



WASURERU-NAI "Never Forget"



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

Editor: *Jim Trick*

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Homecoming 2020



Gerry Tuppert

Amazing how our lives can change on a dime in what I now refer to as the great interruption of our generation.

The thought was not lost on me how our fathers found themselves in a desperate fight just a few short weeks after crossing the Pacific, which was then followed by years of relentless isolation, not of their choice of course. Everything changed so quickly for them and shortages of any adequate life-sustaining food and hygiene products became their reality until their eventual liberation in August 1945. Those traumatic events which we are all very familiar with puts so much of our current situation into perspective.

The days of a calendar just keep rolling along obliviously of any pandemic, and that makes us more determined to celebrate the 75th homecoming anniversary of our veterans. While perusing some of the rich content submitted for our newsletter, I was pleasantly surprised to read a more detailed and comprehensive account of our soldiers' repatriation. Some things like the frequency or in many cases the infrequency of incoming mail, make for interesting observations. Mail from home while in the POW camps or when waylaid at a transition point was pure gold for a soldier anxiously awaiting transport back to Canada. Pat Turcotte, daughter of Lt. Leonard Corrigan, sent us an excerpt from her dad's diary in which we

get a glimpse of this. For many arriving in Manila, it was to be the first time they were able to send a telegram, and that truly raised excitement for all parties. Many thanks for your contribution Pat, which you'll find later in the newsletter.

The record for most letters (135), received by a Hong Kong POW, seems to be held by Pte. James Downie, WG. The envy of his mates for sure. (See clipping on next page).

Another noteworthy submission to this edition was sent by Eugene Labiuk from Niagara on the Lake. Eugene is known to us for his fine 'C' Force exhibit at the Niagara Military Museum. There is also a homecoming component to his exhibit and to top it off, he has a keen interest in the POW postal history.

Yes, it was a huge disappointment for those of us who wanted to travel and attend our summer HKVCA convention, and this exhibit would have been an attractive feature in our memorabilia room. It will however be available for the planned 2021 convention so not all is lost.

Reading through Eugene's material I was struck by how many different ships repatriated our men back to native soils. It's evident that many were not cleared to travel and had medical issues that necessitated longer recovery periods. A delay that meant they would be on the next ship heading to Victoria or San Francisco with British and American servicemen.

Repat Meets Daughters He 'Saw' in 135 Letters

Pte. Jimmy Downie of Vancouver, who became famous among Canadian Hong Kong captives for the number of letters he received from home, arrived back in the city Wednesday.

He was greeted by two persons who formed most of the subject matter of those letters, his two young daughters, Phyllis, 8, and Jeanie, 7. Author of the letters, Mrs. Downie, was ill in bed at home and unable to meet him.

"I guess I got about 135 letters altogether," Pte. Downie said. "I was the envy of the camp. I got 52 pictures too. I saw these two girls grow up in pictures."

Pte. Downie was taken to Vancouver Military Hospital where he will be treated for malnutrition. He went down to 98 pounds while a prisoner of war. He weighed 138 when he left Canada.

With other Canadian prisoners, he worked as a steel-chipper in Jap shipyards for 10 sen a day. When American air raids got beyond control, he was moved into the iron mines where he "worked like a slave."

"We were starving all the

time," he said. "We had barley and tea three times a day and nothing else. There was no nourishment in it."

Only other Vancouver men among the 100 repats was Pte. Jack Walton, 5626 Larch. His sister, Sue, went to Bellingham to meet him and rode back on the repat train.

Pte. Walton lost 30 pounds during his imprisonment.

Vancouver on Sept. 16, 1945, they were wearing American uniforms. They were provided with Canadian military uniforms for the flight home to Quebec.



The six men in the photograph are all RRC. From l to r in the top row, Rfn M.I Davies, Cpl LTS Doull, Rfn.JC Court, Rfn.SG Allison. Kneeling l to r are Rfn GA Shaw and Rfn.JT Beebe.

The attached telegrams* tell an impactful and emotional story. The first telegram, sent from the Canadian military, informs his Mom and family that he is alive and has been repatriated by the Americans. The next two, also from the Canadian military, outline his route home and expected arrival time on Canadian soil in Vancouver. The last two are from my Dad to his Mom, sent upon his arrival in Vancouver. The tears of pain shed for many years had finally turned to tears of joy as Dad and his comrades returned home to their loved ones.

**See our online version to view the telegrams.*

Thank you for that story, Murray.

This is an interesting account because it mentions flying back to Eastern Canada- something I had not considered. My understanding was all soldiers, once on native soil, returned to their home towns via our rail system.

One thing is never in doubt and that is the telegrams and letters were the most precious and well-received items. I think most if not all the men kept them in their treasured family albums as a way to document that part of their service.

When I look at my dad's telegrams, I have a vision of his mother in her kitchen apron reading the confirmation of his condition and crying with joy. They really are a poignant reminder of those moments captured in time for all generations to enjoy.

Murray Doull of Clearwater, BC, is our BC membership rep and treasurer and has sent this homecoming account of his dad's return journey.

