



WASURERU-NAI "Never Forget"



National Newsletter of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association Autumn 2020 Edition

Editor: *Jim Trick*

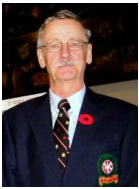
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VJ Day - 75th Anniversary Events



Jim Trick

Our theme for this edition is a retrospective of the various commemorative events that took place across Canada on August 15. Our President, Mike Babin, asked that we all commemorate this significant day by visiting a local cenotaph, veterans' section of a cemetery, or take part in other activities.

We have been overwhelmed with photos and, due to space limitations, we've had to limit those included in this newsletter. There are more photos on our Facebook page and in our Photo Gallery along with write-ups in the Region Reports in this issue.

Below is a small sampling of the photos and comments we've received from our members marking VJ Day. Austen Cambon's narrative about his experience at the Oakville Cenotaph is especially compelling and appropriate, as he responds to questions regarding his family's service and experiences. In one of many instances, the Ewing family gathered on this day to remember not only Ken Ewing (RRC), but all Hong Kong veterans.

I arrived at the Oakville Cenotaph early to take photos of the flags flying in the wind on a beautiful sunny morning. My purpose was to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day, the end of World War II, and "Liberation Day", the most special day of all for the survivors of the Battle of Hong Kong. They had spent just over 44 months in horrific conditions in Japanese POW camps in Hong Kong and in Japan. This day continues to be commemorated every

year by the survivors and by the families of all those brave Canadians who fought in the Battle of Hong Kong in December, 1941, including my late brother, Ken.



I sensed that I might be alone at this Cenotaph on this very important day in Canada's military history, and I was, until Amanda came walking by and saw me taking photos. She asked if she could help. This delightful young lady not only very willingly took the photos I wanted, but listened patiently while I told her the reasons for my being there that day.

Amanda admitted to not knowing enough about the various wars I spoke about. She seemed to be genuinely interested in my family's service to our country. She had to leave, but said that she hoped that I would still be at

the Cenotaph later on, so that she could bring her children to meet me.

I stayed, and she came back with her husband and their lovely daughters, aged 11 and 14. The youngest child asked me why there had to be wars. I did my best to explain why. She hopes to become a Veterinarian. I have no doubt that she will achieve her goal.

I feel very honoured to have met this fine young family whose Mom wanted them to meet me, an old soldier.

Perhaps they are typical of so many such families these days, with the parents working from home for now, but with uncertain futures as to employment, and with children heading back to school, potentially into harm's way, all because of the Pandemic. As we pass the torch in these troubled times, my meeting Amanda and her family encourages me to believe it will be held high and in strong hands.

Good luck to them.

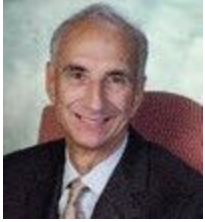
Austen E. Cambon, Lieut. (Ret'd), 3 RCHA, Divisional Artillery
1st Commonwealth Division, United Nations Force, Korea
Brother of the late DR. KEN CAMBON, RRC. Quebec

(Photo courtesy of Amanda)



Left to right. Back row - Tom Ewing, Steve Ewing - sons, Front row - Susan Ewing - widow, Marilyn Ewing - daughter in law and Tom's wife.

President's Message



Mike Babin

It was very gratifying to see that so many of you took the time to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VJ Day, and the release of Canada's POW's. There were incredibly well-organized events in Lethbridge,

Winnipeg, Cobourg, ON and Ottawa, among others. Many other smaller, informal commemorations also were held across the country. Our Hong Kong Veterans would have been so proud and pleased to be honoured in this way! You can read about many of these in this expanded edition of our newsletter.

The Book of Remembrance, which has been discussed in previous newsletters, has been printed and distributed to military museums and other venues across Canada. Gerry Tuppert of BC (son of Rfm. William Tuppert RRC) has done an amazing job of producing the Book and placing it. And we were successful in obtaining a grant from Veterans Affairs Canada which covered all but a small amount of the costs. Elsewhere in this newsletter you'll find a list of the locations of the Book. Please make a point of visiting the one nearest you!

We were forced to postpone our national convention to August of next year because of COVID-19. In the last newsletter, I reported that Mitzi Ross has had to withdraw from her HKVCA activities for health reasons. Among her other duties, Mitzi was our convention planning leader. I am pleased to advise you that Gail Angel has volunteered to take on this important responsibility, and we can look forward to updates from Gail in future newsletters. Thanks, Gail!

We had planned for our Annual General Meeting to be held in conjunction with the convention in Ottawa. We opted instead to conduct it via teleconference. This was the first time we've held the AGM this way, and it was a success. Attendance was low, but at least all members across the country did have the opportunity to listen in and participate using a technology that we all are familiar with: the telephone. We will consider using the same format in future. The [draft minutes of the AGM](#) are posted on our website.

I reported in the last newsletter on the results of our elections for the Board of Directors. The new Board was approved at the AGM. The Board has elected its Officers for the upcoming year, and they are: Barry Mitchell – Treasurer; Lucette Mailloux – Secretary; Mark Purcell – Vice-President; and Mike Babin – President.

I expect that some of you are wondering about the status of our project to create some parking spaces adjacent to the Memorial Wall. At the moment it is on hold. The initial cost estimates we received were under \$100,000, but as we moved further ahead those costs escalated to more than \$150,000! Although we had been successful in raising some funds, including a grant from VAC and several generous donations from the estates of deceased Veterans, the Board decided that this dramatic increase in cost made the project unaffordable, and so shelved the project for the moment. In the meantime, we are continuing to search for more donations and grants to pay for the project, and to find ways to reduce the costs so that we can move ahead with it once again. Rest assured that all donations which were earmarked for this project, are being held in anticipation of a restart of the project and will not be used for any other purpose. You are welcome to add to our Memorial Wall parking fund by sending a donation to our Treasurer, Barry Mitchell, or through the [CanadaHelps](#) web site.

Over the last year, sharp-eyed visitors to the Memorial Wall in Ottawa have reported a few errors in the engraved names which have gone undetected up to now. Derrill Henderson has worked with a firm in Ottawa to have those corrected, and I'm pleased to report that the work is now completed. Thanks, Derrill!

As our children and grandchildren head back to school, we must all remain dedicated in our efforts to contain the virus. Please continue to wear your mask, physically distance, and wash your hands. We are all in this together!

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

In Remembrance



Last Post

Lloyd Seaward - Lloyd was a sailor whose ship was sunk by the Nazis. Their vessel was badly damaged and stopped in Japan for repairs. Japan demanded all crew off the ship and as such, being a Canadian, he was imprisoned with our 'C' Force members. Being made a POW by Japan, he was invited to join the HKVA along with two other navy men. (Submitted by Derrill Henderson)

VJ Day 1945 AND BIG FRIENDS

By George S. MacDonell

AUGUST 15, 2020

The Time: 12 noon on 15 August 1945

The Place: Ohasi Prison Camp in the mountains of Northern Japan

The Situation: Emperor Hirohito of Japan, had just announced to the people of Japan by Radio that Japan had surrendered unconditionally to the Allied Powers – the war was over!



