



WASURERU-NAI "Never Forget"



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

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Homecoming



Gerry Tuppert

It has been quite an enlightening experience to revisit the accounts of our Hong Kong veterans' return journey to Canada.

It soon became apparent that not all arrived back to their hometowns at the same time and not all received the riotous reception they deserved.

After a brief hospital stay in friendly Guam, some Canadian soldiers like my father were asked if they wanted to fly back to North America. Arriving in San Francisco, they boarded a train northward to Seattle and a three-hour ferry ride to Victoria B.C.

Later, the bulk of the happy returnees sailed into Esquimalt harbour aboard the **Prince Robert**, the very vessel that had transported them to Hong Kong so many harsh years before. Another British vessel the **HMS Glory** would bring other soldiers of 'C' Force to Vancouver Island. Then it was yet

another ferry to Vancouver harbour on the mainland and finally, CPR, a crowded train headed for the Rockies and beyond. The coach was festooned with a banner displaying the words "Hong Kong Express, we hate rice", an expression of the humour that helped sustain them through their difficult times.

As the train made its way east, the anticipation grew and so did the celebrations.

An unbridled street party on the Winnipeg train platform for the hometown Grenadiers, and then further east an equally large reception complete with the regimental band for the Royal Rifles in Quebec city.

This was in huge contrast to the soldiers who found themselves being unceremoniously dropped off at tiny train depots at all

hours of the day and night. They quietly made their way home to rural farms and reservations on the Prairies.

During their captivity communication by mail was so spotty that some came home only to discover that close family members had passed away.



HMCS *Prince Robert*, here shown arriving at Esquimalt in 1945 with prisoners of war, carried C Force men both to and from Hong Kong. (PAC PA116788)

The last of the 'C' Force soldiers who had not been waylaid in a hospital, continued on all the way to rural Newfoundland, only to arrive late in October.

Our story contribution comes to us from Marilyn Wright, daughter of Capt. Collison A. Blaver, (MC) RRC.

<https://www.hkvca.ca/cforcedata/indivreport/indivdetailed.php?regtno=X35>

This is from my dad's diary:

Day 1326 (Aug. 11) – News that the war is over!! Don't Believe it Yet

Day 1364 (Sept. 18) – On Board the USS Admiral Rodman still in Manilla Harbour

Day 1373 (Sept. 27) – Crossed the 180th meridian. (This is dad's last entry)

The following events are from stories I have been told by my mom, Jane (d.2000) and by my Aunt Thel (d.2015), dad's sister.

When Dad finally came home, he was sent to Chorley Military Hospital, in Toronto. My mom, Jane Meaden, was a Nursing Sister there. Dad was on another floor than mom, but a nursing Sister friend of mom's told her about Dad and that perhaps she should come and meet him. They finally met in November of 1945. Mom went home for a couple of weeks at Christmas and they met up again in January of 1946.

In April of that year Dad was invited to attend a dinner reception in Quebec City to receive his Military Cross (MC) award. He invited mom to go with him. Now, back in 1946, an unmarried woman did not go anywhere with a man. So another of mom's Nursing Sister friends and her fiancé went with them.

It was in Quebec city on the Plains of Abraham where Dad proposed to her and they were soon married in Toronto, (June 1946). My sister was born in March of 1947 and I came along in December 1948.

Tragically, on October 1st, 1951, Dad passed away just over a month shy of his 37th birthday.

He had visited his boss's son who was in the hospital, and six days later, dad was dead. The little boy had polio and Dad had no immune system to fight it.

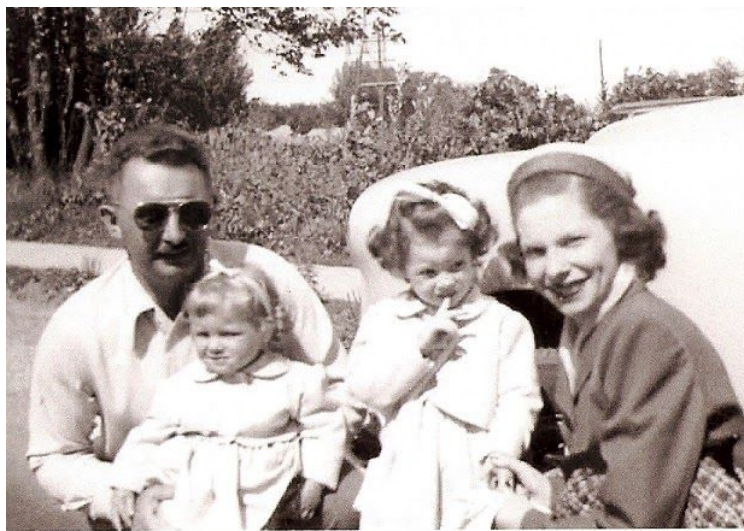
President's Message



Mike Babin

Convention Update

Have you reserved your hotel room yet for the HKVCA convention in Ottawa? It's going to be a terrific event, and I hope to see you on the weekend of August 13-16 to commemorate, celebrate, learn and share. We will also be holding our



Capt Blaver and Family

Thank you for your affecting story, Marilyn. There were far too many examples like this of our veterans succumbing way too early to complications from their years of mistreatment.