Homecoming of Cpl LTS (Bill) Doull, RRC "D" Coy:

When the Americans repatriated the Allied POWs from the Niigata 5B and 15B camps on Honshu Island in early September, 1945, the survivors were in very poor physical condition. Dad had temporarily lost most of his vision due to malnutrition and was very weak having lost half his body weight. Along with many of his comrades, he was evacuated to an American hospital ship and then flown to an American military base in Guam.

As Dad regained his eyesight and some strength at Guam, he made a small booklet by hand in which he wrote from memory as best he could remember, the names of his comrades that had passed in the 4 camps where he had been imprisoned, what they had passed from and approximate dates. He also wrote the names and ranks of the Americans that had repatriated him and his comrades. This booklet is preserved in his shadow box.

After a couple of weeks in Guam regaining some strength, Dad and 9 comrades (7 RRC and 2 WG) were flown to San Francisco where they boarded a train on September 14, 1945, headed to Seattle and then Vancouver. You will see in the photograph that when they arrived on Canadian soil in

As we approach the 75th anniversary this August 15th, I hope all of us can reflect on these homecoming memories in our family history with pride for their selfless military service and unbridled gratitude for their safe return.

President's Message



Mike Babin

COVID-19 has brought incredible hardship to Canadians and people around the world, and I hope that you and your families have been able to avoid the worst of its effects.

Although our problems pale by comparison, I can't help but be reminded of the incredible suffering thrust upon the Canadians in 'C' Force during their long internment.

The pandemic forced us to postpone our convention in Ottawa this August. We are now planning to hold it next year on the weekend of August 14, 2021 in Ottawa. I hope you will try your best to be there for the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Hong Kong! It's obviously early days now, so please watch for more information in future newsletters.

Paying Respects

On Saturday, August 15 at 11am local time, I am asking every one of you across Canada to take a few moments to commemorate V-J Day and mark the 75th anniversary of the end of the war in the Pacific and the liberation of 'C' Force POWs from the camps in Japan and Hong Kong. Please visit your local cenotaph, veterans' section of a cemetery or other appropriate location and make an act of commemoration. This might be laying a wreath, reciting a poem or prayer, singing a song, flying the HKVCA flag, displaying a poster or any other heart-felt activity. Please take a photo and email it to us at hkvca41@gmail.com and we will post it on our web site and on Facebook on a special commemoration page. Be sure to include information in your email such as location, activity and people involved.

Annual General Meeting

The HKVCA's charitable status obligates us to hold an Annual General Meeting of members, which we often do in conjunction with our convention. But with the postponement of this year's convention, we will need to hold the AGM separately. We've scheduled it for Tuesday, July 7 at 2 pm (Eastern time). The meeting notice is elsewhere in this newsletter, and all members are invited to call in to participate

Welcome home all.

We Will Remember Them

using the toll-free number. The meeting will last less than one hour and it's a good way for you to get caught up on the activities of your association.

Book of Remembrance

Gerry Tuppert from BC has done a terrific job in producing a "Book of Remembrance" to commemorate this year's significant anniversary. The book contains the names and photos (if available) of each of the members of 'C' Force. A number of military museums and other locations across Canada have requested a copy to place in public view. It's a great initiative ... thanks, Gerry!

Election Report

We recently solicited nominations for the Board of Directors to serve for the next two years. The report from Kathie Carlson of Lethbridge, the nominations committee chair, is elsewhere in this newsletter. I want to thank Kathie and her committee of Norma Fuchs (Calgary), Cynthia Melanson (Cardston, AB) and Jim Trick (Victoria) for their excellent job. Most of the nominees who agreed to serve as Directors are familiar faces who have served for many years, and I thank them for standing again. There is one new person, Greg Auld (High River, AB), and I am pleased to welcome him to our Board! Because we ended up with exactly the number of nominees to fill the available seats on the Board, there is no need for an election. But the new Board will be approved by a motion at the AGM.

Thank You Mitzi

Unfortunately, one of our long-time Directors, Mitzi Ross (Ottawa), has decided to step away from her HKVCA activities due to health concerns. In addition to her role as a Director, Mitzi has organized a couple of Ottawa conventions, and has arranged the annual ceremony at our Memorial Wall for many years. Thanks, Mitzi!

As always, please send any questions, comments or suggestions to me at president@hkvca.ca.

We Will Remember Them



HKVA Report

Phil Doddridge

Phil sends best wishes to everyone in the HKVCA/HKVA family. On YouTube watch him raise our Canadian flag on Canada Day a few years ago, and discuss sock-making while a POW.

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

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the HKVCA will be held on Tuesday, July 7 at 2:00 pm (Eastern time)

All members are encouraged to attend via toll-free audio conferencing.

Agenda for the meeting:

- Welcome and call to order.
- Motion to amend By-law No. 1 to enable holding of meetings by electronic means.
- Motion to accept minutes of last AGM.
- Presentation of and motion to approve financial statements.
- Election of Directors.
- Presentations of Reports.
- Adjournment

Copies of all relevant material will be available [on our website](#) at least 7 days before the meeting. If you require a hard copy,

please phone 416-732-5720 not later than June 26. Please leave your name and address.

