

THE SPIRIT OF THE TORCH

"All generations of the Hong Kong family remember with pride"

Volume 1, Number 1

December, 2001

Regional Director's Welcome

As Regional Director of the Ontario Branch of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association it is a very special privilege to officially welcome all members to our unique association. The members of the Executive Council and I have been looking forward to this opportunity to communicate with everyone in this first edition of the Ontario Regional Newsletter. The two Executive members who have worked so hard on its publication are Pat Turcotte and Lori Smith. Well done, ladies! Members are invited to take part in its continuing success by sending us comments, articles, questions, stories and pictures. All ideas and suggestions are welcome!

We need to begin by making sure that you know who we are as an organization, what we stand for and where we're going. First and foremost, we are the proud sons and daughters (as well as the grandchildren, relatives and friends) whose fathers served their country in the battle for Hong Kong, before the agony of those years spent in the prison camps of Hong Kong and Japan from 1941 to 1945. We are the children whose fathers sacrificed their youth, their dignity, and, in the case of 554 brave Canadian soldiers, their lives, so that we might live in freedom. In November of 1941, 1974 Canadian soldiers arrived in Hong Kong. Today, 250 veterans remain. GOD BLESS YOU ALL.

In 1996, The Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association of Canada came into being at the request of the veterans. It is the first and second generations, you and me, and our children, who must carry the veterans' activities forward. We must be vigilant in every area that affects our veterans, their spouses or widows. Are their needs being met regarding veterans' allowances, disability allowances, and tax assessments? Are they being properly represented in all

HKVCA In Ontario

This association aims to perpetuate the memory of the Hong Kong Veterans of Canada, and to ensure the welfare of the surviving veterans and their spouses, and the widows and their families by:

- Enrolling all of 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
- To orally proclaim 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

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situations where the veteran's voice should be heard?

Remembrance Day Ceremonies provide an excellent opportunity for the Hong Kong Veterans to be given due recognition. Elsewhere in this Newsletter, you'll see that we've begun to make big strides in that area. In terms of where we are going and what we are trying to achieve, we want every Canadian to be aware of what the Hong Kong Veterans sacrificed in order to maintain our freedom. The truth is that our soldiers were ill-trained, ill-advised and ill-equipped. In the face of such circumstances, the courage of the men of the Royal Rifles, the Winnipeg Grenadiers and their Headquarters Unit was without question. This should be brought to the attention of all Canadians. In 1941, our soldiers were burdened not only with the battles they fought, but the hellholes that the P.O.W. camps were, in both Hong Kong and Japan. To this day, the Japanese government has not apologized or compensated our men for this. Part of the mandate of the HKVCA is to ensure that we will never forget, and that Canadians at large will learn not only what the soldiers had to endure on the battle field, but what the veterans have had to endure since they came home. There has been a step in the right direction. In British Columbia, the Grade Nine History Curriculum, as of this last September, includes a Unit involving what happened in Hong Kong during World War II. May this be just the beginning, in our country's search for knowledge about these events. In closing, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of your Executive Council to wish you and your families a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year, for 2002.

Best Regards,

David J. Murray, Regional Director

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Reports from the Area Reps.:

The province has been divided into six Areas, as shown below. Each area has its own Area Rep. to better relate to the people in that section of the province. Between 40 and 50 HKVCA members live within each area, and Reps. are expected to be in contact with those members on a regular basis throughout the year, and to act as a conduit for members' questions, interests and issues related to the organization.

Area Reps will be reporting from their Areas in each of the coming issues. As a start, we'd like to show you who the Area Reps are, and the many different communities involved. The numbers indicate the members and the Veterans in each community.

List of Cities and Towns by Area _

Northern Area : (28) Liana Frechette

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Barwick (1) | 6. Kaministiquia (2) | 11. North Bay (1+1 Vet) |
| 2. Callander (1 Vet) | 7. Keewatin (1 Vet) | 12. Red Lake (2) |
| 3. Emo (1+1 Vet) | 8. Kenora (1) | 13. Sudbury (1 Vet) |
| 4. Espanola (1) | 9. Marathon (1) | 14. Thunder Bay (6+3 Vets) |
| 5. Garson (1 Vet) | 10. New Liskeard (1) | 15. Vermilion Bay (1+1 Vet) |