I hope other members will contribute to the "Homecoming" theme and submit a few words about their family's experience good, bad, happy or sad. Those stories deserve to be passed on to ensure we all understand the depth and complexity of the Hong Kong experience as it relates to our veterans, and also the families at home who waited sometimes for years without any reliable news.

The 557 souls who perished in Hong Kong and Japan never had the chance to experience one of these momentous homecomings.

So this summer, on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of VJ Day, we will dedicate our "Book of Remembrance". It will be our symbolic way to repatriate those names to Canada and ensure all have come home together.

(Don't forget to read another Homecoming-related story: check out Hong Kong Veteran, George MacDonell's account *Liberation Day* on page 6.)

We Will Remember Them

Annual General Meeting there. Mitzi Ross has more details for you elsewhere in this newsletter.

And I'd like to dispel a rumour: this is not planned to be our last national convention!

I'd also like to address another convention-related issue: the Coronavirus. We've been asked whether, considering the situation, we will still go ahead with the convention. At this point, the answer is a definite YES! There is every reason to

believe that the measures the various levels of government are putting in place will minimize the impact of the coronavirus on all of us, and so there is no reason now not to proceed with the convention. From your own perspective, if you book a hotel room at the Lord Elgin Hotel, as we recommend, it may be cancelled at any time up to two days before your arrival without penalty. We will not be sending out the registration packages until May (and, therefore, asking for you to pay your convention fee), and by that time the situation should be well understood. That leaves air or train transportation. If you book early, I suggest you purchase a fare that can be cancelled. Or, alternatively, hold off booking your transport until you receive the convention package. So please continue to make your plans for Ottawa! We will keep you advised if the situation changes.

Hong Kong Report

This past December I travelled to Hong Kong and was honoured to participate in the annual commemorative ceremony at Sai Wan War Cemetery arranged by the Consulate of Canada. While there, I visited some sites which I hadn't been to before, including the gun batteries at Mt Davis, and a very interesting small museum at the nearby Jubilee Battery, which is located on the grounds of the University of Chicago campus in Hong Kong. Although Canadians were not involved directly at either of these sites, Canada's role in the Battle of Hong Kong is clearly outlined in the museum's exhibits. I later met with one of the scholars responsible for the research and production of the exhibits, and was extremely impressed and moved by his commitment, and that of his colleagues, to preserving the Battle's history.

I also met with members of a small group of Hong Kongers who are involved with historical reenactments - the LiveThing History team. As part of their work, they recently undertook the design and sale of a small commemorative item, and donated 100% of the proceeds to the HKVCA. The group is interested in obtaining memorabilia, particularly uniforms and insignia, for use in the reenactment program. If you have any items you'd like to donate for this purpose, please contact me.

On the topic of visiting Hong Kong, I asked in an earlier newsletter whether there would be interest in a group trip to Hong Kong later this year. Although I had a fair number of people respond favourably, I have since decided that with the ongoing social turmoil in Hong Kong, it would be better to postpone to 2021. I will again canvass our members once the situation there has returned to normal.

Elections!

We will be holding an election for our Board of Directors this year. Kathie Carlson is heading up our Elections

Committee, and the other committee members are Norma Fuchs, Cynthia Melanson and Jim Trick. I thank them all for volunteering for this important role. They will be soliciting nominations for Directors, and I encourage you to apply! Our Board plays an important role in directing the HKVCA's efforts, and in advocating for our veterans and widows. Please consider contributing by submitting your nomination for Director, whether for yourself or someone else.

For information on the various roles and responsibilities of our Directors and the time commitments required, you can look here:

https://www.hkvca.ca/aboutus/p_p_manual/Gen002.php.

And to find out more information about how we run the election, please refer to our Elections Policy here:

https://www.hkvca.ca/aboutus/p_p_manual/Admin005.php.

Newsletter Costs

As you know, the HKVCA's annual membership fee is only \$20. So, our financial resources are very limited, and we must be careful about how we spend our (your!) money. A major expenditure is the printing and mailing of paper copies of our quarterly national newsletter. In fact, about 85% of the total dues our members pay go towards this, although only just over 30% of our members receive a paper copy! Reducing the number of paper copies of the newsletter would help reduce our costs and free up money for other projects.

This is why we recently sent a survey to those who receive a paper copy asking if they wish to continue receiving it, or would consider switching to receiving their newsletter online. Recipients were advised that if they did not respond at all, we would assume this means they no longer wish to receive a paper copy. Somewhat surprisingly, only about half of the recipients replied! Of those who did reply, quite a few opted to receive the newsletter online.

As a result, we have dramatically reduced the number of paper copies we will be printing and mailing out starting with the June newsletter. It's important to note that Veterans and widows will all continue to receive paper copies. No change! Also, this action concerns only the newsletter. All members will continue to receive other mailings in hard copy, such as for our convention and election, or by email notification.

The money we save by not printing and mailing these unwanted paper copies will go towards our educational and commemorative programs.

Remembering (next page)

As I write this, I've just received news that Hong Kong Veteran Bob Barter has just passed away at 98 years of age. There are now only 6 of these remarkable men who remain alive. We must all do our utmost to ensure that they and their 1,970 comrades in arms are never forgotten.