To join the call for the meeting, follow these steps:

- Dial 1 855-342-6455 (toll-free).
- When prompted for conference ID, enter 1240146 and then #.
- When prompted, say your name, followed by #.
- You will then join the call.

All phones will be muted during the presentations, and unmuted for voting and questions.

Please direct inquiries to president@hkvca.ca



In Remembrance

Last Post - Ralph MacLean, RRC on March 14, 2020

From the Editor/Membership Rep



Jim Trick (editor@hkvca.ca)

Support for our Homecoming newsletter theme has been outstanding as you'll see in this edition. In fact, in this printed copy we had to exercise some judicious editing due to the amount and length of submissions. For those of you with

online access, please visit our online edition for more details and links.

While you're there, check out our home page to see some of the information we've been adding to our 'C' Force library and gallery.

2020-2022 Board of Directors

Kathie Carlson, Election Chair

The current HKVCA Board of Directors approved a Nominations Committee on January 22, 2020, to request

Due to space limitations in this printed copy, some detail that appears in the online version has 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.

nominations for the 2020/2022 National Board of Directors. This Committee consisted of Jim Trick (Victoria), Norma Fuchs (Calgary), Cynthia Melanson (Cardston), and Chair

Kathie Carlson (Lethbridge). The "Call for Nominations" to all HKVCA members was highlighted in the HKVCA Spring 2020 Newsletter under the President's Message.

Our world drastically changed in the following months with the COVID 19 Pandemic. Even with this affecting everyone, HKVCA members still found the time to submit nominations, which closed April 30, 2020. Our committee is very grateful for your nominations.

Results are as follows:

In total there were 25 nominations for 13 people, with some nominees receiving multiple nominations. Nine members accepted their nominations, and 4 nominees declined, largely due to previous commitments.

The nine (9) nominees accepting their nominations represented the following regions:

Mike Babin – Ontario Region

Homecoming - Lt. L.B. Corrigan



Pat Turcotte

My father, Lieut. L.B. Corrigan, WG, spent much of his time in POW camps recording his thoughts in a diary, which he buried in the ground. He was able to recover much of it after the soldiers were liberated. He continued

writing his thoughts as he travelled home in letters sent to his wife along the way. I have the original letters, and his wife Gladys's responses, and have copied some of their exchanges in those weeks that it took to get back to Canada. Here are some excerpts from those writings.

Sept. 1, 1945 Sham Shui Po Camp:

Dearest Glad, Paddy, Shelagh et al,

A few lines in haste to once again inaugurate communication. How have you all been keeping these last thirty or forty years? Have had no mail from you since your letter of August '44 so can only hope you have weathered the storm OK. Send pictures at your first opportunity. Plans for our immediate future are very much in the dark but we hope to be shipped out very shortly. I look forward to some sort of quiet holiday in which we can again become acquainted. The thrill and excitement of release is mixed with thousands of queries - word of friends at home - how much the girls have grown - are they interested in golf or music. Do hope to hear from you shortly. Love, Leonard

Barry Mitchell – Prairie Region

Carol Hadley – Prairie Region

Lucette Mailloux Muir – Quebec Region

Gerry Tuppert – British Columbia Region

Mitzi Ross – Ontario Region*

Mark Purcell – Ontario Region

Bernard LeBlanc – Atlantic Region

Greg Auld – Prairie Region

Since there were fewer nominees than the 10 positions on the National Board, there will be no need for an election.

Thanks again to all HKVCA members for your nominations, and thanks to the members accepting their nominations for the National Board of Directors.

*Note: Mitzi Ross has since declined

Sept. 1, 1945 :

Dear Glad, Kiddies and all,

Just back from visiting the H.M.C.S. Prince Robert. Ran into a couple of Swift Current locals. What a treat to have lots of gossip from home recalled. Hospital patients are being moved to the hospital ship first. May I impress on you the urgency of photos of yourself and the girls. My imagination is in a turmoil trying to picture you after all these years. News of rehabilitation plans for returned men gives me great hope for the future. All my love, Leonard

Sept. 12, 1945 - Swift Current, Sask.

My dearest Len,

No words can express our happiness in getting the telegram Sunday night that you are safe and would be home. We've waited so long for the news - it still hasn't really sunk in yet. We've been apart so long. The children are well. I imagine you'll hardly recognize them. People have been so good to me, and everyone is so pleased I've had good news from you. My phone

has been ringing steadily for two days. It's been a terrible time for you. I only hope that you're in good health and that the weeks fly by so we can be together again. All my love, Glad

Sept. 12, 1945: Airmail letter written aboard "Empress of Australia"

Dear Gladys and girls,



Our departure from camp was most unspectacular. I was volunteering to handle Red Cross parcels at the dock, and I conked out because of the heat and was put in the ship's hospital. We picked up women and children from Stanley Camp and then upped anchor to begin our voyage to Manila. The ride down the harbour provided thrills for us as the area teemed with shipping of all types - battleships, destroyers, minesweepers, submarines and other craft. When we get to Manila we'll be under the guidance of the U.S. in a city built just in the last weeks to house returning soldiers. We've heard there may even be some mail from home when we get there. Love, Leonard

Sept. 13, 1945: (diary) - Wednesday

- Entering Manila Bay ...the temperature is about 115 degrees F.