South West Area: (58) Lori Smith

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Amherstburg (1) | 10. Hamilton (5) | 19. Port Stanley (1) |
| 2. Aylmer West (1 Vet) | 11. Kitchener (2) | 20. Puslinch (2) |
| 3. Beamsville (1) | 12. London (6+8 Vets) | 21. St. Catharines (2+2 Vets) |
| 4. Brantford (1) | 13. Meaford (1) | 22. Sarnia (4) |
| 5. Burlington (1 Vet) | 14. Mitchell (1) | 23. Stratford (2 Vets) |
| 6. Cambridge (1) | 15. Niagara Falls (2+4 vets) | 24. Waterloo (1) |
| 7. Delhi (1) | 16. Orton (1 Vet) | 25. Welland (1 Vet) |
| 8. Grimsby (1 Vet) | 17. Palmerston (1) | 26. Windsor (1) |
| 9. Guelph (1) | 18. Paris (1+ 1 Vet) | |

North East Area: (36) Ron McGuire

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Ashton (1) | 7. Kanata (2) | 13. Ottawa (7+1 Vet) | 19. Spencerville (2) |
| 2. Carleton Place (1) | 8. Kemptville (2+1 Vet) | 14. Oxford Mills (1) | 20. Vanier (2) |
| 3. Consequoy (1) | 9. Merrickville (1) | 15. Perth (1) | |
| 4. Cumberland (1) | 10. Metcalfe (1) | 16. Pembroke (1 Vet) | |
| 5. Gloucester (1) | 11. Nepean (1+1 Vet) | 17. Russell (1) | |
| 6. Greely (1) | 12. Orleans (6) | 18. Smiths Falls (1) | |

Central & South East Area: (50) Leon Sokalski

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Athens (1) | 10. Cornwall (1+1 Vet) | 19. Napanee (1 Vet) |
| 2. Aurora (1) | 11. Cobourg (3) | 20. Newmarket (3) |
| 3. Baltimore (1) | 12. Gravenhurst (1) | 21. Peterborough (1+1 Vet) |
| 4. Bancroft (1 Vet) | 13. Keswick (2 Vets) | 22. Port Hope (1) |
| 5. Barrie (2+2 Vets) | 14. Kincardine (1) | 23. Prescott (1 Vet) |
| 6. Belleville (1 Vet) | 15. Kingston (1+3 Vets) | 24. Queensville (1) |
| 7. Brechin (1 Vet) | 16. Lyn (1) | 25. Shelburne (1) |
| 8. Brockville (6+1 Vet) | 17. Milton (1) | 26. Trenton (6) |
| 9. Cambden East (1) | 18. Mount Albert (1 Vet) | 27. Wilberforce (1) |

Greater Metro Toronto Area: Part One (54) Randall Ross

- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Agincourt (1) | 6. Pickering (2) | 11. West Hill (1 Vet) |
| 2. Ajax (3) | 7. Rexdale (1 Vet) | 12. Weston (1) |
| 3. Bowmanville (1 Vet) | 8. Scarborough (7+1 Vet) | 13. Whitby (2) |
| 4. Courtice (1 Vet) | 9. Thornhill (1 Vet) | 14. Willowdale (1 Vet) |
| 5. Oshawa (4+2 Vets) | 10. Toronto (21+4 Vets) | |

Greater Metro Toronto Area: Part Two: (17) Pat Turcotte

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Brampton (5) | 2. Mississauga (8+ 1 Vet) | 3. Oakville (3) |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------|

The GTA Area, Part Two is undergoing a name change and will expand in the next few weeks. Pat Turcotte has asked Rickie Edey, "Flash" Clayton's daughter, to look after the members in this area. The original plan was to assist Randall

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Ross with his extra-large GTA group, and that part of the plan has been accomplished. The new area will be called "West Central", and will include not only Brampton, Mississauga and Oakville, but a few other locations farther west.

This issue of the Newsletter will feature reports from four of the six Areas:

Liana's Report from Northern Ontario

Hello to all, and a special "hello" to those in Northern Ontario. I hope everyone has heard from me by now. I am actively trying to contact all members and hope to meet with all of you over the next year. I would like to thank those people who have shared conversation and memories with me in my short duration as your representative in the North. I would like to thank my grandfather, Mr. John James, for putting up with the almost daily phone calls and Mrs. Mona Bell, for her memories and the books. Sympathies are extended to her and her family at the passing of her husband, Kenneth Bell Sept. 6, 2001.