OHASI POW Camp, c 17 August 1945 (Courtesy US Marines)

To those of us at Ohasi, who had been Prisoners of War for nearly four years, our first reaction was that we were free.

Now in negotiations with the Japanese Camp Commander we needed to immediately learn what being “free” isolated in Northern Japan meant. What did freedom mean to the 150

In Memoriam

Irene Dallain, widow of Jean Paul Dallain RRC E30264 passed away at the age of 98 on August 27, 2020.

Susan MacDonell, daughter of Hong Kong veteran George MacDonell, passed away on July 8, 2020 (obituary).

Ross Speller, son of Lionel Speller, MM, RCCS, passed away on May 12, 2020.

POWs in the camp including 68 Canadians? We may have won the war, but we were by no means free or out of danger with the Japanese military still in command.

We immediately began negotiations with our Japanese Camp Commander. What made these negotiations both dangerous and difficult, were several factors. The first was the Japanese Military code of “Bushido”, which demanded a Japanese Officer die fighting or commit Seppuku rather than accept defeat.

Secondly we knew our Camp Commandant, Lieutenant Zenishi, had written orders to kill his prisoners “by any means at his disposal” if their rescue by any Allied forces seemed imminent. And thirdly, we knew that within a deep deserted mine shaft at the mine and some dynamite, he could easily dispose of all of us under thousands of tons of rock without a trace for eternity.

How would this Japanese officer accept defeat and surrender, and would he obey his Emperor or not? We were soon to find out.

We were in a serious predicament, isolated in the mountains of Japan, with no access to a railway or a travelled highway, with no transportation of any kind and unable to speak the language.

We knew that the Allied command was not aware of a POW camp in this remote location and we had no idea of how to acquaint them with our location or of our existence.

We had no legal standing, we had no money, and we had no agreement that we could even remain in the camp.

Locked in the mountains, we were nowhere near a Japanese residential area, but there was a very small village located about a mile away.

Because of the devastating American bombing of the past six months, Japan and its cities were reduced to rubble, its institutions were in chaos, and millions of Japanese in urban centers were both homeless and starving.

We had no guarantee of a food supply, our men after years were already close to starvation, and in the camp we had food supplies, such as they were, for 3 days.

The victorious American forces were nowhere in sight and still had not landed in Japan. Despite the fact that our Japanese Camp Commander was angry, felt dishonoured, and humiliated, he appeared to be willing to negotiate our status.

After some stressful hours we reached an agreement:

1. The Japanese guard and all their weapons would be dismissed from the camp.
2. The Kempitai, the much feared Military Police of the Japanese Army, would provide temporary Camp security.
3. We could temporarily occupy and live behind the walls of the camp.
4. The Camp Commander would stay in the camp in his office with us for an indefinite period.

With these understandings underway we still had a massive problem. We had an urgent need to find food for our men and at the same time try to save those near death.

Despite the risk, we decided we must find a way to feed our men. With trepidation, we looted the Japanese stores in the camp for boots, clothing, soap, leather belts, umbrellas and a host of smaller items. We then sent out two teams of five men each, under a Sergeant, to see if we could barter our items for food with the local peasants. We feared this could provoke a dangerous backlash.

To our delight, the Japanese farmers were not hostile, and were happy to exchange food for our items. But the result of these daily excursions were not enough to feed the camp.

While this was going on, we realized a secret radio we had been operating in the camp, might be our key to rescue. By careful monitoring of our receiving set tuned into Tokyo, we were informed that the Americans were going to conduct a grid search of the islands of Japan for prison camps from the air. We followed the broadcast instructions and immediately painted P.O.W. in eight foot letters in white paint on the roof of our biggest hut. This appeared to be our only hope – but could they find us in this isolated area of Japan buried in the mountains?

Two days later, at about 8 a.m., with all of our food gone, we heard a murmur from the sea.

In a few minutes the murmur increased to a distant throb of a single engined airplane flying at about 3000 feet.

Corsair Aircraft from USS John Hancock, c 17 August 1945

Then suddenly we could see him high above us – a little blue



navy fighter plane with the white stars of the U.S. Navy painted on its wings and fuselage.

He was east of us and as he proceeded, his engine noise began to fade – he had missed us. Please, God, let him see our camp!

Then all of a sudden the fading engine sound changed its pitch and we heard the roar of a fighter engine in a dive.

Around the adjacent mountain he came, and then down the centre of the valley where the camp lay with his engine bellowing wide open. At 100 feet, he flew over the centre of the camp.

The camp went wild! Our prayers were answered. Contact at last – now maybe we had a chance!

He gained altitude to about 7000 feet, and he circled above us – we assumed he was radioing our location to his base.

Then once again around the mountain he came, to fly over the centre of the camp with his canopy back, his wheels down and flying as slowly as he dared, he threw out a silver tin box on a long streamer that landed in the centre of the camp.

In the box were fluorescent strips of cloth and a handwritten note. The note read “Lieutenant Claude Newton (Junior Grade), USS Carrier John Hancock. Reported location.”

The written instructions for the cloth strips were simple:

“If you want Medicine, put out M”

“If you want Food, put out F”

“If you want Support, put out S”

We put out “F” and “M”.

Once more he flew over the camp to read our signals on the ground and wagging his wings, he headed straight out to sea to his floating home – The Carrier John Hancock.



USS John Hancock, c 17 August 1945 (Courtesy USS Hancock Society)

We were joyous beyond belief and also stunned – now what’s

going to happen? Was that all? What’s next?

Seven hours later, at about 3 p.m. that afternoon, 14 airplanes approached the camp from the sea. They were blue with white stars on their wings. While still flown from the Aircraft Carrier Hancock, these were much larger carrier planes called Torpedo Bombers.

They each made two parachute cargo drops in the center of the camp and left us with a ton or more of food and medicine. There was a wide range of items in these supplies from powdered eggs to tins of pork and beans and there was a large quantity of it.

Some of the medicine was called “Penicillin” with special instructions for its use, since our doctor had never heard of it. This miracle drug and the food came just in time to save our sick. That night we had a feast and a mighty party. Despite the doctor’s warnings, the influx of calories nearly killed us.

Now life has taken a turn for the better. Our men were gaining weight, and the extra food and the new drug was rapidly removing our sick from the life endangered list.

Also we could see a pathway now to rescue and freedom. Command knew of our existence.

Time passed until one sunny morning we had another visitor from the sea. A little blue fighter plane with the familiar white stars on his wings circled the camp and dropped a note. The note read “Goodbye from Hancock and good luck. Big Friends Come Tomorrow.”