- There are close to 500 ships in view as well as many more vehicles on land...and mountains of supplies.

- Every tent (for the soldiers) is full of supplies....there is lots of delicious food available.

- We expect to be here 5 or 6 days.

- The main idea seems to be to do everything they possibly can for the POWs.

Sept. 16, 1945: (diary) - Saturday

- We're still living the life of Riley in Manila.

- I attended a good quality game of baseball yesterday - 3 major Leaguers participated.

- I had a medical yesterday and was pronounced fit to travel. I weighed 169, a gain of 16 pounds since the end of the war.

- Just learned we're leaving by boat for 'Frisco arriving around the first week of October. Damn! I'd hoped we'd go by plane.

Sept. 17, 1945: (diary) - Sunday

- I feel very low tonight. Don't know why. Maybe it's the letter from Glad, which I found a mite disappointing.

Sept. 21, 1945: (diary) - Friday

- Two days out and our ship rides as smoothly as a train so that personal comfort is not lacking.

- The meals are of high calibre and one can almost feel additional pounds being added.

- This business of going home is rather awesome and quite frankly I'm a bit frightened by the prospect.

- "Abandon ship" drills relieve the monotony of a long voyage as does some target practice with the 40 m.m. guns

- They called for volunteers to form a band - some pretty hot stuff came to light and we had a pretty good time.

- Seven days out, we avoided a typhoon, and had some repairs to the boiler.

- We have just turned north and are halfway to 'Frisco.



- A concert today with the new "ship's orchestra" - Tenor Sax, Alto Sax (yours truly), 2 guitars, squeeze box, fiddle & drums. Really grade "A" material. Some very good talent came to light, including a Negro baritone singing "Old Man River".

Sept 28, 1945: Friday
Aboard "U.S.S. Admiral Rodman"

Dearest Glad,

Received your letter of Sept. 16th, and while extremely glad to see any word at all from you, was a bit disappointed in it from a news standpoint. Our draft of 24 officers and 80 men goes to form a party of nearly 5000 passengers mainly POWs (Yank), and enlisted men whose terms of duty have expired. Our ship, the Rodman, is listed as 22,000 tons and has a very enjoyable cruising speed of over 40 knots, in fact by far the most comfortable cruising ship I've been on.

Certainly these Yanks don't do things by halves. Despite the number of men she carries, a great deal of thought has been given to the comfort of these men including spring beds and mattresses. It looks like we'll waste no time in 'Frisco. How long we'll dilly dally in Vancouver before being released is a matter of conjecture - perhaps 3 or 4 days before we head for home. I've felt more than usually low this past couple of weeks which seems out of keeping with the general spirit that should prevail about now. Must be the result of too much attendant excitement to the idea of going home. I don't expect to have the opportunity to phone from

'Frisco but will do so from Vancouver. Until then, au revoir. Love, Len

Sept. 29, 1945 (diary) - Saturday

• I hastily, and humbly correct an entry a few days back when I mentioned target practice with the 40 m.m.guns. I learned today that it was a real, live, honest-to-God mine which strayed directly in our path.

• We are now 1,696 miles from the Golden Gate bridge, and 700 miles due north of Honolulu.

Sept. 30, 1945 : Letter from Gladys

Can't begin to tell you how excited I was to receive your first letter, written Sept. 12 aboard "Empress of Australia". You spoke of another letter. I haven't received it yet. They told me we could write to you at Manila. I wrote one letter. Then I saw your name listed as having sailed aboard the "Admiral Rodman" so I didn't write again. We've waited so long for news that I can't believe it

when it comes. I saw your picture in the Winnipeg Tribune yesterday and I was so glad to see you looking so well - first picture of you in four years. Paddy and Shelagh were so excited. To have a Daddy again seems unbelievable to them. Guess I'll close for now, my dear, will write again soon. All our friends ask to be remembered to you. Also the Dunlops - George always asks for you. All my love, Glad

In the photo on the page above, Lt. Corrigan greets his daughter. It was the first time Shelagh had ever seen her Dad. She was 2 when he left, and she was 7 when he came back.

"In the midst of 4000 people in the Winnipeg Train station, I was picked up by a very tall fellow who turned out to be my father, Lt. Leonard Corrigan, WG., seeing each other for the first time in four years!"

Homecoming - via Manila



Gene Labiuk

For a postal historian/military historian, one's curiosity can easily extend when novel material and information become available. Such is the case many years ago when I came across the envelope shown as Fig. 1.

