



WASURERU-NAI "Never Forget"



National Newsletter of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association

Autumn 2024 Edition

Editor: Jim Trick

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President's Message



Mike Babin

I hope you've all been able to enjoy the summer months. Here in my town of Toronto we've had lots of rainstorms, but also some very welcome warm and sunny days.

80th Anniversary of VJ Day

We are now just one year away from our 80th Anniversary of VJ Day commemoration! Your planning committee has been working hard (even over the summer!) to pull together the many details needed to make the event a success. In her article elsewhere in this newsletter, Planning Committee Chair Kathie Carlson details the array of fascinating activities you and your family will be able to participate in. It's going to be fantastic!

To make the event as affordable as possible for you we are very interested in finding companies and individuals who would contribute by way of partnerships. This could be direct financial support, or "in-kind" support such as providing services like printing or transportation. If you know of a potential supporter, please contact Kathie Carlson at 2025reunion@hkvca.ca. Kathie can provide you with a terrific handout you can use to describe the event and how partners can help.

VJ Day Commemorations

There were several commemorations of VJ Day last week across the country, and you'll find descriptions and photos in the "Regions" section of the newsletter. Thanks to everyone who organized and participated in these!

Plaques and Gravestone Markers

Aside from our Memorial Wall, perhaps the most successful country-wide program the HKVCA has produced is our Commemorative Plaque. There are now well over 50 of these installed in Legions and other locations across Canada, with more in the works. They are free of charge and provide an excellent opportunity to educate Canadians about the Battle of Hong Kong. Contact your Regional Director if you have a location in mind!

Lori Atkinson Smith and Derrill Henderson continue to offer our gravestone marker. This is a very elegant way to indicate a Hong Kong Veteran's grave. Read more about this fine program elsewhere in this newsletter.

Theatre

Ontario's Stratford Festival has just announced its lineup of plays being offered next season. The Festival is the largest classical repertory theatre company in North America, and

has a superb reputation. One of their offerings next season will be “Forgiveness” ... a play based on Mark Sakamoto’s award-winning book “[Forgiveness: A Gift From My Grandparents](#)” which tells the story of his grandparents, one of whom was Hong Kong Veteran Ralph MacLean. This is a “must see” for Ontario members!

Fall is beckoning, the leaves are turning colour and Halloween is not far away. Make the most of it!

We Will Remember Them

From the Editor



Jim Trick

For this issue, we’ve managed to corral quite a bit of interesting information from our submitters. Thank you!

The 80th

A lot has been going on with the preparation for our 80th Anniversary Reunion. I’ve been with HKVCA since around 2004, and have participated in and attended several of these affairs, and never have I seen the amount of preparation and coordination that is currently taking place. Kathie, Mike and their committee are creating an event that you don’t want to miss. More information can be found later in the newsletter.



The Work of Many

The product you hold in your hand, or view on the screen, is a result of much effort and dedication by our group of volunteers. First of all, our contributors. We depend on them to let us know what is going on, what is coming up in the near future, and to provide glimpses back into ‘C’ Force history. There would be no newsletter without you - thanks and keep those articles coming!

Online Update

Jim and Lori

HKVCA Website Updates

- We’ve added the book Official History of the Canadian Army in the Second World War, [linked from our submissions area](#).
- We’ve updated and reorganized our collection on commemorative visits to HK and Japan (and added the link in the “About Us” category on our home page). [Take a look](#). We’re also on the scrounge for any other records of commemorative visits through the years. Feel free to send along what you have to our Contact address.

No one likes to read copy that contains typos, confusing sentence structure, and less than pleasing layout. This is where our proofreaders shine. Thanks to Kathie, Lori, Barbara and Anne we can produce a product of which we can be proud, and which enhances the presence of HKVCA. Thank you!

Now, just when you were starting to think that we are a little full of ourselves, let me assure you that there is always room for improvement. We ask two things of our readers:

- Let us know if you spot a typo, factual error, or, indeed anything that is not right. We can’t change the paper copy but we can fix the problem in our online version.
- Don’t hesitate to suggest future topics or layout changes. We want to improve and make our newsletter more meaningful for our readers.

Photos in this Issue

To save space and shoehorn this issue into 12 pages, we’ve had to reduce the print size of several photos. Our [online version](#) is a great place to visit to see them full-size.

- As many of you know, one way the POWs found to record their experiences was through poetry and drawings. We’ve started a page highlighting these efforts [here](#). Feel free to contribute!

Page Missing



our active links.

