region's Education Committee participated in a very special event in Ottawa.

The Parliamentary Library sponsors 85 teachers and teacher mentors chosen from every province and territory to take part in a six-day study of the Canadian Parliamentary system. An Ottawa committee chooses the delegates after rigorous screening both locally and provincially related not only to their quality of their work as teachers but also their contribution and leadership in the community they represent.

As part of the six-day event, the teachers have a two-hour opportunity on the second day to visit a Resource Fair which includes displays from the Federal Government and its associated agencies, as well as the Canadian War Museum, the Museum of Civilization and others. The Ontario Region of HKVCA was invited to participate because of our Ten Lessons, and the Essay Contest we are sponsoring across the country again this year.

The fact that we were invited by the Coordinator of the Resource Fair, Debbie Jiang, to take part in the event was a big plus, particularly as Debbie is a member of HKVCA, Ontario Region who lives in Ottawa. Debbie made us feel very welcome and did a superb job of organizing the Resource Fair.

Knowing that items to be made available to the delegates could not be sold, and knowing how important it was to give teachers the opportunity to come into contact with the Ten Lessons, an appeal was made to the Board of Directors of HKVCA to sponsor supplying complimentary copies to the 85 delegates. We were delighted to learn that the Board supported our request and that all 85 delegates would be able to get copies without charge. For this gesture, we thank all of the members of the Board of Directors. Be assured that the delegates were just delighted, and our contact with them became much more meaningful.

In addition to the Board of Directors, may we thank Ted Terry and Ian Doull, both HKVCA members living in Ottawa, and Bernard Turcotte, from Mississauga for their enthusiastic response to the challenge of speaking to all the teachers in both French and English, thereby making sure that the Ten Lessons are being heard about from coast to coast to coast. No exaggeration, as there were delegates present from Inuvik in the north, B.C. in the West and Newfoundland in the east, as well as the various provinces in between.



Ted Terry, Ian Doull, Bernard Turcotte

All of us who participated felt energized by the teachers around us, and labelled the event a great success in helping more Canadians learn about the Battle of Hong Kong, and the Canadian soldiers who fought there.

The Education Committee's next event is the Ontario History and Social Science Teachers Association (OHASSTA) Conference being held in Mississauga on November 9 & 10, 2007. We plan to be in touch with the majority of the 350-400 History teachers expected to be there so as to further spread the word about the Hong Kong story.

Pat Turcotte - Chair, Education Committee

Season's Greetings to one and all!



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To Everyone who contributed to this newsletter - Thank you.