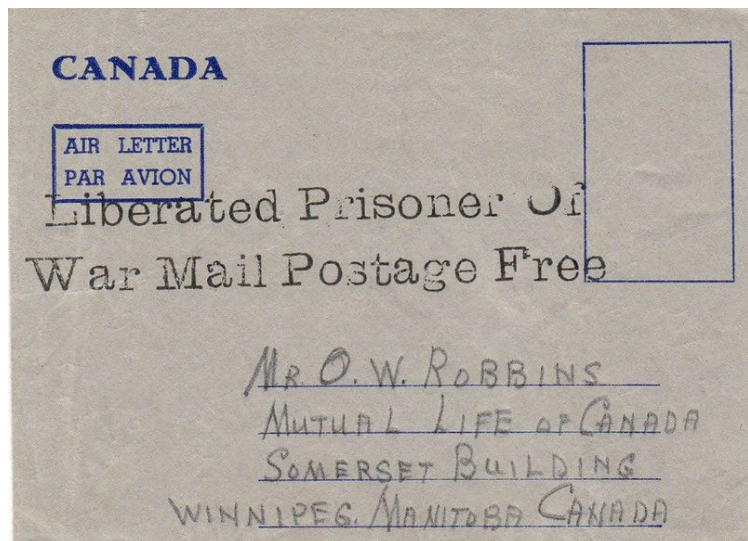


Figure 1: Air letter written by Major Baird on September 17, 1945 showing the two-line serifed overprint "Liberated Prisoner Of War Mail Postage Free".

The message of this air letter reads:

Manila, P.I.

Sept. 17th , 45

Dear Orville

Have never been able to write a letter to you before. The nips weren't very co-operative.

We arrived here from Hong Kong five days ago and have been spending most of our time eating and sleeping under most agreeable circumstances. We still have a lot to make up as far as eating goes and believe me we are working hard at it and getting results too. Have gained 20 pounds in the past five weeks. Now weigh 145. We expect to sail from Manila tomorrow for home. You can imagine how pleased we are. We are in an American camp, believe me the Yanks know how to do things in the right way. They have a system and work it, the results are astounding. They know what they want done and do it. Their equipment seems to be limitless and one can readily understand why the Nips folded up so soon after the Americans got organized and under way.

I hope you have been in the best of health and getting your fair share of business. I received one thousand cigarettes from the company. They were most gratefully received I can tell you. Please pass on my sincere thanks for them. Will be seeing you soon. Yours,

K. G Baird.

A few comments in his letter piqued my interest "We arrived here from Hong Kong five days ago" ... "We expect to sail from Manila tomorrow for home."

Googling at the time was a bit sketchy and slow in trying to find out what, how, why, when, where, as there wasn't much documentation available. Then a light bulb clicked, tried the newspapers to see if there were any stories about Canadian POWs in the Philippines and low and behold I stumbled across the Toronto Star newspaper story of August 23, 1945, illustrated in Figure 2 (next page).

I now had the bug, spending countless Saturdays and Sunday afternoons at the Toronto Reference Library going through their newspaper microfilm reels from across the country, for the months of August to December 1945, clipping and saving the stories. When I couldn't get the Victoria, BC newspapers, my good friend Gray Scrimgeour aided me by going to the University of Victoria Library and getting the stories. Not stopping with the Canadian newspapers, I then went online and started to get information from the Australian newspapers regarding the formation of the 5th Replacement Depot. Further digging went into the Australian War Memorial, Imperial War Museum, Canada War Museum and the Library and Archives Canada. I now have hundreds upon hundreds of repatriation newspaper articles and photos involving the repatriation of our Canadian POWs as well as other British Commonwealth POWs.

MANILA PREPARES WELCOME FOR 1,000 CANUCK PRISONERS

Manila, Aug. 23—(CP)—Approximately 1,000 Canadians will be among the 32,000 Allied prisoners of war evacuated from Japanese camps to the Philippines.

The evacuation of both prisoners and internees will be carried out as quickly as possible by the American recovered personnel division replacement command, the American Red Cross and occupation forces entering Japan.

The initial case of Canadians who eventually will come to the 5th American replacement depot near Manila, will be in the hands of the Australian section at general headquarters.

Canadian groups are enroute from Canada to relieve the Australians. In the meantime, Col. Richard Malone, Canadian public relations officer, is maintaining liaison with the Australians in connection with arrangements for evacuated prisoners and Col. Moore Cosgrave, Canadian military attache at Canberra, Australia, is due in a day or two to handle the work of preparing for the prisoners' arrivals until Canadian teams headed by Lt.-Col. M. W. MacNulty, of Sherbrooke, Que., arrive.

It is not yet known if the 300-odd Canadians in the Hong Kong area will also be evacuated to Manila. However, arrangements for them will be supervised by Brig. Kay, Canadian military attache at Chungking.

Recovered personnel units which will accompany occupation forces will make lists of liberated prisoners before their evacuation and cable them to the war department at Washington. It is presumed this service will apply to Canadians.

Messages to next of kin will be accepted immediately.

Once prisoners have been evacuated to the Philippines by air and water transport they will find specially converted replacement depots specially equipped with every convenience. There will be 24 hour Red Cross service, registration under a central filing system, message centre service, information counters, canteens and recreation centres. Messages from relatives will be delivered.

During the trip to the Philippines the prisoners will have medical supplies, food and clothing available, which will be taken to Japan by the occupation forces.

Figure 2. Article from the Toronto Star giving details of the Canadian repatriation teams proceeding to the 5th Replacement Depot at Manila. – Toronto Star, August 23, 1945.

I then questioned myself, how did these men get home? With the information at hand, I then compiled the list shown in Figure 3.