The plane then flew over the camp once more wagging his wings as he headed never to return, out to sea to his floating home.

The next day at about 10 a.m., to our amazement, three giant B29 bombers flew in from the sea. Now we knew what “Big Friends” meant, and they were gigantic.

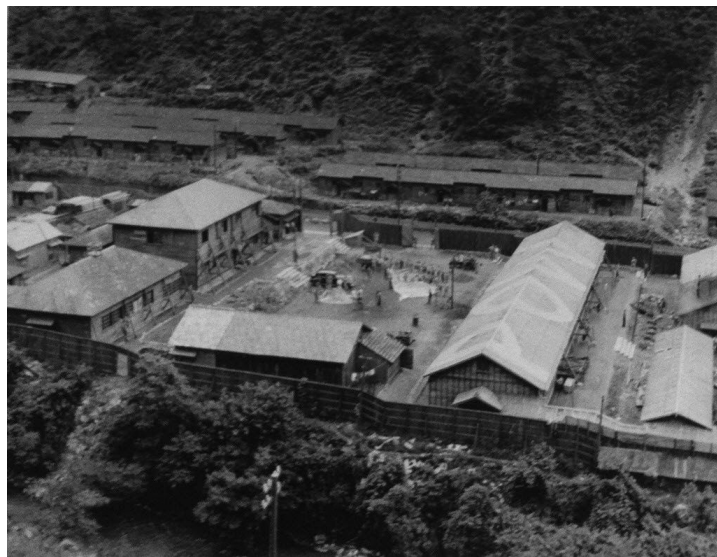
They circled the camp, flew up-wind a couple of miles and at a very low altitude began their run. We saw their giant bomb bay doors open and suddenly a wooden platform – upon which was loaded a number of 60-gallon oil drums – was dropped. To each oil drum was attached a coloured nylon chute, and each was packed with tinned rations and supplies of every kind including new uniforms and footwear. Soon the air was filled with 60-gallon oil drums, swinging leisurely beneath their chutes, coming to earth over an area of a square mile or so. In one pass they dropped several tons of food and supplies of all kinds. In the eyes of the nearby Japanese villagers, we POW’s had gone from starvation and poverty to wealth beyond measure. It soon occurred to us that, since our new found wealth was scattered all over hell’s half acre, we should ask the Japanese civilians in the village to find and bring our oil drums to the camp. They were happy to do this if we let them keep the nylon chutes for their women and some of the food as payment. Our bounty was delivered by our hungry neighbours.

That night, we had another big party, only now everyone was dressed in a new uniform of his choice: Navy, Army, Marine. The next morning, promptly at the same time, three lumbering four-engined giants from the Marianas Islands made their run and again deposited tons of supplies on Ohasi. Again the industrious Japanese dutifully, with much bowing, delivered the aerial bounty to their conquerors. By now the camp was beginning to look like an oil refinery, with unopened 60-gallon oil drums stacked on the square.

The next day dawned bright and clear, but with a high wind blowing from the sea. The bombers appeared on time, but this time when they dropped, some of the parachute lines were snapped in the high winds and the oil drums fell straight down as deadly missiles. Several hit the camp, went through the roofs of the huts, hit the concrete floor of the hut in question and exploded. One such drum was packed with canned peaches, and I can assure you that when it was over, you could not find a surface not smeared with peaches anywhere in that hut! There were several very near-misses of ours and Japanese personnel and several Japanese houses in the nearby village were damaged. On the next drop, the same thing happened and as I was fleeing for safety from the camp to a nearby railroad tunnel, I looked up to see that I was right under a cloud of falling 60-gallon oil drums now free from their parachutes. It was a terrifying moment. Was I to be killed after all? Not by a hated enemy, but by the clumsy kindness of my well-meaning American friends?

Again the camp was hit by drums full of food, clothing and even toothpaste. Something had to be done. We now had tons of food and supplies enough for months, and more was arriving.

Was there no limit to their generosity? The aerial supply chain that had saved us was now a menace. The camp had begun to look as if it had been shelled by artillery. So we immediately painted two words on the roof: NO MORE!



OHASI POW Camp, 15 September 1945 (Courtesy U.S. Marines)

The next day, the big friends came from the Marianas and as we watched with bated breath from the safety of the nearby railroad tunnel, they circled the camp and, without opening their bomb bay doors, flew back out to sea, firing off red rockets. It was great fun while it lasted, but it was getting to be too much of a good thing.

The immediate, organized action to drop so much food, clothing and medicine into the camp was typical of

Americans. When you consider the cost of the delivery system and the amount of aid they provided and the speed with which they delivered it, you can only wonder. This generous and timely response to our needs and to countless other prisoners of the Japanese, saved many lives and it says a great deal about the values of our American allies and the mighty civilized nation that stood behind them. No Canadian, as he gazed in wonder at our American ally's rescue efforts, will ever forget their concern for us and their timely generosity.

Now we settled down to caring for our sick and to some serious eating. We began to gain a pound a day.

At about this time, I decided to go back to the mine where we had worked so long. I especially wanted to say goodbye to my fatherly old foreman of the machine shop who had been kind to me on a personal basis. It was both a joyous and sad meeting between the old man and the departing soldier. We were happy that the war was over and we Canadians could go home and yet we were sad at the knowledge that this would be our last "Sayonara." I promised my old Japanese foreman friend that I would take his earnest advice and return to school as soon as I got home.

"Hancho, you go Canada now." These words of explanation whispered to me on August 15, the day the Emperor spoke, will never be forgotten, nor will the goodwill of the old man who spoke them! I developed no hatred for the people of Japan. Most of them were as kind to us as they could be under the rules of their brutal military dictatorship. The Japanese lost 2,900,000 servicemen and civilians during the war. Millions more were left starving, homeless and wounded.

At every level the war had been an unmitigated disaster for Japan.

The common people of Japan and their loyal soldiers were unwitting cannon fodder for their cruel and evil rulers who forced them to act out their crazy dreams of the military conquest of East Asia and, as usual, it was not just the Chinese, Philippianos and Allied soldiers, but also the common people of Japan who paid the terrible price for the military imperialism of their ruling elite.

We also visited the camp graveyard and sadly said one last goodbye to our comrades who had found their last resting place so far from home. It seemed to me an unjust reward for such brave young men.

On September 14, a naval airplane flew in from the sea and dropped a note to inform us that an American naval task force would enter the nearest harbour to evacuate all prisoners on the following day.