HKVA Report



Phil Doddridge

On the Passing of Bob Barter

Bob and I were friends from boyhood. We sat together in high school, we joined the RRC the same day. My number was E-29986 and his was E-29987. We were in

We Will Remember Them

D Company RRC. We came back together and we travelled to HKVA meetings together from St. Johns NFLD to Vancouver.

It was due to his influence that my career in education was started. I owe him a lot and I will miss him.

(Read [Phil's memoirs](#) on our website)



In Remembrance

Last Post

Robert (Bob) Barter, RRC, on February 28, 2020

In Memoriam

Verna Pearson, daughter of Elmer Cole, RRC; sister of Bliss Cole, RRC; on Dec 14, 2019

Anne Richardson, widow of Douglas Moore, WG, on Jan 24, 2020

Lorraine Lawlis, widow of Phillip Lawlis, RRC, on Jan 23, 2020

George Ralph Churchill Jr., son of George Churchill, RRC, on Jan 14, 2020

From the Editor/Membership Rep



Jim Trick (editor@hkvca.ca)

Mike, in his President's Report, has discussed our recent survey regarding the paper copy of this newsletter. The results are interesting in that out of 103 survey mailings, we only received 58 responses. Disappointing, but illuminating! We

will be saving more of your dues to use in support of our mission, rather than wasting funds on the mailing of unread newsletters.

For those who responded and made the change to email (18), many thanks.

Others indicated that they still prefer to receive a paper copy, and that's fine too. It's heartening to have you confirm that you read the newsletter.

For those who provided comments, fear not, they have been received by your Regions, and where a response is due you will be contacted.

Below are our membership statistics as of this month:

Veterans: 6, Widows: 86, Regular: 458. Total: 550

Due to space limitations in this printed copy, some detail that appears in the online version may have been omitted.

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.

Convention 2020 Homecoming



Mitzi Ross, Chair

Well, things are getting exciting here in Ottawa with regard to the Convention in August.

We are moving along well and have finalized 90% of the events and will finalize the last one by the end of this week.

Lord Elgin Hotel Accommodations

We negotiated a great rate for our group at \$169 per night even though July and August are prime times as it is “wedding season”, a time when Ottawa’s hotels and restaurant prices rise substantially. On top of that there will be the “Tamarack Ottawa Race Weekend” taking place which also increases room rates.

If you would like to reserve your room now rather than waiting till you receive your information packages in the mail in mid-May, please feel free to do so. The Hotel’s direct line is 613-235-3333 or you can call toll free 1-800-267-4298. When you are speaking to the receptionists remember to tell them that you are with the “Hong Kong Veterans” group in order to get the \$169 rate.

If you prefer to register online please click on this link <http://bookings.ihotelier.com/bookings.jsp?groupID=2707054&hotelID=12200>. It will take you to a page with the header: “*Please join us for the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Hong Kong Veterans Conv 2020*” this is where you will get the group rate of \$169 per night. If you do not see this header, please sign out and call either of the 2 phone numbers above to register.

If you have any problems with booking your room, either by phone or on-line, please email me at: mitziross@rogers.com or call me at: 613-225-5105.

HKVCA Activities and Events at the Lord Elgin Hotel

Convention Registration Desk After you check-in at the main desk for your rooms and received your room keys, proceed to the “Convention Registration Desk”. This will be located on the main floor to the left of the front desk, just past the valet station. There will be greeters on duty to show you where to go. Once you have registered for the convention you will receive your “Information Package” which will contain everything you could possibly need for the convention such as: your Registration Tag which you must have on in order to get into each venue and/or event; an Agenda which will have the name, location and time of each event and the Bus Schedule which will show pick-up and drop-off times of the buses which will take us to all off-site events. You will also find numerous Brochures of Ottawa sights and activities to see and/or do during your free time.

Memorabilia Room Here is where you will see a large, comprehensive collection of artifacts, diaries, uniforms, pictures, etc. telling the Hong Kong Veterans story. You can take your time and browse the items on display. Also, there will be a sales table where you can buy books written by our Veterans themselves and books written by relatives and/or friends of our Veterans along with flags, ties, etc. which may also be purchased at that desk. If anyone wants to bring in items relating to the Hong Kong Veterans, please see the

article below. Note: Ken will have to know soon what you would like to bring for display so as to save some space for you.

Hospitality Room This is a lovely room where you can sit and chat with old friends and relatives and hopefully make some new friends. You can catch up on what they are up to now and what they have done since the last Convention here in Ottawa in 2015. There will be non-alcoholic drinks (juices and soft drinks) available as well as Wine and Beer and munchies.

Meet-N-Greet For those who come in on Thursday, once you have registered for your accommodations, registered for the convention, received your “Information Package” and taken your suitcases up to your rooms, you are welcome to meet in the Hospitality Room where you can sit and chat and relax after your travels to Ottawa. This will be an informal “Meet-n-Greet” get together. There will be drinks available, both alcohol and non-alcohol, as well as munchies.

Board of Directors Meeting There will be a short BOD meeting prior to the AGM on Friday morning.