I am attempting to put together stories of those people who lived in Northern Ontario prior to and after the war so if anyone has information, it would be greatly appreciated. I am trying to find any family of Pte. Johnny Franckiewicz, WG – his is a story of courage and sadness. After the war, he settled in Fort Frances. While on his honeymoon, he drowned in Clearwater Lake. If anyone has information on Johnny during or after the war, could they please contact me? The local paper is currently attempting to retrieve the story. I am also wondering if anyone has any information on Pte. Paul Luchka, WG.

Wreaths were laid on November 11th in memory of all Hong Kong Vets this year for the first time - in Thunder Bay, Atikokan and Barwick. Thanks to Anne Axent and her son Michael, Marcine James and Bruce James for laying the wreaths. I hope to have more next year.

If you have any questions or information, please feel free to contact me. I may not have the answers at the time, but I will sure try my best to find out.

**Thought: Professionals built the Titanic –
Amateurs built the Arc!**

Liana Frenette Northern Rep.

Ron's Report from North Eastern Ontario:

I have made telephone contacts with all my members but four, and will continue to try to reach the others. I've been fortunate in the Ottawa area to be able to publicize the Hong Kong story with an exhibit at the Nepean Museum, running from November 1st to November 23rd. This is an 8-panel exhibit, and, with the accompanying artifacts, helps record the brave actions of "C" Force during the defense of Hong Kong, and the terrible existence endured by the survivors, as well as post-war difficulties with the government. I feel that this a particularly apt time for such a presentation since this December is the 60th Anniversary of this important episode in Canada's military history.

As a postal historian, I am always interested in photocopies, front and back, of envelopes and postcards related to "C" Force, as well as mail when men were with "Y" or "W" forces. I will be glad to reimburse photocopy and postage costs, and give credit to those concerned, when the data is included in a book a fellow postal historian and I are planning to publish. To get in touch, consult my contact information on page 7 of this Newsletter.

Finally, I am very pleased to report that when the possibility of sponsoring a wreath for Remembrance Day, in honour of the Hong Kong veterans, was mentioned to members in my area, a large number were interested in being involved. Some found that there wasn't quite enough time to arrange for a wreath for this year, and will do so next year instead. It was gratifying to see that there were six new wreaths in communities in the Ottawa area in memory of the Hong Kong Veterans. You will see their names in the list of donors elsewhere in this Newsletter. Many thanks to all of them. The wreaths will be in those communities for many years to come.

I look forward to being in continuing touch with HKVCA members in the North Eastern area of the province.

Little-known fact: The town of Bury, Quebec, population 800, had more enlistments during WWII than any other town in Canada. There were 32, all with the RRC, and all went to Hong Kong.

Ron McGuire North Eastern Rep.

Randall's Report from the GTA Area

It has been a pleasure to meet, and speak, with those people in the GTA area who are members, or would like to be members of the HKVCA. The interest and vibrancy that people, particularly veterans, show when one talks to them is a great testament to their resilience and their ability to make the most of their opportunities. Concern for others, and the need to get to know one another better, is important in our lives, especially for those connected to such an important and dramatic part of our history. The Hong Kong veterans and their families we must always cherish. I hope to meet many more of the members of the Hong Kong family as time goes on.

Randall Ross GTA Area Rep.

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Lori's Report from South Western Ontario

There was a very large turnout for the Remembrance Day service at the outdoor cenotaph in London, Ontario on November 11th. The wreath for HKVCA was laid by Dorothy Sauson, widow of Ray Sauson, RRC, by "Red" Harrington, WG and by Lori Smith, daughter of Harry Atkinson, WG. Dorothy Sauson, Lorraine and Phil Lawless, RRC and Christina and Alfred Babin, RRC purchased the wreath on behalf of HKVCA members in the London area. After the service was over, quite a few children and their parents walked over to "Red" Harrington and asked him questions about his experiences.

After the service, some members of the London HKVCA group met at a local restaurant for lunch. These included Dorothy Sauson, Les and Colleen Sauson, son and daughter-in-law of Ray Sauson, RRC, and "Red" Harrington, WG, as well as Barry Fair, son of Gray Fair, RRC. Ellen Howard, daughter of Jim Irving, RRC, and Doug, Lori and Kelly Smith, son-in-law, daughter and granddaughter of Harry Atkinson, WG, joined them. It was a wonderful sharing of memories, ideas and pictures.