September 15 was a beautiful, clear, warm fall day in Japan. Early in the morning, an American fleet anchored in a nearby harbour. Large tank-landing craft beached themselves and in haste, disgorged a force of Marines and their armoured vehicles. Soon, a motorized column of Marines arrived inland at the Ohasi camp. They were led by a Marine colonel and they were armed to the teeth. These were veterans of the long Pacific campaign. They had survived many terrible encounters with the Japanese in their march across the Pacific and they looked the part. I never saw a more comforting sight. After our captain saluted the colonel, they embraced. The colonel then told us how he planned to evacuate us, and gave specific orders as to how this was to be done. After he issued his orders, he asked, "Are there any questions?" Our captain said, "Yes, I have one. Sir. What in the hell took you so long to get here?" That brought a smile to those tough, weather-beaten faces.

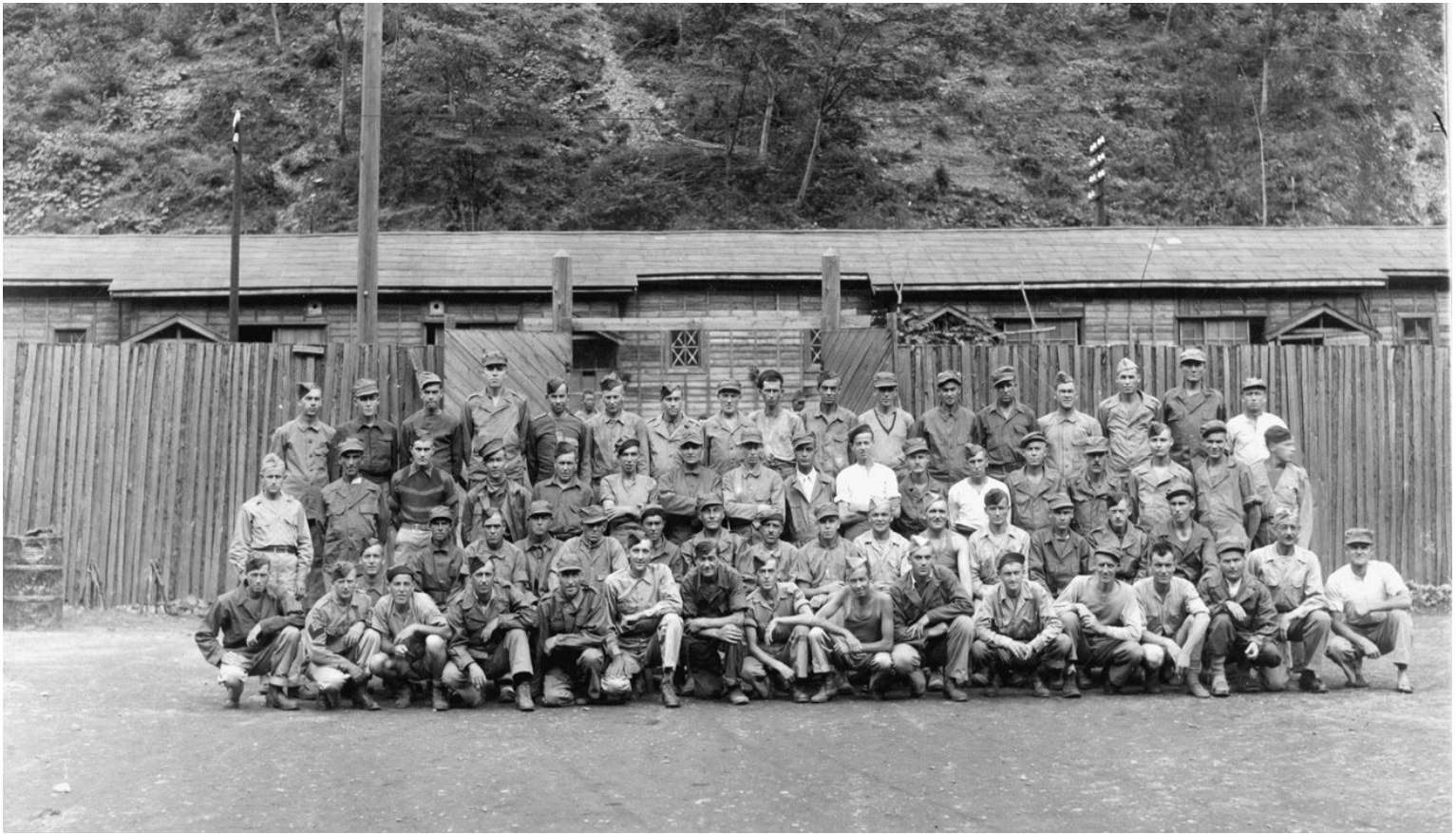
And then we mounted up, said "Sayonara" to Ohasi and after four years, began the glorious journey home to our loved ones.

From the rear of the last vehicle in the departing column, I saw a forlorn figure standing in the centre of the empty camp – it was Camp Commandant Lieutenant Zenichi.

Design & Production

Sue Beard
ORBIT Design Services
647-864-2818
Sue@MissRealEstate.ca

(Camp photo next page)



*OHASI POW Camp 65 Surviving Soldiers of 'C'Force, George MacDonell back row, fourth from left. 15 September 1945
(Courtesy US Marines)*

Sgt Gander Project - Update



J P Bear

Film Update

Well, throughout the last 6 months, as you are all aware, there have been some difficulties for many of us. After having to cancel plans to travel to Ottawa I found myself finding it hard to get to the people I need to so as to get the film produced. I have made some contacts in the Winnipeg area and hopefully I plan on securing some help in getting the production of the film made at least by 2021. I will keep you all apprised of the situation and plan to be in Ottawa in August, 2021.

With that said, I happened across some information that I found was a piece of gold in a stream. And so here is the surprise...

Monument Surprise

Recently I spoke with a young man, Noah Tremblay, who at the age of 11 years learned of SGT. GANDER's story and decided to enter a Heritage and Science Fair. Noah is now 20 and is in his third year in College, he lives in Bass River, Nova Scotia and is the main curator and manager of the "Forgotten



Heroes" Monument at the Bass River Veteran's Memorial Park.

GANDER is keeping watch over the Monument which honors him and all other Service Animals who have served and are serving the Canadian Military, RCMP and Police.

Asked why and how he became involved with this project he mentioned, on Remembrance Day 2010, he was reading a newspaper about GANDER and was intrigued to find that animals are very important to military forces. He found that GANDER was not a trained military service dog, he was just a family pet and mascot.

He learned more about GANDER from the book, "SGT GANDER: A CANADIAN HERO". He also spoke with Lord Lloyd Swick and Bass River Veteran's Memorial Park Director, Karen Ewing, who owned Newfoundland Dogs.

Noah worked on the project originally for a year till its completion and on Canada Day, July 1st, 2012 the "Forgotten Heroes" Memorial was unveiled and dedicated. The monument recognizes animals who served their country in war and peace.



List of Service Animals

The 15th Battalion Memorial Project and the 48th Highlanders of Canada were proud to contribute to Noah's project in memory of Lt. Col. CE Bent, Commanding Officer of the 15th Battalion C.E.F. and the Battalion's two mascots Bruno and Fritz, whose names appear on the memorial. Noah also selected a post WWI photograph of Lt. Col.