Annual General Meeting The AGM will take place in the “Lady Elgin Room” on Friday morning. The meeting will start with “Depositing the Colours” followed by the Hong Kong Veterans “Remembrance Protocol” and then the meeting will start with Mike Babin as Chair. There will be a review of the previous year’s objectives and accomplishments, a financial report, reports from each of the regions, information on some of the projects currently underway and finishing off with objectives and Projects for the coming year. At the end of the meeting there will be the Closing Protocol and the Retiring of the Colours.

Farewell Breakfast This will be a time when you can relax before starting on your treks home, reflect on the convention, have some breakfast and say “till next time” to all your old and new friends and relatives. The breakfast will run from 8:00 am to 11:30 am on Sunday morning.

Off-site Activities and Events

Memorial Services

There will be two Memorial Services on Saturday morning.

The first service will be at the Hong Kong Veterans Memorial Wall starting at 9:00 am. This will include Welcoming Remarks, National Anthem, Prayers, Act of Remembrance, Commitment to Remember, the last post / the silence / the rouse, followed by wreath-laying by both dignitaries and family members of our Hong Kong Veterans who have passed, Benediction, Royal Anthem and Closing Remarks. If you would like to lay a wreath, please email me at: mitziross@rogers.com by August 1st and include the Veterans name and the name of the person(s) who will be laying it.

The second service will be held at the National War Memorial starting at 11:00 am. That service will have the National

Anthem, Prayers, Act of Remembrance, Commitment to Remember, the last post / the silence / the rouse, followed by wreath-laying by dignitaries, Benediction, Royal Anthem, Closing Remarks and an invitation to all who are gathered to feel free to lay wreaths.

Canadian War Museum

We will be going to the War Museum on Friday afternoon to see exhibits of the Battles in the Far East. There is also a new exhibition for World War II, due to be completed in May, which promises to be quite impressive. You may join one of the "Tours" that they have, but these are fairly long with a lot of walking so perhaps your best option would be a "Self-Guided Tour" which means that you pick the areas you wish to see and a museum staff member will answer any questions you may have and will direct you to those areas.

The Westin Hotel

We have reserved the "Confederation III Ballroom" in this spectacular hotel for the Friday night dinner/dance. The Head Chef at the Westin is extraordinary at his craft and this meal will be absolutely scrumptious. There will be Cocktails starting at 5:00, Dinner at 6:00 and Dancing at 8:00 (till...well I guess

Memorabilia Display 2020 Convention

Ken Skelton – son of Sydney Skelton (RRC)

Enhance our memorabilia display planned for the convention by sharing any photos, articles or souvenirs brought back by your family member of 'C' Force.

Liberation Day



George MacDonell

Yesterday, a small carrier-based plane with the white stars of the United States on its wings, dropped a message in the centre of the parade square at Ohasi Prison Camp in northern Japan. The terse message read "URGENT. Prepare all allied personnel for evacuation by sea – AM 15

Sept."

Could this be true? After nearly four years, were we going to survive this nightmare of slavery, starvation, disease, abuse and death at the hands of the Japanese?

Is freedom possible? Could we ever see our homes and our loved ones ever again?

The next day, the 15th dawned warm, bright and clear. All was ready. Our few miserable possessions were packed - our sick were prepared for transport and assembled in the square. The sun rose over the horizon, breakfast of bully beef, hardtack and tea was over. A

when the cows come home!). This evening is less formal than the Saturday night Gala. Don't forget your dancing shoes because I am sure there will be more than a few who will be kicking up their heels on the dance floor.

The Chateau Laurier Hotel

We have reserved the "Adam Ballroom" in this iconic hotel for the Saturday night Gala. We are sure you will enjoy the Gala at this grand old hotel as the decor is impressive and has an old-world charm to it. The Head Chef at this hotel has won many trophies for his expertise so this meal will undoubtedly be absolutely divine. There will be Cocktails starting at 5:00, Dinner at 6:00, Guest Speaker at 7:30 and of course Dancing after that. This evening is the more formal event of the two nights, but you can still bring your dancing shoes here also.

If you have any questions about the CONVENTION please contact me at: mitziross@rogers.com or 613-225-5105.

Be sure to label items identifying your 'C' FORCE family member(s).

Questions? Contact Ken Skelton at ken.skelton@sympatico.ca, and please put "2020 Display" in the subject line

deep silence fell over the camp. Were they really coming or was it a hoax? The early minutes slowly ticked by into hours until at about 10 am, the silence was broken by a distant rumble down the road which grew louder and louder, and then a roar of engines as a cavalcade of military trucks and armoured vehicles full of heavily armed US Marines crashed through the gate and into the camp.



The marines were cheered, embraced, and a pandemonium of sheer joy swept through the happy throng of anxiously awaiting prisoners.

A marine Colonel, mounted on a jeep beside a 50 calibre machine gun was in command. Within minutes, orders were given, trucks were loaded with sick first and when all hands were ready, the Colonel asked, "Are there any questions". An American officer spoke "Yes" he said, "I have one: What took you so damn long to get here?" That brought a smile to marine faces and we then were off down the road, hell-bent to get down to the harbour, and the open sea, and out of Japan forever.