One of the suggestions at that get-together was that all future wreaths for the Ontario HKVCA have www.HKVCA.ca put on the ribbons. This way those with an Internet connection would be encouraged to explore the Hong Kong story even further, learn more about our veterans, and thus help spread the message "Never Forget" even more widely.

Lori Smith **SW Ontario Rep**

The remaining Area Reports will appear in the next Ontario Newsletter, which is set to go to print for June 2002.

Notes from HKVA : Ontario Branch

By John Stroud, RRC

The best place to start for the sake of any new HKVCA members is at the beginning. The Hong Kong Veterans Association of Canada, Ontario Branch, was formed in 1946. Elected in that year were:

President: Charlie Clark
Treasurer: Bob Stager

Vice President: Lew Brown
Entertainment Chair: John Stroud

Secretary: Ray Pellor
Executive Officer: Paul Farrace

Also, in 1946, we began participating in the Warriors' Day Parade at the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto, and we have carried on that tradition all through the years.

In 1948, we were sworn in by the Dominion President of the Canadian Corps Association. We then applied for and received both our National Charter and our Provincial Charter, as Unit 48 of the Canadian Corps Association. In the same year we registered the name of the Hong Kong Veterans Association of Canada.

In 1951, John Stroud was elected President of the Ontario Branch, and continues as President today. In those early years, the design and purchase of the Official Flag of the Association was one of the group's projects. Another was the first National Convention, held in Toronto in August of 1955. At that time, the Warriors' Day Parade coincided with the Convention, and it was a most impressive sight to see 100 Hong Kong Veterans take part in the parade. Wives and families were ticketed onlookers in the stands, and when the parade was over the delegates went on to the Convention.

Early Conventions were held in Quebec, Calgary (including a visit to the Calgary Stampede), Victoria, Edmonton and Winnipeg. The Ontario Branch, in the early years, made representation in Ottawa to the Pacific Pay Standing Committee, and won the fight for Pacific Pay for the Hong Kong Veterans. The Branch was also involved in the fight for free eye care, glasses and other health issues.

John Stroud was National President through 1989 and 1990, but resigned in favour of the Ontario Branch, in order to eliminate the possibility of a conflict-of-interest situation.

There have been many good times over the years, including the annual picnics, which have included trips across to Centre Island, and the Christmas Tree parties held until just a few years ago.

Since you will receive this Newsletter just before Christmas, may I wish you all the best for the Christmas Season. A special God Bless to all Hong Kong Veterans, Wives, Widows and Children.

John Stroud, President,
Ontario Branch, HKVA

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Special Bulletin: Just recently, a special motion was tabled by members of the National HKVCA Board of Directors regarding the status of veterans as regards HKVCA. This is how the motion read in part: "It is desirable that all surviving Hong Kong Veterans be granted a Lifetime Membership in the Hong Kong Veterans Association effective immediately." Needless to say, Board members, and Executives in the Regions right across the country endorsed the motion unanimously. Welcome all!!

Finders Keepers

We are pleased to let members know that we have been able to connect with 266 HKVCA people in Ontario. Our Area Reps have been in touch with many members by phone, but would appreciate having the opportunity to chat with a few more. Some members' numbers have been changed, or just not included with their other member information. We would appreciate it if those listed below let their Area Reps know how to reach them by phone.

North East (Ron) West Central (Rickie)

Sandi Cameron
Madeleine Charron
Mary Patton

Pat Baxter
Central&South East: (Leon)
Ron Clairicoates
Ruth Horswell
Alfred Mills

North (Liana)

Mrs. D. Berry
Morgan Davies
Lynne Howard
Darren Hyatt
Margret Mallery
James Mitchell

Coleman Pollock
Alfred E. Rowen
Joan Anctil
Ronald Beattie
Rena Lucas

South West: (Lori)

Harold Baker
Gary Cyr
Mrs. Frank Ebden
A.P. Gelly
Hazel Martin
Dorothy McColm
Jean Onyette
Harold A. Smith
John H. Smith
Mabel Vanderveen
Mrs. P. Wilmot
Ada Royal

GTA (Randall):

Margaret Bannister
Florence Carter
Melbourne Carter
Gerald Doucette
Gloria Fortune
Janet Henry
Cora Hetwitson
Helen Hunt
Kenneth Inche
Thomas Laflamme
Mrs. Phyllis Lanyon
Allison MacDonald

George MacDonnell
Geoffrey Marston
Steve Martin
Clara Matchett
Clifford McDavid
Mary McGregor
Margaret Ostroski
Irene Pelletier
John D. Pollock
Evelyn St. John
Dorothy Varley

Do be in touch with your Area Rep! He or she is your contact to the Newsletter,
and to the other members of the Ontario HKVCA!