Bent, Bruno and Fritz on the Bent family farm in Paradise, N.S. for the cover of the programme for the dedication ceremony.

Since the initial monument was built and dedicated, Noah has been contacted over and over again by various handlers of their own service dogs/animals. He mentioned, since so many more people have contacted him to include their animals, he found

to have more monuments built would be extremely costly, so he opted to have the new honorees have their names placed on benches.

Noah mentioned that he has had to add more than 140 names to the benches, and is dedicated to honor these "Forgotten Heroes"!

He did say, "You know there are Poppies that have 3 colors, White is for Peace, Red is the most common and the one that should be worn on Remembrance Day to honor all Service Men and Women, and Purple is to honor all the animals who have served their country.



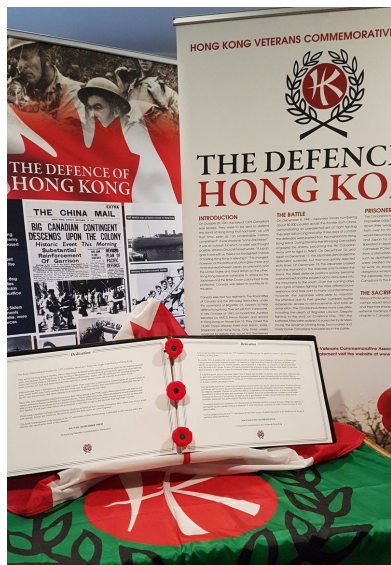
One of the benches that Noah has added to honor more "Forgotten Heroes"

When I asked Noah if he was aware of HKVCA, he said he wasn't, but he thinks of them often when he reads the name, "SGT. GANDER – Royal Rifles of Canada"

God Bless You Noah and Thank You for caring for the "Forgotten Heroes"

Book of Remembrance - Update

Gerry Tuppert



Book of Remembrance on Display

In response to some inquiries I am pleased to provide an update on the status of the books and their locations. All copies sent across the country were accompanied with an introductory letter from our president Mike Babin. The letter provided a short account of the Defence of Hong Kong and the cost in lives lost and of course the aftermath. Recipients were informed of the significance

of the 75th anniversary to our membership and thanked for their participation in publicizing our story by making a copy available for their visitors to peruse.

We acknowledge the following individuals and their staff members for agreeing to display and safe keep our books. Their involvement truly supports our mandate to educate the public about the role of Canadians in the battle of Hong Kong.

Starting on the west coast, I hand-delivered a copy to the Vancouver Island Military Museum in Nanaimo. Vice president, Mr Brian McFadden, who was in the throes of revamping their far east POW display for the 75th anniversary, accepted our book and flag. In appreciation I took the opportunity to donate a Japanese knife my father brought back, and it will become a part of their fine exhibit.

Mr Roland Sawatzky, curator of history at the Manitoba Museum received two copies. One copy will remain in their 'C'Force reference library section and the other will always be accessible as a loaner copy to the prairie membership for commemoration ceremonies.

Mr Jim Doherty, president of the Niagara Military Museum, readily accepted our book even though their facility was COVID closed. It will become an integral part of their 'C'Force - the Hong Kong story exhibit. The ten panel display featured in a previous newsletter by Mr. Eugene Labiuk will be reassembled for the 2021 HKVCA convention in Ottawa. They

will also fly the HKVCA flag at suitable times, and for that we are very appreciative of their commitment.

In London, Ontario Ms. Pat McCallum accepted a copy and will temporarily display it in the lobby of the Parkwood hospital. It will eventually be relocated to an equally prominent location at their new Kiwanis Center when completed.

In Quebec City, Mr Eric Godbout, Director of projects for the newly rebuilt Voltigeur Museum will display the book when they reopen their doors to the public.

Hong Kong Veteran, Phil Doddridge, perusing the Book of Remembrance

Quebec Region Director, Lucette Maillieux Muir will safe keep the book until a more formal arrangement is completed.

In New Richmond, Quebec, the president of the Bay Chaleur Military Museum, Mr. Gordon Dell accepted our book even though the museum is presently COVID closed. He went a step further and drove down the county road to present it to HK veteran Phillip Doddridge, RRC, so Phil could have a gander at it. (pardon the RRC pun)



That was certainly a highlight and as you can see in the picture it's a keeper.

The next stop was at the New Brunswick Military History Museum. Those who attended the 2017 convention there are familiar with their battle of Hong Kong display. Although closed as well, the Executive Director, Ms. Michelle Bissonette, reached out to accept the donation, and will find the most appropriate way to highlight the book with their current display. A very fine tribute to the 200 or so volunteers from this area.

Ms. Katrine Wilkinson, Head Librarian for the Halifax Citadel Museum, received two copies and a flag for their rather large facility. One for their reference library and one for the museum display. Ms. Wilkinson spent several years in Hong Kong and was quite familiar with the 'C' Force story. This high profile and well-attended tourist attraction will most surely help to keep the Hong Kong story in the public eye.

At this point I would also like to thank Veterans Affairs Canada for their timely and generous support of our book project. We are always grateful as an organization to have their backing for our various programs and activities.

We remain as always together in remembrance.

BC Region Report



Gerry Tuppert

This VJ Day was like no other on the books. The great interruption of 2020 impeded large formal gatherings but that did not seem to affect those members determined to commemorate in their own way. Most just

brought family members who were in their so-called bubble and laid a wreath, a poppy or a picture at their place of remembrance.

Those who have participated or have a picture of a VJ Day commemoration in their vicinity are encouraged to send a photo (with caption please) to the webmaster@hkvca.ca.

My sense is people enjoy seeing the membership in an active role right across the country. That has always been the prime indicator of a healthy organization and we are no different.

Thank you to all who have sent material and continue to do so.

I want to send a special end of the summer greetings to our 13 widows here in BC. We know and acknowledge that this pandemic is a serious and especially worrisome time for them and their caregivers. All of the membership send you continued good health and warm wishes.



Victoria, BC: Wreath laid by Horace (Gerry) Gerrard's great-grandsons Alistair and Asher White (photo by Kevin).

It is not unusual for our board of directors to field questions about where members can donate their memorabilia, documents or war mementos. This will always be an ongoing dilemma- what to do with

father's things when you can no longer keep them and no relative wants them.

One idea being discussed is how to create a 'C' Force virtual museum.

Items could be photographed and documents scanned and placed in the virtual museum.

The thinking is everyone could enjoy access to the display content by just clicking away on their computers.

More importantly the history and context of these items can reveal information about your father's experience in the camps.

It will take some investigating to see which museums out there are still interested in acquiring the bricks and mortar donations.

My initial inquiries appear to indicate that they would like everything, but have little to no space to display it. Most seem to be exploding at the seams with WW2 artifacts from Europe, but very little from the Pacific theatre.