Soon the harbour was in sight and on the beaches were the landing craft, which had landed the marine vehicles. The inner harbour was full of gray naval vessels dominated by a big cruiser and a huge white painted hospital ship named the "Mercy". In minutes, we vacated the trucks and were ferried by Naval launches to the big white hospital ship.

Once aboard the Mercy, the navy took over and lined us up along the rail on the port side of the ship. The order was given to strip off every piece of clothing and everything else you have and place it by the rail. We obeyed. Now came the order, dump it all over the rail into the sea. We did and over the side went our clothing and everything else we possessed.

Now in our birthday suits, we entered the ship to meet a crew of sailors who first covered our faces with a towel and sprayed us with DDT. Next, we went into a large shower room with ample hot water and soap where a group of sailors scrubbed us one by one until they were satisfied we were squeaky clean.

Now in this scrubbed, disinfected state we were issued with brand new naval uniforms according to our rank. I was outfitted as a Naval Lieutenant.

Next, we went one at a time before a battery of doctors in a triage group to receive a medical examination. The sick were immediately separated, and placed on gurneys and whisked off to hospital beds with white sheets, navy doctors, and beautiful young nurses to care for them.

Next, we went before a group of marine police and asked if we wanted to bring criminal charges to any Japanese by name on shore.

After that we were told we could send a high priority cable to anyone in the world we wished. Thus our families heard of our release that day.

Now it was time for lunch in the ship's gleaming cafeteria with tomato soup, spaghetti and meatballs and ice cream for dessert - could all this be real?

It was apparent that our respectful American hosts were going to do everything they could to make us welcome and as comfortable as they could.

Next we were escorted to our comfortable sleeping quarters of tiered bunks below decks for a nap before dinner. At this point, my name was called out and a naval officer said he was ordered to escort me to the Bridge where the captain wanted to see me.

Upon arrival, the captain informed me that the Admiral commanding had ordered that I was to be ferried to the big cruiser in the harbour.

I replied that I couldn't possibly leave my men and could not make the transfer. At that point the captain said as if speaking to a mentally challenged teenager "Lieutenant, when that man over there (pointing to the cruiser) says you are going over there - then Lieutenant, you are going over there...period!"

He then added, "I will take care of your men until we are reunited in Tokyo."

In half an hour I was climbing up the side of the cruiser. There I was met by the deck officer of the watch and was escorted to the cruiser's sick bay to be examined by one of the ship's doctors.

Thankfully no further hot showers were required. After a thorough examination, the doctor relaxed and we began to talk. After a while the Doctor said, "Lieutenant, as you know, the American Navy never consumes alcohol at sea." "But..." he said, "Since your rescue is an emergency operation, I am going to prescribe for your recovery a shot of medicinal brandy - and one for myself as well." He then unlocked a cabinet and poured for us two whopping big glasses of brandy. At this point I said to myself, if this is just a dream, please don't let me wake up. Then after kind wishes from the doctor, two white-coated Filipino mess boys escorted me to a spotless cabin with a bed with white sheets and told me that they would call for me at six o'clock for dinner with the admiral.

At six o'clock as promised the mess boys escorted me to the ship's wardroom where I met the Admiral.

All the ship's officers were there and he introduced me to each. Afterwards, I was seated on the right hand of the admiral and a chicken dinner on white table cloths was served with apple pie and coffee for dessert.

After dinner the Admiral asked me, among many other questions, what in heaven's name were Canadians doing in the Pacific theatre of war.

I caused great merriment amongst the wardroom audience when I replied: "We thought you Yanks might need some help."

After dinner and more discussion and cigars, I was escorted back to my cabin. As the door closed behind me, I heard the anchor being hoisted aboard and the soft whine of the cruiser's mighty turbines as she prepared to leave the harbour for the open sea. What a day! I was exhausted!

My men were safe in the capable hands of our allies, our sick were finally being treated.

The war and the prison ordeal were both over. We had done our duty and behaved with courage and honour.

To the gentle rocking motion of the big cruiser, it was now time to sleep and to dream of home and freedom. We were going home.

The Sgt Gander Film Project

JP Bear

Hello everyone from here “downunder”, in Phoenix Arizona... Well, I have been working very hard on getting Gander’s Film onto the big screen and/or into the schools. I want you to know that I plan on being at the Convention/Reunion in August and to display for you the Trailer of the film that I will be presenting to Production Companies to entice their interest in producing the film.

With the help of Craig Baird, the CBC Heritage Minutes Writer/Producer/Narrator of various podcasts that are about CSM John Osborn, The Battle of Hong Kong and of Sgt Gander, the Trailer is being produced. I have mentioned to the HKVCA Board of possibly having Craig be in attendance at the Convention. I did speak with him directly, and he is grateful for the invite and will see what he can do to make it.

At this time I can’t tell what genre I will have in, ie, Feature Film, Docu-drama, TV Miniseries or as a Documentary. I personally would love to see the Feature Film, but in reality I feel, as most do, that a Documentary would be the best route to go, both historically accurate and financially feasible.