It looks like the page you’re after has been m.c. due to our continuous housekeeping or our re. Let’s see what we can do to find the informati. For starters take a gander at the links that run. Hopefully, you’ll find a link that will take you w. Clicking on the house icon will take you to our

The Dreaded “404”

Even the best-managed online offerings will offer up “Page Not Found” from time to time. Our HKVCA site is no exception.

Constant updates, deletions, and other activities virtually guarantee a meetup with “404” (in web speak). You can help minimize this occurrence by letting us know when the “404” is encountered. Just drop us a note indicating the page you were visiting when you clicked on the broken link. If the link leads to another page on our site, we’ll get right on it; if the link is to an external site we’ll do our best to contact the owner.

They Came Home Via the Philippines

Our good friend, Gene Labiuk, has contributed significantly to our site over the years. His passion for things-postal resulted in a four-part series extracted from the Postal History Society of Canada which we feature [here](#). He has authorized us to convert this document to HTML for easy reading on all web devices including smartphones.

This document contains a wealth of information on the period after VJ day when the LPOW (liberated prisoners of war) were being processed for a return to Canada. While the focus is on letters and the like, there is much more here, providing a comprehensive picture of the LPOW experiences as they made their way home.

[Take a look](#) and let us know what you think.

Our Vault

As some of you know, a few months ago we created an online information storage area called the Vault. Thanks to the work of volunteers such as Lori, Lillian, Barbara and others, the breadth of information collected on ‘C’ Force members has ballooned, and we needed a place to store it. Hence the Vault.

So, if you’re researching a ‘C’ Force member, don’t forget to check the vault following the instructions you’ll find on the report. I’ll admit it’s not the easiest route to navigate, but - hey- it’s Google.

“Traitor by Default”

I’ve been alerted to a recent book ([available from the Dundurn Press](#)) by Patrick Brode, published last April, focused on the trials of Kanao Inouye, the Kamloops Kid.

Description: *At the end of World War II, a young Japanese Canadian would stand trial and face execution for having committed war crimes and betraying his country.*

Have you read it? Let us know your thoughts.

Hong Kong Veterans Memorial Service Ottawa 2024

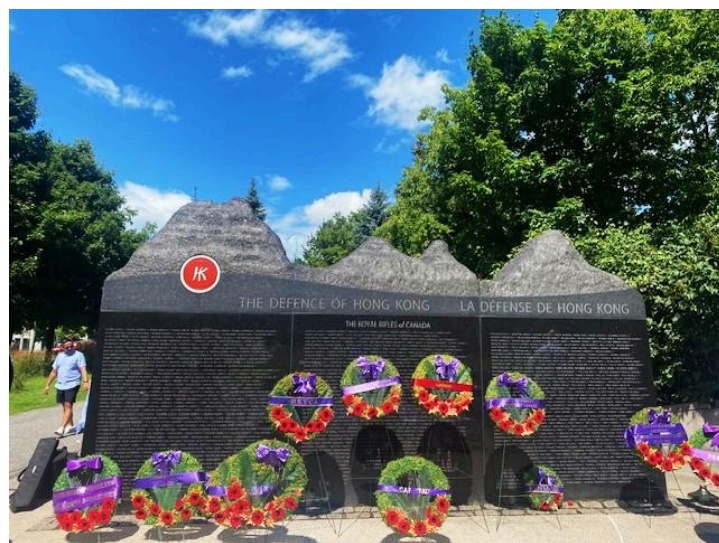


Ian Englehart

After a severe rain storm in Ottawa on Friday August 9, 2024, the sun shone brightly for the Hong Kong Veterans with a comfortable temperature of 24 C. The Hong Kong

Veterans Memorial Service was held on Saturday August 10, 2024 in Ottawa at the ‘C’ Force Memorial Wall also known as The Defense of Hong Kong Memorial Wall. This was to commemorate the 79th anniversary of the end of World War II in the Far East and to remember the brave Canadians who fought against the Japanese Imperial Army for 17 horrific days, surrendering on December 25th 1941 and becoming prisoners of war for 4 long years before coming home. This is the first ceremony where there were no surviving Hong Kong veterans left.

The ceremony was well attended by 70 people. Once again, the event was supported by the National Research Council (provided free parking) and the National Capital Commission (Memorial site upkeep).



The Defense of Hong Kong Memorial Wall following the ceremony. (Photo by Gwen Englehart)

The master of ceremony was Ian Englehart, son of Royal Rifles Veteran Harold Englehart.