This is good feedback for us from the curators, who may want to develop a special far east POW section like the Nanaimo military museum, complete with our HKVCA plaque.

Prairie Prose



Carol Hadley

Greetings from the Prairie Region. I hope you are all healthy and safe as we exercise new protocols in our life to keep ourselves and our families well.

With the changes that the COVID 19 has brought, we have not held any monthly meetings and our plaque presentations are on hold until it is safe to do so.

This information was missed from the previous newsletters so will include it in this article in appreciation of the HKVCA members and the Charleswood Legion members that made the event happen.

On Sunday, December 8, 2019 this iconic date in our history, we were welcomed to Charleswood Legion in Winnipeg, to dedicate a plaque. There were about 30 people who attended in the cold icy weather but the hospitality was warm in the Legion.



The Branch President, Alf Tait welcomed everyone and introduced us to do the Protocol service. The Branch Sgt. at Arms, Gary Parrington, included our Colour Party to open the service. Barry Mitchell read the FEPOW prayer. Allan Hadley, Son-in-law to Borge Agerbak,

WG HK vet and Barry Mitchell, son of Vaughan Mitchell, WG HK vet removed the chairs. The Honour Roll of the men from this area was read.

We were pleased to have Myrna Driedger, MLA for Charleswood, and City Councilman Kevin Kline to remove the drape on the plaque.

So what do you the members think of this 'C'Force virtual museum idea? Please do send us your comments and suggestions. Use the contact form on the HKVCA site and all ideas and opinions will be discussed and a plan can be forged to keep it moving forward.

More to come about this topic later, as it seems like something we can all contribute to and be engaged in some way or another.

Stay safe and may you enjoy a pleasant beginning to your backyard autumn colours.

The Ladies Auxiliary President, Diane Pickering, arranged the refreshments for all to enjoy. Thank you to the Sgt at Arms for the Ladies Auxiliary, Kelly Smeall for preparing the music for the service.



Myrna Driedger, MLA for Charleswood, and City Councilman Kevin Kline

Brochures were placed on tables to inform the attendees

of a brief history of the Battle of Hong Kong. There was an interview with CTV before the service started and the following day there was an interview with the Winnipeg Free Press/Community newspaper representative – with thanks to William Trefry, Public Relations for the Branch, and 1st Vice Spencer Ready.

We had several members attend with our Colour Party (Stan Lopata and Alex Taylor), Marilyn Gelinias (Secretary), Barry Mitchell (Treasurer), Mel Pageot (daughter in law to Leon Pageot, WG HK vet) and of course, my husband/chauffeur Allan.

Now to more current information:

Nationally we continue to hold virtual monthly meetings to deal with corporation business. One item is the Book of Remembrance. This project was completed by Gerry Tuppert of BC Region. There were copies distributed to each region and Prairie Region has our copy in the Manitoba Museum in Winnipeg. It will be part of a Remembrance Month display in November in the Museum.

Winnipeg - VJ Day Ceremonies



We were pleased to have about 40 people attend the Winnipeg, MB service for VJ Day on August 15, 2020 that took place in the Field of Honour at Brookside Cemetery at the Winnipeg Grenadier Memorial stone.

George Peterson, our last Winnipeg Grenadier, Hong Kong veteran, was unable to attend, but he was acknowledged in our ceremony and we felt he was thinking of us. His daughter Pat was going to spend the day with him at Deer Lodge. There were no widows, as most of them are in care homes and cannot

travel, but there were several of our HKVCA members in attendance and some participated in our service. We also had several veteran associations represented and a few carried their Colours with our Colour Party. Our piper, Maureen McFarlane and bugler Daniel Whittaker added to our service.



Jon Reyes, MLA, Military Envoy and Carol Hadley, Prairie Regional Director

Our guest speaker was Mr. Jon Reyes, MLA and Military Envoy for Manitoba, who expressed his appreciation of the efforts of our Canadian military in keeping Canada free.



Mr. Reyes laid a wreath on behalf of the Provincial Government with Armand Lavallee (President of Manitoba Joint Veterans Association) as his escort. Barry Mitchell (son of Vaughan Mitchell, WG HK vet) laid a wreath for the

HKVCA with Wayne Stebbe (son of Larry Stebbe, WG HK vet) as his escort. (see photo)

Padre Paul Lampman, Pastor of St. Luke's Anglican Church gave the opening and closing blessings and Donna Remillard (daughter of Ray Sellers, WG HK vet) gave the Act of Remembrance and Colleen Stebbe (daughter of Larry Stebbe, WG HK vet) gave the FEPOW prayer. Rev Murray Still, (grandson of Joseph Oige WG, KIA), Pastor of St. Stephen and St. Bede attended with his mother Yvonne.

Thank you to Eirik Bardal (grandson of Njall Bardal, WG, HK vet) for the podium and sound system.

The event was recorded for Facebook by Dan James (grandson of John James, WG HK vet) and we had a cameraman from CKY TV News.

Selkirk



Dennis Stewart from Selkirk, MB attended the Selkirk Legion #42 ceremony at their Cenotaph with President John Austin laying the wreath with Sgt. at Arms Brian Wilson. Dennis Stewart in uniform marched in

with the Color Party. Padre Reverend Stephen Sharman gave a nice address relating to the Battle of Hong Kong and mentioning the 'C' Force members from that area. Also, in attendance was the Clandeboye Pipes and Drum Band.

Pilot Mound

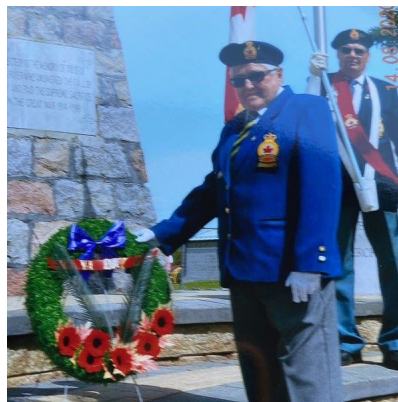
(photo from Sentinel Newspaper)



Gord Arbuckle of Pilot Mound, MB gave the address at the ceremony in the Pilot Mound Memorial Park for the Pilot Mound Legion #62. The ceremony was well attended. Gord talked about the Memorial Wall in Ottawa that has all the names of 'C' Force. He mentioned the members from the Pilot Mound area and the families that were left behind.

Charleswood

The Manitoba Legislature allows us to have the Hong Kong Veterans flag fly in August and December at the Cenotaph on Memorial Blvd in Winnipeg. Charleswood Legion #100 also flew the HK flag on August 15 weekend.



Swan River

Helen Prieston, widow of Riley Prieston in Swan River laid a wreath at the Cenotaph in Swan River on Saturday, August 15, 2020. Colours were carried by Mick Bobbick of the Swan River Legion #39.