After many years of compiling information, I began writing a manuscript entitled “They Came Home Via The Philippines” and submitted it in 2019 to the [Postal History Society of Canada \(PHSC\)](#) for publication in the PHSC Journal. [Parts 1](#)

[and 2 have been published](#) and Part 3 is in the process of printing. When part 3 is available it will be submitted to HKVCA for uploading. When all three parts have been printed, the PHSC will combine them into an electronic book format and this will be presented to the HKVCA for addition to their website for reading and downloading.

LIST OF REPATRIATION SHIPS WHICH CARRIED “C” FORCE MEMBERS FROM MANILA TO CANADA

Repatriation ship sailings from Manila				
Name of ship	Nationality	Departure Date	Arrival Port	Arrival Date
To Canada				
USAT General Langfitt Transported 10 Canadians and 286 British	United States	Sept. 15, 1945	Esquimalt, BC	Oct. 3, 1945
USS Gosper Transported American, 1,936 British and Canadian LPOWs	United States	Sept. 21, 1945	Victoria, BC	Oct. 12, 1945
USS Admiral C. F. Hughes Transported 3,881 passengers including 1,951 U.S. Army enlisted men, POWs made up of 465 American, 1,263 British, 141 Canadian 18 British Indians, Civilians 13 U.S., 12 British and 18 U.S. Army nurses all of whom were confined to Japanese prison camps.	United States	Sept. 24, 1945	Victoria, BC	Oct. 9, 1945
HMS Implacable Transported 2,127 British of which 5 were Canadian members of the RCAF attached to the RAF	British	Sept. 25, 1945	Esquimalt, BC	Oct. 11, 1945
HMCS Prince Robert Transported 27 Canadians and 15 Missionaries	Canadian	Oct. 2, 1945	Esquimalt, BC	Oct. 20, 1945
HMS Glory Transported 1,460 (including 37 Canadian sick and 119 fit)	British	Oct. 9, 1945	Esquimalt, BC	Oct. 27, 1945
HMCHS Letitia To Tacoma Washington, transported 721 Americans, arriving on December 5, 1945 To Vancouver, transported the last Canadian LPOW from the far east, 31 members of the Canadian Repatriation Liaison Group, the British Repatriation Team, 8 French and Irish priests, one Dutch civilian and one Norwegian Merchant Marine and 23 British LPOWs	Canadian	Nov. 12, 1945	Vancouver, BC	Dec. 6, 1945
To the United States*				
USS Admiral Hugh Rodman Transported 58 Canadians and 950 British	United States	Sept. 18, 1945	San Francisco, Calif	Oct. 3, 1945
USS Catron Transported 585 British and Canadians	United States	Sept. , 1945	San Francisco, Calif.	Oct. 19, 1945
USS General Howze Transported 2,800 American, 44 Canadians and British	United States	Sept. , 1945	San Francisco, Calif.	Oct. 15, 1945
USS Joseph T. Dickman Transported 950 British and Canadians	United States	Sept. 25, 1945	San Francisco, Calif.	Oct. 16, 1945
USS Ozark Transported 551 British and 19 Canadians	United States	Sept. , 1945	San Francisco, Calif.	Oct. 2, 1945
USS General Brewster Transported 551 British and 19 Canadians	United States	Oct. 19, 1945	San Francisco, Calif.	Nov. 3, 1945

*Those who were taken to San Francisco were then transported by train to Vancouver or by train to Seattle and then ferry to Victoria.

Figure 3. List of Ships

Since the HKVCA Convention in Ottawa has been cancelled and one of the exhibits at the convention was to be the 10 panels from the Niagara Military Museum (NMM) exhibit “The Hong Kong Story”, these 10 panels are on the HKVCA site for your viewing, courtesy of the [Niagara Military Museum](#).

The NMM will also leave this exhibit on display until the end of summer. For those wishing to view the entire exhibit their address is:

Niagara Military Museum
5049 Victoria Avenue
Niagara Falls, ON L2E 4E2
Phone 905-358-1949

Hours 11-4, Wednesday to Saturday, please call ahead to ensure that they are open when you plan to attend.

For the HKVCA regions that may wish to reproduce these panels as a teaching aid, kindly contact the NMM at

niamilmuseum@gmail.com and they will provide the proper files for reproduction purposes as well as the specifications for re-sizing.

As always, when a project is finished, important information always seems to surface. This was the case of the material which is currently on display in the NMM exhibit through the courtesy of the family of Gerald Sunstrum. It is an official US Military document* listing the first 10 Canadians to be transported from Manila to Canada, aboard the USAT General Langfitt that left Manila on September 15, 1945 and arrived at Esquimalt, BC on October 3, 1945.

(* Document can be viewed in our online edition)

To the members of the HKVCA, I thank you very much for allowing me to share my collecting hobby and interest with

The Sgt Gander Project Update

JP Bear

Well, Hello to All - Sorry I won't be able to meet and see you this August, but I do look forward to next year, AMEN!

I wanted to pass on to you how things are developing on my project. I have had help from Craig Baird, Producer of CBC, Canadian History Ehx podcasts, to produce my trailer for the film, that I will use to help pitch my idea to various production companies.

I have opened a "GoFundMe Account" to help me with some of my research and development expenses that I have incurred over the years of getting the project up and off the ground.