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Profiles Of Our Ontario Veterans:

Each issue of the Newsletter will feature a profile of at least one veteran from the various areas of the province. We'll want to get a picture of his early life, as well as his years back home after Hong Kong. All the better to get to know our veterans better! Here is our first candidate.

Leo Berard, WG

Leo Berard, Winnipeg Grenadier, was born in St. Anne des Chenes, a small French-speaking community about 28 miles South East of Winnipeg in 1915. In his early years he lived with his grandparents, going to school in French until Grade 6. When he moved into Winnipeg to be with his parents he went to Public School to continue his education, and, by Grade 10, had begun to be more comfortable in English. When he decided to join the service in 1933, his grandparents weren't very happy. They didn't really want him to wear a uniform, remembering, as they did, the crisis in Quebec over conscription in World War I, but, in 1933, jobs were scarce, and when they learned that Leo was being sent on courses, and being paid in the process, their minds were eased somewhat.

Early on, Leo became an Assistant Instructor at Camp Borden. He was able to work in both French and English, which made for a really busy time. It looked like he might be sent with PPCLI's to England, since he almost made the cutoff for his height. Soldiers had to be 5'4" tall, and he was 5'3 ¾", but instead, he was urged by a Colonel in the Winnipeg Grenadiers, not to transfer, and, before he knew it, he was on his way to Hong Kong.

Once in prison camp, Leo spent one year in Hong Kong and then, in 1943, he was moved to Kawasaki in Japan. After 2 ½ years there, he was moved again, this time to the coal mines at Sendai. Whispering campaigns had begun to hint at a huge bomb having been dropped by the Americans. The POWs were only 90 miles from Hiroshima. It wasn't long after that the Japanese guards lined the prisoners up, told them to salute, and when they did, returned the salute, and said "Banzai" to indicate that the war had been won by the Allies. After a few tense days, when the POWs weren't really being guarded, but were still not completely free, the Americans arrived, and flew the prisoners out to return to North America.

Having survived the war, Leo returned to Canada. After convalescing in hospital, he made the

decision to stay with life in the military. For the next 16 years he was with the PPCLI's, starting in 1946. He even had a stint in the Korean War, coming back in 1953, after the treaty was signed. Once back home, he returned to Camp Borden.

One thing Leo had never forgotten about his Hong Kong experience was that Maj. General Maltby, China Command, had written that Canadians were cowards in fighting the battle of Hong Kong. He went to England in 1991, with a good friend who had been with the Strathconas, visiting a number of institutions to lay a complaint about Maltby's comment, but no one would listen. It was the wife of Lieut. A.S. Black ,WG who later sued, and won, so that the book Maltby had written was taken off the shelves. Leo didn't speak about the time spent in Hong Kong for many years after he came home, but the comment by Maltby played no small part in getting him to write a book in 1993, titled "17 Days Until Christmas", about the Hong Kong experience. At this point in time, he is not hesitant to speak out against the atrocities that were perpetrated by the Japanese in the POW camps, and he is currently giving lectures to new recruits, and other interested groups. He feels it is important that people understand what really happened there, in order to make sure such terrible things don't happen again.

As for his personal life, Leo was married in 1935 to his lifelong companion, Helen, who died 3 ½ years ago. They had been married 64 years. He has a son, a Major with the Canadian Air Force, who was stationed in France until he retired, a daughter, married and living in the Toronto area, and another daughter in California. He is proud to say that he has 8 grandchildren, and 7 great grandchildren. As if this weren't enough to be proud of at this stage in his life, he says that he's "the luckiest Canadian alive" because he and a very fine lady by the name of Mary Marx, will be married in California on December 8th of this year, the date, he mentions wryly, that the Japanese first bombed Hong Kong in 1941, sixty years ago.