Technical support was provided by Alan Sandeman providing microphone, speakers, music (Oh Canada and God Save the King). Once the service concluded the song Never Grow Old, written and sung by Alan, was played,



Derrill Henderson provided the Prayers and Benediction. (Courtesy Richard Lawrence Photography)

Live music for The Last Post / The Silence / The Lament / The Rouse was provided by bugler Marion Lajoie and two pipers from the Sons of Scotland Pipe Band, Bob Dery and Blair Buchanon. The pipers also played music before and after the ceremony.

The Act of Remembrance was given by Warrant Officer J. Kenneth L. Doyle.



Warrant Officer J. Kenneth L. Doyle giving the Act of Remembrance. (Photo by Gwen Englehart)

The Honourable Anita Vandenberg MP Ottawa West-Nepean and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of International Development gave a wonderful speech and laid a wreath on behalf of the Government of Canada. Mr Dawolu Saul laid a wreath on behalf of Veterans Affairs. RAdm (ret'd) Larry Murray laid a wreath on behalf of the Royal Canadian Legion. Dr. Jeff Noakes, laid a wreath on behalf of the Canadian War Museum.

It was an honour to have Warrant Officer J. Kenneth L. Doyle lay a wreath on behalf of the Canadian Armed Forces.

Mitzi Ross laid a wreath on behalf of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association. Julie Carver laid a wreath on behalf of the Indigenous Veterans. This is a new addition to recognize the sacrifices that Indigenous Veterans made in Hong Kong and World War II. Gerry Wharton laid a wreath on behalf of the Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans in Canada. Stéphane Ouellette laid a wreath on behalf of the Merchant Navy Commemorative Theme Project. Young Megan Mantha laid a wreath on behalf of The War Amps.

This year 16 family wreaths were laid. One of the wreaths was laid by Julie Carver, grand niece, on behalf of an Indigenous member of 'C' Force, Robert Blanchard, who was killed in Hong Kong. Gail Angel laid a wreath in memory of Gander, the Newfoundland dog mascot of the Royal Rifles of Canada, who died in combat and was

awarded the Dickin Medal (Victoria Cross for animals).



Young Megan Mantha laying a wreath on behalf of the War Amps at the Hong Kong Veterans

Memorial Service. (Photo courtesy of Richard Lawrence Photography)



Warrant Officer Stephen James, grandson, laying wreath for Hong Kong Veteran John James. (Photo courtesy of Richard Lawrence Photography)

Following the Memorial service, 16 attendees went to the Lord Elgin Hotel, Grill 41 for a luncheon.

The ceremony was Livestreamed and recorded via Facebook by Laura, Jo-Anne and Sarah Scaffidi, available at [this link](#).

Richard Lawrence, from Richard Lawrence Photography, graciously took a number of wonderful pictures that can be found on his website and in this article. If you are interested

in obtaining prints, you can [contact Richard Lawrence Photography](#) directly for pricing information.

From the Vaults: Objects Relating to the Canadian Experience in Hong Kong

Submitter: HKVCA member: John Russell

(submission edited)

---- Forwarded Message ----

From: Jeff Noakes <jeff.noakes@warmuseum.ca>

To: John Russell (email address suppressed)

Subject: RE: POW Albert J. Russell RRofC Regt# E-22957

Hello John,

Thank you for your email. It was good to have met you at the ceremony last Saturday. The article, which I worked on with my colleague Stacey Barker, can be found [here](#):

The direct link to the PDF is [here](#).

The article mentions a letter that was sent to your grandmother following your father's broadcast. As you may know, the Canadian government monitored these broadcasts, and after verifying the names and information contacted families to pass along news to them.

These files were microfilmed at some point, and the microfilm has since been digitized and made available

online. Recordings of your father and another prisoner of war (Kenneth Ewing, also of the RRC) were broadcast at the same time. Correspondence about the broadcast, including transcripts, starts [here](#).

There are a series of buttons (arrows to move to next image and previous image, etc.) above the scanned image of the microfilm. A number of follow-on documents, including transcripts and letters to next-of-kin, are found in the next images in the file. This includes the letter to your grandmother, as well as a letter to your uncle Robert's wife, since your father mentioned him in his broadcast.

I hope this information is of use, and please don't hesitate to let me know if you have any additional questions. Thanks again for the artifacts that you donated, and for your support of the Canadian War Museum.

All the best,

Jeff
Jeff Noakes, Ph.D.

Save The Date!

80th Anniversary Reunion August 14 to 17, 2025, Ottawa

Greetings from the 80th Anniversary Reunion Committee.

We hope your summer was all that you hoped it would be...next Summer will be one to remember!