BC Region Report



Gerry Tuppert

There is little to report with respect to HKVCA activity in our area. It’s been somewhat of a wet winter, but that is par for the course as they say. However, spring is just around the corner with snowdrops appearing everywhere.



A huge shout out to our Hong Kong veteran's widows, we know you are out there and we think of you often and fondly.

The only topic dominating the social media platforms here is the ever-increasing threat of an appearance by the nasty

Personally, I don’t feel that one genre would be better than another. My #1 goal is to just get the film produced and out to the public as soon as possible. I know that the Veteran’s and persons who knew Gander/Pal, are not getting any younger, and I truly would like them to see the finished product. It is not for me that I want to get the film done, but it is for them!

I want you all to know, since beginning this “journey”, of writing the first script about Sgt Gander, that I get more and more excited every time I tell the story!

Well, I don’t want to bore you with more “on and on’s”, so let me close with this thought...

I want this story to be told to the world and I want to show my Love and Praise for all the men, women and dog who “Gave So Much For So Many”!

With All My Heartfelt Love for You All, I Wish You the Best! God Bless You All and Thank You for All Your Support and Prayers for me and Your Story - Always know that this story is not mine, it is Theirs and it belongs to You All!

Coronavirus. I think we may just have to stay indoors a little longer if it emerges on the west coast.

Our thoughts are with all who are affected, and I don't mean to make light of that situation.

Flag Flap

Now as mentioned in the previous newsletter I visited the Vancouver Island Military Museum in Nanaimo, BC. <http://vimms.ca/> I noticed a Japanese flag in their southeast Asia display case around the corner from our Hong Kong plaque. So I inquired as to how it came to be there and was told that the sailors from the Prince Robert donated it to the museum. They were so taken with the story of ‘C’ Force that they felt compelled to leave this little memento as a grim reminder on how that story played out. They had intimate knowledge of the Canadian involvement, having been the naval transport there and had seen the results when they went ashore in Hong Kong 3 years and 8 months later.

There is another quite well known Japanese flag. This one has made its way back to Canada via some of our boys.

Folded flags were an easy item to carry and conceal if necessary. Now that would be an excellent draw if this item made an appearance at the 2020 convention memorabilia room. Where exactly is that particular flag?

A banner with the names of those British sailors who came ashore that day is also displayed on our Gallery website in the Coming Home section:

<https://www.hkvca.ca/galleries/Gallery/Coming%20Home/index.htm>.

Prairie Prose



Carol Hadley

Greetings from the Prairie Region. There are signs of spring as the weather gets warmer, however Mother Nature has given us some surprises in March.

We were saddened by the passing of Anne Richardson, widow of Douglas

Moore, WG, on Jan 24, 2020. Her funeral was on February 6 - Padre Paul Lampman (HKVCA member from St. Luke's Church) officiated at the funeral. It was a wonderful tribute to Anne. Our sincere sympathy to the family and friends. We will remember them.

Pat Peterson informed us of George's 99th birthday – she decorated his room and took a cake. The Vets at Deer Lodge were getting a quilt with their name on it, but she was unsure of the group doing the donation. A call to CJNU at Deer Lodge had them wish George a happy birthday.

Paul Dartnel from Legion 215 had a wonderful Remembrance Display for the Battle of Hong Kong. Items from the Manitoba Museum, the Military Museum and from members, made a terrific tribute to the Canadians who fought in Hong Kong. The display was open to members and visitors from November to March and received a lot of interest.

Ontario Offerings

Lori Smith



What a welcome sight they must have been especially with their cartons of cigarettes.

That is all for now folks, best wishes for a warm spring to all.

We took a break from doing the Plaque presentations as the winter weather is an issue, however, we do have some requests that will be followed up in April. Stay tuned and perhaps you will be able to attend and support this wonderful program to honour our veterans.

HKVCA Website researchers are looking for pictures of the gravestones or niches of the vets for their records, also the date of birth is missing from our records. Please check our website and see if some of this information can be supplied to keep our records up to date.

You will be receiving a registration package for the 75th Anniversary of VJ Day in Ottawa. We have some hard-working, dedicated members putting together an exciting program to mark this significant date in our history.

There will be election information in the next month for you, our members, to consider keeping our organization a viable entity for our widows and veterans. Please consider taking an interest and get involved.

God Bless!

← Administrator at Parkwood Hospital with the '3 sisters'

Lawrence Ross (RRC E29339) three daughters, (sisters Patricia, Debbie and Lana) made Valentine cards for all the veterans at Parkwood Hospital in London, Ontario. The '3 sisters' delivered the Valentine cards along with a small gift bag with a pair of socks, a small notebook with a pen, and a small heart chocolate. The staff placed the items at the veteran dining table on the day! This was done in remembrance of their dad, his stay at Parkwood, and in celebration/recognition of The Battle of Hong Kong's 75th anniversary.

"The caregivers/nurses were thrilled with the Valentine's bags that we made for the vets, and the vets were very appreciative of our 'thoughtful gesture' (their words). We 3 sisters were just happy and proud to give back, and thank them for their service."

One of the sisters has contacted her local councillor and asked if we could get a small plot of land in a park, or stretch of road, where a Hong Kong Veteran Memorial could be placed.