The Hong Kong Veterans' Ladies: Their Side of the Story

This column will feature interviews with the wives and widows of the veterans, and/or stories they would like to tell, everything from their early years, to the war years and the years that followed the war. One of the logical places to start would be with the Ladies' Auxiliary. This group has been active through all of the war years, to the present time.

We encourage any of the ladies, whether in the Auxiliary or not, to send in material that we can publish. We are also interested in developing a "Where Are They Now" column. If there is someone you've been trying to locate, let us know, and we'll publish the information. We'll research that person, but some of our readers may be able to help. Just use the contact address for Pat Turcotte on page 7 of the Newsletter.

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A Veteran's Visits to the Schools (and other Venues): "Flash" Clayton, RRC

Many years ago, when I was Zone Colour Sergeant at the Legion, I began to go to the schools right here in the Brechin area. Since then I've been involved many times. This is how it works.

Foley Separate School is right next door to the Legion, and Brechin Public School is on the same concession, ¼ mile away. The schools are invited to attend our service right in the Legion. We have a Pipe Band which goes right to the farther school, which is the Public School, and the students form up and march with us. On the way, we stop at the Separate School and they fall in. When we get to the Legion, we then have our Legion service outside, where the cenotaph is, right in front of the building. The service includes the wreath laying, anthems and the Last Post. If the weather is inclement, everything is done inside the Legion itself. After the service, we all go into the Legion and the different classes present the poems, songs or other items that they have prepared. Last year we veterans had to line up, and the students presented each of us with a homemade Silver Cross. It was a very impressive moment.

We have two outside schools in Ramara Township. We go to those schools at 9 AM on the same day that we visit the other schools. We have a ceremony for all the students and the dignitaries. Each student at the school receives a poppy. We take our colours, take part in the service and say a few words. This year we will do this on November 9th, and then, of course, we have a service on November 11th. I must say that all the services we have are well-attended by the local people. Then, on the 10th, I have been asked to be one of three speakers at the old Bolsover School, and will attend with my wife, Jessie. On November 11th, I'll be attending the service at the Legion in Whitby, this having been arranged by David Murray, the President of HKVCA in the Ontario Region. The Whitby Legion is very pleased to have us. I will carry the Hong Kong flag, and, hopefully, David's mother, Audrey, along with Jessie, will lay the Hong Kong wreath.

Three years ago, Jess and I spoke at Notre Dame High School in Scarborough. There were about 1200 young ladies there. We talked about different things – the fact that it was really hard to see men you had known really well, after training together, die violently in battle, that those soldiers who came home tended to die young, and that those who survived had no pensions for a long time, and had to fight long and hard to get pensions at all. After we had finished, there was a question and answer period. One young lady in the balcony asked if I would fight for Canada again, knowing now about all the difficulties the veterans faced after

coming home. My answer, that I still think of Canada as a great country well worth fighting for, brought a loud, enthusiastic response. What a reception! I was never so proud to be a Canadian.

Just recently I was asked to speak at a school in Baysville, not far from Bracebridge. I explained that I was already involved in another situation on the day that they had requested. They called back to say that they would be happy to have me go there on Monday, November 12th. I told them that I would go. Being able to talk to students is always very special. I look at the young faces in front of me, and don't hesitate to tell them that they should be happy that they don't have to worry about going to war.

About two months ago, the third portion of the TV series, "The Valour and the Horror", called "Savage Christmas in Hong Kong", was shown in our Legion on a Sunday afternoon. It was none of my doing, but the Legion came to me and asked me if I would come. They set up for 80 and 120 showed up. As the one Hong Kong veteran in the area, I spoke, and answered questions. There were many tears, and at the end of the get-together, a standing ovation. There was a lot of controversy about that TV series. The one thing that pleased me was that none of the Hong Kong veterans themselves were unhappy with the Hong Kong segment of the show.

One other thing happened just recently. I got a parcel with a covering letter from a teacher at Vanier High School in Courtenay, B.C. His Grade Eleven students had all watched "The Valour and the Horror", and had sent a total of 29 letters to me to let me know their response to that program. The letters were all there in the parcel, and, as you can imagine, they were very moving to read.

What I find at this point in time is that every year the feeling for the history of our veterans seems to get stronger. Perhaps through more understanding of the horrors of war, the youth of these next generations will be inspired to help avoid war in the future.