As many of you have recently attended VJ Day ceremonies in your respective cities this past August, we have too! And our vision for the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day with you in Ottawa in 2025 is quickly coming into focus as we zoom in on the details of how to make this event exceptionally memorable.

As we've shared before, we will be hosting the 80th Anniversary of VJ Day on Friday, August 15th at our landmark Memorial Wall. The following day, we will continue to come together to remember and honour our history with a trip to the War Museum with a tour, meal and speaker on August 16th.

Your comfort attending these events is so important to us! We've made it a priority to make sure you feel like a VIP so we will endeavour to provide you with all the amenities that will ensure that you are able to sit comfortably, and if outside, to be hydrated and keep you protected from all kinds of Ottawa weather.

We are committed to creating a memorable and enjoyable experience for you as well as sociable and fun! We've made connections with a wide variety of presenters and entertainers and will be having what we are calling "break out sessions". This is designed for us to meet as small groups to hear and experience the rich tapestry of stories as well as time to socialize and enjoy our time together.

No reunion would be complete without our flagship Gala night on Saturday, August 16th. We promise great food, fabulous entertainers and a celebrity speaker. Any guesses who that may be??...

A huge thanks to all the members who have sent an email confirming their attendance. Haven't done that yet?? THIS IS YOUR CUE! We want to hear from you!! This GUARANTEES that you will receive the latest and greatest updates on how the planning is progressing and key dates and information needed once we get closer to event time. So if you are going to join us for the event of a lifetime, send an email with how many are attending to 2025reunion@hkvca.ca

In 2025 (which is coming faster than you know it) we will be sending out registration forms and the itinerary. We've made sure you will have all the right information at the right time.

The Committee has been working tirelessly throughout the summer, focusing on creating a partnership package to present to sponsors across the country, who we hope will generously donate funds to help cover some of the costs of our weekend Reunion.

The opportunity to ask for donations is open to any of our members, who might know a business in their communities who contribute to events like ours.

If you are someone who has connections to a local business or enterprise, please email us at 2025reunion@hkvca.ca for

Gravestone Markers update

Derrill Henderson and Lori Atkinson Smith

Derrill Henderson has been diligently walking through cemeteries this summer and affixing our brass HK gravestone markers to numerous graves in Eastern Canada. These red HK markers make our veterans' gravestones stand out.

We thank all of you who have donated money towards the purchase of the HK gravestone markers on the graves of our veterans who no longer have family.



*Gravestone Markers -
COLUMBARIUM OPTION
(Photo by Mike Babin)*

Derrill was asked a question a short time ago: "I would like one for my dad, but he is in a Columbarium". Well, we have that covered!

a package and we will send it back for you to present to your community sponsor. "Partnership Packages" are in both French and English. There is also an attachment on the Defence of Hong Kong which tells the story of the Battle of Hong Kong. We will need to know who you are approaching to avoid duplication.

Looking back to when we all came together to solicit funds for the Ottawa Memorial wall, you all answered the call and we achieved great things! This is another opportunity for you to contribute to an exceptional moment for our association, and we count on your support and connections!

Tax donation receipts are available. The site for donations at the Canada Helps Website: <http://www.hkvca.ca/donations>

One example of how our membership makes a difference is through the generous and expert support from Jon Stebbe; grandson of Larry Stebbe (Winnipeg Grenadier Hong Kong Veteran.) Jon, founder of Loudspace Marketing, will be leading our marketing and promotion campaign and will be donating his time and expertise to help us make this event user friendly, and capture our mission through the ads and promotional materials created for this amazing event.

We will keep you up to date through this newsletter and our HKVCA Website, and we are looking forward to meeting and reconnecting with you in Ottawa on August 14, 2025, so be sure to SAVE THAT DATE and share plans for the Reunion with your family and friends. Be sure to RSVP your interest to: 2025reunion@hkvca.ca and be sure to send all questions and inquiries to that email address. We look forward to hearing from you!!

Bye for Now!

The gravestone marker may be adhered to the door of the niche in a similar manner to a gravestone.

If there is a glass door on the niche, you could add a stand for the gravestone marker.

Gravestone markers can be purchased (or donations sent) by 2 options:

E-transferred to hkvca.national@gmail.com with the notation HK Gravestone Marker.

Indigenous Veterans Project



Pam Heinrichs

Well, the Indigenous Veterans Project is moving along with some momentum!

We are excited to announce that we have contracted with Sharon Parenteau to write

teaching resources for us. Sharon has been an Inner-City and Support Teacher for Indigenous Education before moving to the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF) as Provincial Education Coordinator. Recently, she retired as the General Manager of the Louis Riel Institute, the educational authority for the MMF. Sharon has extensive curriculum writing experience spanning 25 years. We are very excited to work with Sharon and welcome her aboard!