I have been in contact with the Newfoundland Dog Club of Canada (NDCC) and the Newfoundland Dog Club of America (NDCA) to pass on to their Regional Clubs to ask them for financial support.

I have been using the internet, with ZOOM communication to meet with various film professionals and have been receiving a lot of positive input and support from them. Some of the people who I have "met" with on ZOOM, are Canadian Documentary Filmmakers, and they keep helping with a push to make this dream come true.

I will include my GoFundMe account info, so if you happen to know someone who would like to see the trailer and possibly,

BC Region Report



Gerry Tuppert

It certainly has been quiet on the Pacific coast for more than obvious reasons. As we are all aware most veteran gatherings and conventions have been cancelled or like ours, postponed.

The calendar days just keep rolling along despite any pandemics. Yet there is still a meaningful way we can show our support and commemorate our milestone event. Our association President Mike Babin, asked the membership

you. A large thanks to my family for being understanding during the many years this project took to complete. To my very dear friend Gray Scrimgeour for his guidance, encouragement and assistance during this pursuit, thank you Gray. A thank you to the NMM, when I presented my vision for "The Hong Kong Story", their response was "do it", their excellent work was much appreciated. A very big thank you to the PHSC for publishing this work and sharing this knowledge with their membership and the public.

they or someone they know who would like to help, I would appreciate it.

<https://www.gofundme.com/manage/sgt-gander-and-the-battle-of-hong-kong/donations>

Let me say this - I do not feel members of the HKVCA should be contributors to my fund, not that I wouldn't appreciate it, but because your father's, husbands and family members have already given so much for so many.

This I truly believe, and I hold all your prayers and good wishes for a successful completion for my project close to my heart! In this time of turmoil, with this pandemic, I continually pray for your continued good health and that we stay safe and strong.

I am excited with the upcoming activities I am getting involved with and I pray that when we meet next August, 2021, that you will all be celebrating with me at the positive conclusion of seeing the "finished product" up on the screen, be it in a school, on television or in a cinema.

Once again Thank You for All You Do for Me and God Bless You All!!

I hope, if you [see the Trailer](#), that you like it!

to consider laying a wreath and holding a minute of contemplation at our respective places of commemoration. Here in BC, I know we can count on a goodly number of our members to take a few moments on VJ Day and do just that. There will be no formal organized ceremonies here or across the country for that matter. That is why the cumulative effect

of all our individual moments at a cenotaph can and will be so important.

Book of Remembrance.



I am more than pleased to announce that our Book of Remembrance will finally make its way to the printers. Final proofs were approved last week and twelve limited copies will be distributed to various military museums and exhibits right across the country, starting in Nanaimo, BC and all the way to the

citadel in Halifax, Nova Scotia and points in between.

Thanks to the skills of our webmaster Jim Trick, there will be a digital version available for all to peruse. The intent is for anyone to click on a link and scroll down the pages to the name you are familiar with. More on that later, as this all takes time to work out the details.

Prairie Prose



Carol Hadley

Greetings from the Prairie Region. Hope you are all healthy and safe as we transition into a new lifestyle.

Spring has arrived by the calendar, but the weather has been challenging and we certainly had some surprises in March.

Covid-19 has put our normal world in a new perspective with many changes in ordinary processes like grocery shopping, etc. As you have already heard our 75th Anniversary Convention in Ottawa has been pushed to August 2020, which will also be the 80th Anniversary of Canada's participation in the Battle of Hong Kong. We hope to see you all next year.

Nationally, the Association has been holding conference call meetings for several years now, so our monthly meetings have kept each region informed on events and activities. Personally, with family and friends, we have become virtual communicators to keep in touch. It is especially hard on our young grandsons, but they send us pictures and Facetime with what activities they have been doing in virtual school. A different way of doing things. I miss the hugs.

We were saddened by the passing of Ralph MacLean, of Calgary, AB, on Saturday, March 14, 2020 at the age of 97 years. Ralph was a great supporter of our Association and active until this past year. Our sincere sympathy to the family and friends. We will remember them.

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.

There is something very sobering about reading page after page of all those family surnames. Some names are instantly recognizable and we can assume they are from a certain geographical area of the country. The 27% French names in the Royal Rifles regiment is an example of that representation.

We hope that wherever you are there is an opportunity to see it firsthand. Then you can nudge the person next to you and say there is my relative's name and this is what he did for his country.

The last sentence of the book's dedication reads as follows:

This book, commissioned on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of their Homecoming is dedicated to their service and to the families who sacrificed so much in their absence.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer.

Pat Peterson and her sister Alison, daughters of George Peterson, stated that it's difficult to stay in touch with him in the care home. The Deer Lodge care home staff do their best to keep the family informed. We think of him often and wish him well.

As you can imagine our monthly meetings in this Region (in Winnipeg) have halted as a safety issue. We have had no business to conduct as all activities have been cancelled or postponed. Especially celebrations for the 75th Anniversary of VE day, Manitoba's 150 birthday, etc. We had a date lined up for a Plaque presentation in Carman in early May, however, the virus situation has put that on hold, and we are hoping for September if it's safe to do so.