**Bob "Flash" Clayton
and his wife, Jessie, live near
Lake Simcoe**

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Projects of the Ontario Region of HKVCA:

- ✓ Our projects this year have been two-fold. The first, and most labour-intensive has been the Newsletter itself, and we hope you are pleased with that.
- ✓ Our second is the plan whereby we are trying to make certain that the public is more aware of the Hong Kong Veterans' sacrifices in the Second World War and the importance of their place in the history of this country. To that end we have made arrangements with some of our members to sponsor wreaths in their own community so that the Hong Kong Veterans are honoured there.
- ✓ If any of the members have suggestions about other projects we can undertake, please let us know.

A Listing of Those Sponsoring and Presenting Wreaths in 2001:

This year a very informal request was made of several HKVCA members to consider donating a wreath in their own community for Remembrance Day. It would honour the Hong Kong Veterans on behalf of these individuals and HKVCA. This was one way the Ontario Executive of HKVCA felt that we could draw the public's attention to the important role of the Hong Kong veterans in World War II.

Those who were approached were only too willing to make that donation, and we have listed their names below, as well as the communities where the wreaths were presented. These wreaths will be used for many years in those communities, and will be a continuing reminder of the importance of the Hong Kong Veterans' story.

The intent of the Ontario Executive is to sponsor one wreath in each of the six areas of the province each year, as funds will allow, so that more and more communities will have those wreaths. For this reason, we urge those who would like to be involved in such a cause to feel free to send along a donation any time, and it will be put towards that Wreath Fund exclusively. Just stipulate that your contribution is to go to the "Spirit of the Torch" Wreath Fund.

Wreath Sponsors for 2001:

Sponsors/Wreath-layers:

Community:

Veteran:

| | | |
|---|------------------|--|
| 1. Doug Auld & family | Oakville, ON | George Auld, WG |
| 2. Mrs. Anne & Michael Axent | Thunder Bay, ON | All HK veterans |
| 3. Alfred & Mrs. Babin, Phil & Mrs. Lawless, Dorothy Sauson, Wallace (Red) Harrington | London, ON | All HK Veterans |
| 4. Wendy Campbell | Meaford, ON | Howard Naylor, RRC |
| 5. Joanne Carroll | Prescott, ON | Walter Parkes, RRC |
| 6. Gray Fair | Stratford, ON | All HK Veterans |
| 7. Leisa Connelly & Michelle Fleming | Orleans, ON | Roger Cyr, RRC |
| 8. Freda Findlay & family & Pat Turcotte | Port Credit, ON | Lorne Findlay, RRC Leonard Corrigan, WG |
| 9. Natalie Gibb-Carsley & family | Perth, ON | John Crawford, RCAMC |
| 10. Joy Hodgkinson & Alana MacDonald | Beckwith, ON | R.W. Queen-Hughes, WG & Alvin L. Guy, WG |
| 11. Marcine James (Mrs. John James) | Barwick, ON | All HK veterans |
| 12. Bruce James | Atikokan, ON | All HK veterans |
| 13. Stanley Wasenba | Smiths Falls, ON | Earl Lasenba, RRC |
| 14. Ron McGuire | Westboro, ON | All HK veterans |
| 15. Audrey Murray, Dave Murray & family and "Flash" and Jessie Clayton | Whitby, ON | Matthew Murray, RRC & All HK Veterans |
| 16. Shelagh Purcell & Kay Mann | Cobourg, ON | Glenford Mann, RRC & Leonard Corrigan, WG |

Note: Ken Ewing, RRC, assisted by Derrill Henderson, National President of HKVCA, laid the Hong Kong wreath at the National War Memorial in Ottawa on Nov. 11th.

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Special donations:

A number of members have elected to make special donations to the Hong Kong Commemorative Association's Ontario Region, and we do thank them most heartily! We are happy to mention their names below, and invite other members to join them.