Calgary

On Friday, August 14th, Marilyn and Blake Pridgen (Ralph Maclean RRC) and Norma and Glen Fuchs (John Doiron RRC) were invited to an event at the Calgary Military Museum.



Norma Fuchs and Marilyn Pridgen at Calgary Military Museum

It was a celebration of the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day. There were several Burma Veterans attending and they shared their experience in the Pacific

during the Second World War. After the service we viewed the temporary exhibit in their Founders Gallery. “They Never Talked About it: Untold Stories WWII”, details Canada’s wartime involvement across multiple continents and campaigns, through the lens of more than forty personalized stories including recorded oral histories from veterans, artefacts, artworks, and historical accounts. Ralph Maclean’s story is highlighted in the section detailing the Battle of Hong Kong. We could see and hear Ralph speaking of his experience as a POW. This exhibit will be on display until December. We were so proud to see one of our Veterans in this amazing exhibit.

Lethbridge

A ceremony was held on August 15, 2020, at the City of Lethbridge Cenotaph, recognizing the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day. Approximately 60 people attended on what was a very hot day. It was a collaboration of the Lethbridge General Stewart Legion Branch #4, the Blackfoot community, and HKVCA. A Videographer captured the entire ceremony, which was carried on Lethbridge Live, and now on YouTube for anyone who wishes to see it.

It was an honour to have the Blackfoot Elder, 90-year old Charlie Crowchief from the Blood Reserve, offer a “Honour Prayer” in his Blackfoot language, along with a ceremonial “Smudge”. Miss Blackfoot Canada, along with her Princess, assisted with laying of the wreaths. The six-member, Moccasin Flats Drum group, also presented two songs honouring soldiers who fought in the Battle of Hong Kong. We also had three members from the Bridge City Highlanders Pipe Band play.

We were also honoured by the presence of a Korean Vet, an American Veteran and Legion members.

Our thanks to the Lethbridge General Stewart Legion Branch #4, and surrounding communities for their support and participation.



Lethbridge Legion President Michael Cormican, assisted by Ahhsoohpii Princess Emma Mountain Horse, along with Chiara Gurney, Kathie Carlson and Cynthia Melanson lay wreaths at the 75th Anniversary Ceremony at the Lethbridge Cenotaph on August 15, 2020.

Several people inquired about the loud boom heard on the YouTube video, shortly after our ceremony commenced. It was not a one-gun salute. It turned out to be a car accident a short distance away.

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM!

Thank you to all our members that remembered VJ Day in their own way and to those who sent in information on their event.

Postscript

As you can imagine our monthly meetings in this Region (in Winnipeg) have halted as a safety issue. Any dates that were in place for Plaque presentations are on hold until further notice.

We still hope to have the Annual Reunion event at Neil Bardal Centre in October if it is safe to do so. Please keep October 24 for this event and we will send out a notice to confirm the date closer to that time.

Thank you to Kathie Carlson for keeping in touch with the Area reps in Prairie Region and to the Area reps for keeping in touch with the members.

God Bless!

Ontario Offerings



Mark Purcell

August 15th, 2020 was the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day and the day was commemorated across Canada by members of the HKVCA. In

Ontario, we had several large ceremonies and several small ceremonies, as we all came together to remember our Veterans and the sacrifice they made for all of us.

Here are a few snapshots of the various ceremonies in Ontario, with a report from Shelagh Purcell at the end.



Gail Angel visited the Cenotaph in Richmond, Quebec. The memorial on the left lists all the men from the area who didn't come home. Nine of those names are from 'C' Force, including her grandfather, Stewart Henderson.

Memorial Wall - Ottawa

The ceremony at the

HKVCA Memorial started at 9:30 a.m. as the ceremony at the cenotaph was starting at 11 a.m.

The weather cooperated and it was a sunny day. We had 5 members of the Sons of Scotland plus a bugler that played a few tunes before the ceremony. During the ceremony they played the Last Post, and the Rouse. It certainly added to the ceremony having this live music.

There were approximately 30 people that attended. It ended at 10 a.m.



War Memorial - Ottawa



Commemorative Ceremony at 11 a.m. at the War Memorial.

This ceremony was low keyed as well with approximately 100 people in attendance. There were 8 people from HKVCA that attended this ceremony.



North York

Judi Denison Daughter of E.N. Denison (RRC) and Niece of E. E. Denison (RRC) was at the North York cenotaph honouring the Liberation

of Hong Kong in 1945.

Oakville

Austen Cambon, brother of the late Dr. Ken Cambon, Rflmn, (RRC), arrived at the Cenotaph early to take photos of the flags flying in the wind on a beautiful sunny morning. His purpose was to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day. He was joined by Amanda who happened to walk by. She went home to get her daughters, aged 11 and 14, and her husband in order to meet Austen who was able to pass on the history of the significance of the day. Read Austen's narrative in our main article above.

Markham

Larry Lau, RHKR (V) laid a wreath at the Markham Cenotaph and the city flew the flags there at half-mast for the occasion.





Toronto

In Toronto, Mike Babin representing Alfred Babin (RRC), conducted a moving ceremony to an intimate gathering. At 10:50 a.m., a vintage aircraft ... a Lancaster bomber, flew directly overhead. A wonderful recognition from above!

London

There were 12 people in attendance at the Cenotaph in London. Representatives from the City of London and the Royal Canadian Legion were in attendance. Pat McCallum laid the wreath on behalf of all Hong Kong Veterans and Lana Chartrand and Debbie Legg held the Commemorative flag representing the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day.



VJ75 in South Central Ontario

Shelagh Purcell



In Cobourg on August 15th, 2020 - VJ Day - we decided to focus on "The Liberation of Canadian Prisoners of War in Japan and Hong Kong". It was a fitting start, because in the small towns of Cobourg and Port Hope, Ontario, 34 young men became part of the Royal Rifles regiment -

combining with the Winnipeg Grenadiers - heading off for the Pacific war as part of 'C' Force.

Realizing that there would not be an HKVCA convention in Ottawa this year, it was decided to honour the men who left Canada so long ago. We all know the history that followed.

M.C. Mark Purcell, VP HKVCA, grandson of Lt. Leonard Corrigan, WG, began the ceremony with a short outline of that history, adding a greeting from HKVA President Phil Doddridge. Phil reminded us that this was the date the prisoners started a "new life" and listed the five remaining veterans: Philip DODDRIDGE, Hormidas FREDETTE, Eugene LAPOINTE, George MACDONELL, and George PETERSON.

At the laying of the wreath, Pat Turcotte and Shelagh Purcell, living in Ontario, added their father, Lt. Leonard Corrigan, to the veterans being honoured. Three generations from both families took part.

Very special though, was to have the sister of John Dorian, RRC, Lena Quinn and her family lay a wreath in his memory. Mrs. Quinn, at 95 years, was interviewed by Global TV and spoke of her brother's time away, not knowing for years if he was still alive and the terrible conditions he survived.