Now the 3 sisters throw the gauntlet to YOU!!!! What do you think? What can YOU do?????

With this being the 75th anniversary, wouldn't it be appropriate to have our own HKV site to remember/remind others of their sacrifices?

Please also see George MacDonell's Liberation Day account earlier in this newsletter, and appeal for help from Fred Hurd below.

Quebec Region Report



Lucette Mailloux Muir

Greetings everyone, I hope you all enjoyed a great and safe Holiday Season. I enjoyed a great, but quiet holiday season in the company of close family.

Since our last newsletter, it was quiet during the holidays and now we are back planning for the coming months. Our executive members recently met for the presentation and reading of all reports for the closing of 2019.

We are holding our own, and we do thank all our members for renewing their memberships for 2020, and many for the coming years as well and many welcomed donations. We recently welcomed four (4) new members to our Hong Kong Family. We also thank our widows and family members for

encouraging our younger generations in joining our association and help in keeping the Hong Kong memory alive.

We held presentations of our HKVCA Plaques commemorating our Hong Kong Veterans, more to come, and joined in many activities and commemorative ceremonies during Veterans' Week and November 11th. We Will Remember Them!

I, and many of our members, are planning on attending the Convention and the 75th Anniversary Commemorative Ceremonies to be held next August in Ottawa.

Looking forward to meeting many of you in Ottawa.

Happy Easter and a wonderful Spring to all.

Atlantic Region Report

Bernard LeBlanc



←Plaque Placed next to the Shadow box of F40741 Joseph Napoleon LeBlanc RRC at the Royal Canadian Legion 150 in Jan 2020

Remembering Verna Pearson

Having had both her father and brother serve in the Battle of Hong Kong, in her retirement, Verna was very active in the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association, serving as Atlantic Treasurer. An avid quilter, she designed and donated a quilt to the Hong Kong Veteran's Museum in New Richmond, QC, and received the Queen's Jubilee Medal for her volunteer service to the Hong Kong Veterans.

(You can read about the "Memory Quilt" on our website: <https://www.hkvca.ca/submissions/vpearson.htm>)

Can You Help?

A Standard Watch?

Jeremy Ferrall is reaching out for YOUR help! His question- "was there a standard watch issued to the Winnipeg Grenadiers? I have an old watch



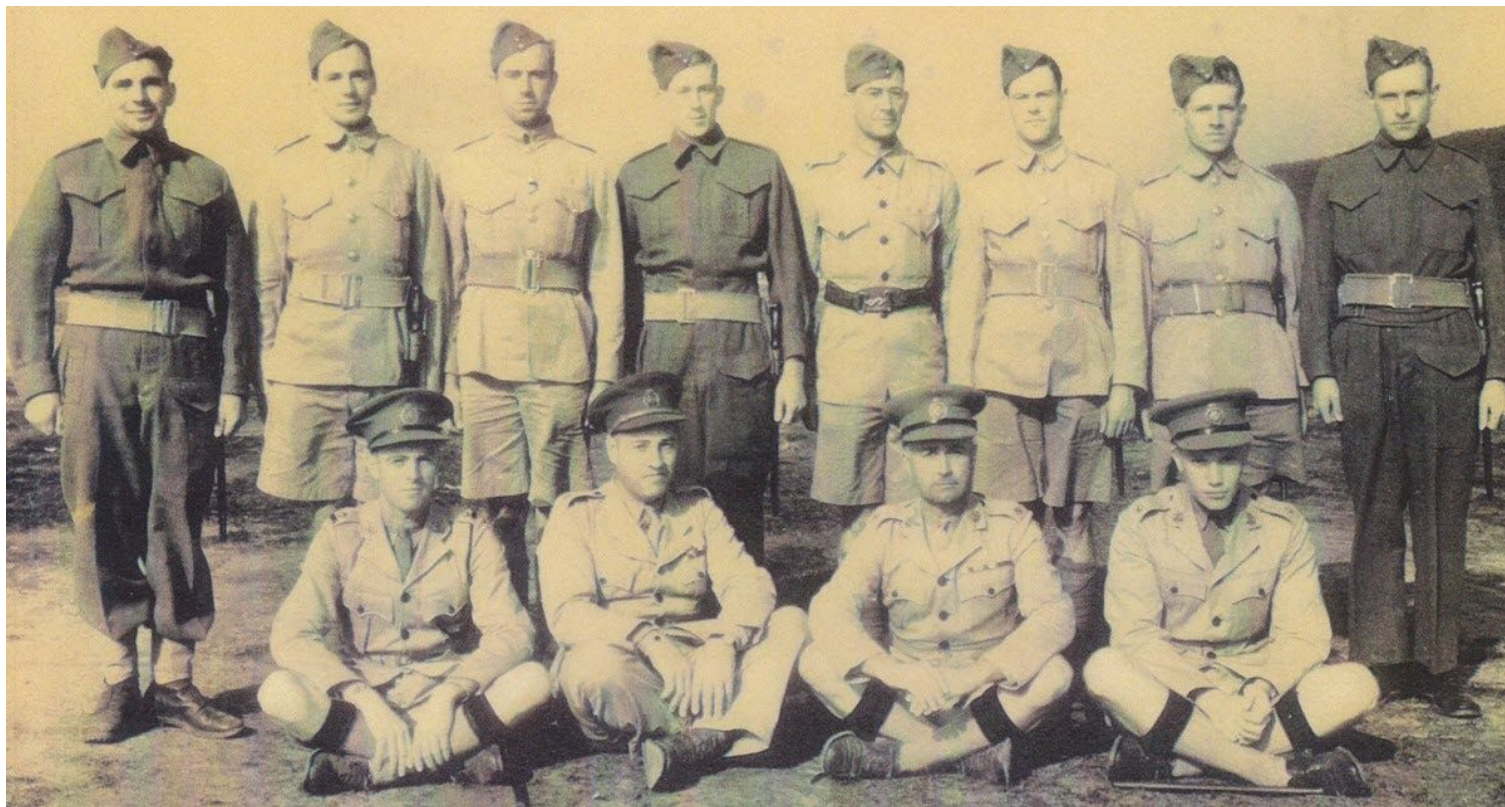
from my grandfather, Arthur Ferrall, WG, H6632. The brand is TIMOR and they made military watches in WW2." Jeremy would appreciate any help or tips in his question.