We have confirmed with the Manitoba Legislature that we can have the Hong Kong Veterans flag fly in August and December at the Cenotaph on Memorial Blvd in Winnipeg.

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, 2020 for this event and we will send out a notice to confirm the date closer to that time.

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 you can supply to keep our records up to date. Also, if you have a specific story about homecoming when the soldiers returned to Canada and their hometown, please send it to me or to our webmaster.

We appreciate the assistance from Grant Mitchell, (Barry Mitchell's son and an HKVCA member) for working on the

new stamp project. His expertise created the HKVCA stamp that you have the opportunity of ordering elsewhere in the newsletter. Thank you, Grant.

Ontario Offerings



(Shelagh Purcell, Cobourg, daughter of Leonard B. Corrigan, WG, X40 – Shelagh is our area rep correspondent who connects with our non-online HKVCA members in Ontario.)

While many people in Canada celebrate May 8th as the end of the Second World War, those of us connected to the Defence of Hong Kong remember instead VJ Day - August 15th, 1945. Fighting ceased on that day, but the return of Canadians who had been imprisoned in Hong Kong and Japan came home some months later. It took time to try to restore health for the men who had suffered unspeakable treatment from their capture Christmas Day, 1941 to August 15th, 1945. And some never did recover.

Having to cancel our HKVCA Convention planned for Ottawa in August this year is unfortunate but necessary.

There are still those family members who remember the return of the veterans. Those living in Ontario include:

- Oda Barlow, Richmond Hill, widow of Edwin Barlow, RCASC, B89635;
- Agnes Fehr, St. Catharines, widow of Victor O. Fehr, RRC, B68310;
- Gloria Fortune, Toronto, widow of Herbert R. Fortune, WG, H6548;
- Esther Jane Geraghty, Burlington, widow of Donald Geraghty, RRC, B45551;
- Jean Killoran, Sarnia, widow of John Killoran, RRC, E30507;
- Margaret MacDonald, Oshawa, widow of Allison MacDonald, RRC, E29974;
- Mrs. F Nugent, Toronto, widow of William F. Nugent, WG, X64;
- Dorothy Sauson, St. Thomas, widow of Oliver Ray Sauson, RRC, E29902;
- Madeline Smith, Port Stanley, widow of John H. Smith, RRC, E30121;

Quebec Region Report



Lucette Mailloux Muir

Greetings everyone during this difficult time and hope you are all keeping well.

God Bless!

- June Smith, St. Catharines, widow of Harold A. Smith, RRC, B40918;
- Yvonne Southworth, Lindsay, widow of Donald Southworth, RRC, C65332;
- Mrs. Elizabeth Stroud, Toronto, widow of John Stroud, RRC, B76772;
- Grace Thornton, Waterdown, widow of Howard E Thornton, WG, L13325.

Some women would have been married at the start of the expedition to Hong Kong, others married after the veterans returned. But all would have memories of the experience of their husbands.

Children too had memories to share about Hong Kong as they grew up.

- Jim Hurd, Smith Falls, son of Edmund Lionel Hurd, RRC, X14 remembers going to Sherbrooke, Quebec when his father came back;
- Barry Fair, London, son of John Grey Fair, RRC, E29982 speaks of the many artifacts of the war at his home;
- Frank Miller, Burlington, son of David R. Miller, RRC, E30613;
- Barbara Cunningham-Drew, Blenheim, daughter of Winston Cunningham, CDC, X08;
- Donna Drimmie, Ancaster, daughter of Victor Oliver Fehr, RRC, B68310.

It was always a special time when we could get together and share memories. Perhaps another year minus the virus for our next HKVCA Convention!

I invite all HKVCA members to submit their stories. Their memories of growing up with a Defence of Hong Kong participant. Let us not lose this piece of history. Submit to webmaster@hkvca.ca

In Quebec things are still slow but gradually getting back to a sort of “normal pace”

Our activities are still on hold for our Plaque presentations and/or other gatherings until restrictions are changed.

Since our national commemorative ceremony next August due to the Covid-19 will not be held, we are encouraging our members when and where possible to commemorate in some way, the 75th Anniversary in honour of our 'C' Force

Veterans by depositing a wreath, flowers, small flag, poppy or two minutes of silence or just a prayer at their local cenotaph or gravestone.

Wishing a Happy Father's Day to all dads.

Take care and Stay Safe.

Atlantic Region Report

No report for this issue.

HKVCA Store



Put Your Stamp On It

The Association has designed a new HKVCA stamp for the exclusive use of its members.

You can order a sheet of 50 of these handsome stamps, each with a mailing value of a regular letter mail stamp for just \$65.00.

To place an order send a cheque for \$65.00 to:

HKVCA
% 22 Tunis Bay,
Winnipeg, MB
R3T 2X1

Something Special!!!

Our own HKVCA flag



Banner with 2" fringe and pole sleeve. 36" x 45" \$130.00 each



Flag - Nylon with rope and toggle, 27" x 54"- \$110.00 each, 36" x 72" - \$130.00 each

Includes shipping costs

Cheque made out to HKVCA and send to:

PO Box 381
Winnipeg, MB R3C 2H6

Questions?? Call Barry Mitchell 204-269-1497