Carl Adams, RRC
A.J.Babin, RRC
Austin Batley, RRC
Mrs. Fred Chapman
"Flash" Clayton, RRC
Fred Cooper, RRC
Elmer Denison, RRC
Rickie Edey
Ken Ewing, RRC
Jim Fleming, RRC

Leila Grieves
David Golden, WG
Thomas Jones, RRC
Beryl Kaine
Eric Maloney, RRC
Eileen Masson
Ken Pifher, RRC
Raymond Smith, RRC
Grant Wood
Bert Worthington, RN

The Voices of Younger Generations:

This column will consist of articles and dialogue among all the generations of the Hong Kong family. This could mean responses of the children, or grandchildren, or friends, who actually have had a chance to visit Hong Kong—particularly those who went on the pilgrimage in 2000. It could also mean those who have managed to attend Conventions, or other get-togethers. We hope there will be questions from one generation to another. The thoughts of both younger and older generations are what we are after. Be a part of the dialogue!

Youth Column

We'd like to see the young members of our Association submit stories about their favorite veterans to our Newsletter, and perhaps also to look at doing so as part of The Memory Project on the Net. Their Web address is: www.thememoryproject.com

- Go to "Peace and War"
- Then to "Veterans' Archives"
- Follow directions to contribute a story.

For more web browsing, here is another way to reach this site, try: www.vac-acc.gc.ca

Get pro-active!

A Granddaughter at the Winnipeg Convention in August

The National Convention in Winnipeg last August 15th to 19th, was a real treat for me. It was nice to see so many veterans and their wives, as

well as widows and family members. Everyone seemed to have such a good time, and it really was like one large family. The ceremonies were very moving, especially the one where the responsibilities of the Veterans were transferred to the members of the Commemorative Association. The banquet was a huge success, with lots of time for people to visit as well as enjoying a really good meal. Many thanks to all the people who organized

the event. Everything was well taken care of. Also, thanks to all those who lent the artifacts and photos for viewing. I have pictures of vets and widows that were there, and, if anyone is interested, I can make copies and send them to them. Besides these, I have pictures of the group in Hong Kong and Japan last fall – Vets, the entire group, and Veterans Affairs. If any one wants pictures of either event, please let me know.

*Liana Frenette, Northern Ontario Rep.
(and granddaughter of John James, WG)*

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Winnipeg Convention

You have all read accounts of the Winnipeg Convention, in the National Newsletter and articles here, about the wonderful time had by all those who attended. It will certainly be remembered as a "family affair", especially when you have fathers and daughters like those shown in the pictures below.

Pam Newhouse & father, Arthur Pifher

Betty Nickerson & father, Gordon Hutchinson

National HKVCA Election results

The following have been elected to the National Executive Committee of the Board.

- President: _____ Carol Hadley
- Vice-President: _____ Neil Darrah
- 2nd Vice-President: _____ David Murray
- Treasurer: _____ Mitzi Ross
- Secretary: _____ Leisa Connelly

Congratulations, one and all!

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Items of Interest:

- Hong Kong crests, badges, albums and books are available through the Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association (National Office) at Suite #164, 1 Stafford Road, Nepean, ON K2H 1B9
- Hong Kong pins, decals and sweatshirts are available from the Manitoba office of HKVCA at HKVA & HKVCA, Manitoba Region, Box 381, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2H6

Note: All Paid-up members of Ontario HKVCA, including all veterans and widows have received in this mailing, a free decal of the HKVCA Association. Anyone else wishing to have one, may do so - ***on our receipt of their membership dues!***

Editor's Notebook: The Intent of the HKVCA Newsletter

We're planning to make the HKVCA Ontario Regional Newsletter as relevant as we possibly can. This newsletter is intended for all those in the "Hong Kong family".

- If you have messages for, or want to connect with others in that family, we'll give you the opportunity here.
- We also encourage contributions from members in the form of anecdotes, articles, questions and criticisms.
- Send Letters to the Editor in care of Lori Smith between now and March 1/02 as Pat Turcotte will be away during this period. Contact numbers for Lori, and all others on the Executive Council, are listed on this page of the newsletter.
- Thanks to all the members of the Executive, and the members at large, who assisted in the preparation of this Newsletter.
- The members of the Executive Council urge you to get in touch, to make this Newsletter a reflection of what's happening in the Hong Kong family all around the province.
- The more you participate in the process, the more interesting and relevant a Newsletter we'll have. The Newsletter belongs to everyone. Let us help you keep informed!

Urge other members of your family to make use of the Membership Application Form in this

Newsletter so that we will indeed "Pass The Torch"!

Best wishes for the Christmas Season!

Pat Turcotte, Regional Secretary

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