Wreaths were also added by Ken and Tom Bevan for their father Clarence Bevan, RRC, and Jamie Doolittle, president of Probus Canada.



Turcotte and Purcell Families

Sandra and Taylor Fox then read the names of the 34 veterans from Cobourg and Port Hope - also listed in the printed program.

The Last Post, Lament, Moment of Silence and the Rouse followed. The Act of Remembrance was read by Mark with the Cobourg Legion Pipes and Drums playing 'Battle O'er' to end the ceremony.



Bevan and Dorian Families

Because we wanted this to be a family commemoration, we invited local dignitaries but didn't ask them to speak. We appreciate that they attended. MP Philip

Lawrence, MPP David Piccini, Mayor John Henderson, Cobourg, Mayor Bob Sanderson, Port Hope, Cobourg Legion President Bob Robinson and Port Hope Legion President Andre Labrosse. Mary Ito led the Cobourg Legion Pipes and

Drums and Chris Devlin, trumpet, added greatly to the morning service. The Colour Party of the Cobourg Legion also attended.

Mayor John Henderson was generous in helping this event run smoothly. Our thanks to all on behalf of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association.

Quebec Region Report



Lucette Mailloux Muir

Greetings everyone.

Hope you are all enjoying a wonderful warm summer. As with all of you, in Quebec things have been quiet for the last few months, with all the restrictions on gatherings, travels etc with the Covid-19 situation.



Nephew Stew Ross and great-nephew Kevin Ross of Sgt. Lance Ross of 'D' Company RRC at Burma Star cenotaph in Kingston, Ontario @11:00 on August 15, 2020 for the 75th anniversary of VJ Day.

For the first time, due to the present situation and the rescheduled Convention, the Annual General Meeting was

held on July 7 via teleconference. Congratulations to the 2020-2021 Board of Executives and welcome to our new member Greg Auld. Thank you Mitzi Ross for your great work during the last years and take care.

We are happy to mention that small groups of our members were able to commemorate the 75th anniversary and VJ Day on August 15 by visiting their cemetery or even by just holding very small immediate family gatherings. In New Richmond, QC, Phil was saluted by local veterans, many friends and family members. In Kingston, ON, nephew Stew Ross and his son Kevin honoured Sgt. Lance Ross, 'D' Company, RRC as many others took the time "To Remember" in their respective area. More pictures will be available on the HKVCA Image Gallery.

The Book of Remembrance was also mailed to many Museums and/or Associations. It is very unfortunate that the public will not be able to see the book at this time, as many are still not open to the public, but will be ready when the time comes. Many thanks go to Gerry Tuppert for his great work on this project.

At this time we wish everyone a Wonderful Thanksgiving and beautiful fall.

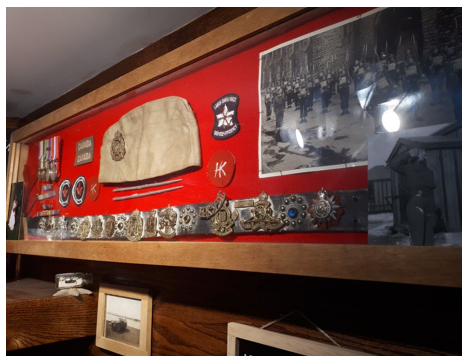
Till next time, Stay Safe and Take Care.

From Our "InBox"



From Walter Willett

Grandpa (Charles Cochrane) had his medals and other items from Hong Kong mounted in the case pictured here, after the war. After his death in 1974, my mother Judy safely stowed the case away and it remained in our home in the Gaspésie for many years. Two years ago, mom allowed me to bring the case to my home in Ottawa. I constructed a bar in the basement, and part of the design incorporated the original case as the centrepiece. The case also has a story.... There is a photo included of Grandpa and Arnold Ross, saluting each other in Gander, NFLD prior to HK. It was Arnold Ross' son in law,



David Sawyer, who built the case so there is a connection between these two HK vets and this case.

Memorabilia and Trophy Belt

Finally... the trophy belt... common among vets who made these sorts of collections exchanging their

regimental pins. It is a very special and unique piece, and we have family photos of him wearing this belt upon his return to New Richmond after the war.

From Robert Cherry



I want to tell you that I knew both Angus Macmillan and Joseph D'Avignon of the Royal Rifles. Angus was my teacher at Quebec High School (QHS) and Joseph worked for my father for many years in Quebec. Angus was not only a good teacher. He was the Chief Instructor of Cadet Corps No.14. He gave many of his

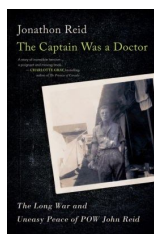
Saturday mornings so that I and my rifle team mates could practise on the range in the basement of QHS. When he learned that I became a Cadet Lt. in 1966, Joseph gave me his Sam Brown. I was proud to wear the Sam Brown of a hero. May their souls rest in peace.

From Graham Hook

There were several soldiers from my hometown, and many from Southern Quebec, deployed under The Royal Rifles of Canada Regiment, who fought in Hong Kong, were captured and imprisoned by the Japanese military. They suffered through deplorable conditions, some died, but those who returned were never the same as before they left. I worked with some of them, grew up with their sons/daughters, and never knew or understood until recently what they had been through. Let us try to ensure nothing like this ever happens again! To those who returned who I knew, including Walter "Allan" Royal, Ken Frost, George Findlay, and the other brave men, and to those that did not return. They sacrificed so much so I and all Canadians would have this wonderful life. Thank you!



Announcements



The Captain was a Doctor

Jonathon Reid

Publication Date: October 24, 2020, Dundurn Press

(Available for pre-order on Amazon, Chapters/Indigo, Barnes & Noble)

In August 1941, John Reid, a young Canadian doctor, volunteered to join the Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps. After five weeks' officer training, Reid was assigned to 'C' Force, the two Canadian battalions sent to reinforce Hong Kong, where he was captured when the calamitous Battle of Hong Kong ended on Christmas Day.

After a year in Hong Kong prison camps, Reid was chosen as the only officer to accompany 663 Canadian POWs sent to Japan to work as slave labourers. His efforts over the next two-and-a-half years to lead, treat, and protect his men were heroic, but he would never be the same.

At the Store

Don't forget to visit our [store](#) and check out our offerings. Great deals on flags and stamps!

Have You Forgotten?

Ah, how time flies. Here it is, September, and we've noticed that some dues payments have yet to be made. Not sure if you've paid? Just contact us and we'll let you know. Information about dues and ways to pay can be found on our [membership page](#).

Due to space limitations in this printed copy, some detail that appears in the online version has been omitted, and some photos cropped and resized.

Please note: underlined words in articles refer to links that are active in our online version or are active if you view our PDF copy on screen.