Unidentified Soldiers

Fred Hurd has submitted a story about his Dad that we'll be publishing on our website, either on its own, or as an adjunct to the [bio already posted](#). He asks for help below:

The picture of this group, taken in the fall of 1940 in Valcartier, Q.C., was found in my father's artifacts after he died in 2001.

If anyone can identify the 3 "Unknowns" I would be grateful to be able to have all the names to go with the faces in this picture. I have no way of knowing if the three who were unknown to me were actually part of the Royal Rifles.



They are as follows: Standing L to R: **Unknown**; Cpt. W. (Allen) Royal, RRC.; **Unknown**; C.Q.M.S. Colin Standish, RRC.; R.S.M. Leslie Shore, RRC.; Sgt. William (Bill) R. Pope, RRC., died in HK.; **Unknown**; Capt. S. Martin (Doctor) Banfill, (R.C.A.M.C) Attached Officer RRC

L to R. Seated: Lt. W. (Bill) Bradley, RRC.; Maj. (Tom) G. MacAulay, RRC.; Maj. (Wells) A. Bishop, RRC.; and Waldo Tulk, Armoured Corps (Died in Italy).

Because I knew some of these veterans in the picture, after they came home, I was able to identify many of them and through time, some others. I had taken the picture to many reunions however participants in the reunions were not able to identify the last four. My latest contact just this spring, was Colin Standish, grandson of C.Q.M.S. Colin Standish, who had never seen this picture before, and he was excited to see that his Grandfather was in the picture. Colin was able to quickly identify one of the unknowns as Sgt. William (Bill) R. Pope from the same town (Cookshire, Q.C.) where he and his grandfather had lived, and so we are down to three unknowns.

If you can help either Jeremy or Fred, please contact the HKVCA newsletter editor. (editor@hkvca.ca)

HKVCA 2020 National Board of Directors Elections

Introduction

Reference: [Policy and Procedures: Election Policy](#)

Published under the authority of the HKVCA Elections Committee, Kathie Carlson (Chair). This document amplifies guidance found in the Reference, and is brief, providing only the critical information you need to nominate someone.

"Call for Nominations" for the HKVCA National Board of Directors

The Election Committee formally "Calls for Nominations" for HKVCA National Board Directors. The Nomination forms are attached to the Spring edition of the 2020 Newsletter and online. All current members are urged to consider whom they feel would contribute their time, energy and skills, to ensure that the spirit, purpose and success of HKVCA are carried forth into the future.

Members are asked to review the following before submitting your nominations to the Election Committee:

1. This Elections Committee is seeking nominees for a maximum of ten (10) Directors.
2. The Term of Office for all Directors is two years. (There is no longer a limit to the number of sequential terms a member may serve.)
3. You may nominate as many as ten (10) people. (Consider advising any nominee(s) of your plans.)
4. A nominee must be at least eighteen (18) years old.
5. You (nominator) must be a member in good standing, with dues for the current year paid.
6. A nominee must be an HKVCA member or become a member within ten (10) days after election or appointment as a Director

Nominations Process:

Fill in the nomination form, either found as an insert to the Spring edition of our newsletter or [online](#) (PDF), or [web form](#). Please note the following:

1. All Nomination Forms must have a postmark or email date, on or before April 30th, 2020.
2. The Elections Committee will validate the Nominees by contacting them to ensure their willingness to serve. A short biography will be required at that time. Deadline for receipt of biographies is May 15th, 2020, for the nominee to be included on the election ballot.
3. If there are more than 10 valid nominees, the Elections Committee will conduct an election. Instructions for this phase will be included in the Summer edition of the newsletter.

Regional Councils

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering for positions on the Regional Councils, please make recommendations directly to your current Regional Director.

Nominations Options

1. Select the [Form in PDF format](#), suitable for printing, filling-out, and mailing. Please fill in all the information that you can, or
2. Choose our convenient [online web form](#).

Questions? Use the "Contact Us" link at the top of any web page or write to the address shown on the nomination form.