We are currently in negotiations with a researcher well versed in the history of the Battle of Hong Kong to contract with him to research the Indigenous members of the Royal Rifles. We hope to have the contract signed soon and in fact it might be by the time of publication of this newsletter!

We continue to research the names of the Winnipeg Grenadiers and do have a few more names to add to the Indigenous Veterans page on our website. Research is ongoing. You will also soon see the histories of some of the Indigenous veterans added to their Individual Report. The information will be added to the “Vault” part of our website. Instructions to access it are in each Individual Report.

We are also excited (lots of excitement happening in this column!) that we will have a booth highlighting the HKVCA and the Indigenous Veterans Project at the Manitoba Métis Federation Annual General Assembly in mid-October, 2024. The 3 day event is attended by over 3000 people and we look forward to promoting the Association and our Project!

I have reached out to some of the First Nation communities in Manitoba that some of our veterans were from in hopes of engaging with the community and family members of those veterans. In addition, I have contacted the Manitoba Southern

Or mail a cheque made out to HKVCA at:

HKVCA

Box 164

1826 Robertson Road

Ottawa K2H1B9

In the notes area indicate that the payment is for a Gravestone Marker. We will then contact you to arrange delivery details.

Chiefs’ Organization and their Veterans Coordinator is eager to work with us to commemorate the First Nations HK vets from communities that are members of SCO. As always, research and establishing contacts are ongoing.



Justin Woodcock and Robert Ouellette (grandson of Red River Métis Veteran) (Photo by Pam Heinrichs)

I was happy to see many people connected to the Indigenous veterans and their families attend the

Prairie Region VJ Day ceremony. The wreath laying was followed by an Honour Song, sung and drummed by Lance

Guilbault. Both MMF Minister of Métis Veterans, Shawn Nault, and Justin Woodcock, Veterans Coordinator for the Southern Chiefs’ Organization, brought greetings and heartfelt words that resonated with those in attendance.



Drummer Lance Guilbault and Robert Ouellette (Photo by Pam Heinrichs)

Speaking of words that resonate, I had a few comments made to me that I would like to share here. One of our Indigenous

guests said how it made them smile, to look around the room and see the number of “our people” in attendance, proud to wear their sashes and other regalia showing their identity—something that wasn’t happening at events such as this even a few years ago. Another Indigenous person at the event who has attended a number of times over the years since they were a

child, mentioned to me how the demographics of the room looked so different that day than it did years ago, referring to the number of Indigenous people/families in attendance. They said that the recognition of the Indigenous veterans and inclusivity of their families and culture in events by the HKVCA is an important contribution to the journey of reconciliation.

VJ Ceremony - Markham, ON

Judi Denison

The Markham Cenotaph, Veteran's Square was the location for a 79th Anniversary of the Victory over Japan Day ceremony, co-hosted by the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers) Ontario Association, the Hong Kong Ex-Servicemen's

Association (Ontario Branch) and the Markham District Veterans Association.

Judi Denison, daughter of Elmer Denison (RRC) and niece of Everette Denison (RRC) laying HKVCA wreath. (Used with permission)



Piper Ian Steingazner of the York Regional Police Pipes and Drums band led the flags party. The Master of Ceremony was Jasmine Lau. Markham District Veterans' Association President Michele Chalmers gave an address. Judi Denison recounted the story of the Battle of Hong Kong, using Mike Babin's address. Lucia Liu recited the poem, "In Flanders Fields". Larry Lau (President of the Royal Hong Kong Regiment, the Volunteers, Ontario Association) recited "The Fallen". Edward Leung (Vice Chairperson, Hong Kong Chapter of The Ontario St. John Fellowship) read the poem "The Siege of Hong Kong."

Dignitaries who addressed the group included the Honourable Helena Jaczek (MP for Markham-Stouffville), Bill Pang (MPP for Markham-Unionville), Deputy Mayor Michael Chan (City of Markham) and the Reverend Alex Wong.

BC Region Report



Gerry Tuppert

Greetings from the west coast. The BC membership are all in agreement that we have been spared the nasty fire season of last year. We hope this moderation in climate extremities

As always, in addition to honouring our veterans, it is heartwarming to know that this work is bringing people together and helping to re-establish kinship ties of long ago. And as always, maarsii to the Métis Veterans Legacy Program for providing us with funding to allow us to do this work.

The ceremony was very powerful and respectful. I met a man who was there to remember the battle and to say, "Thank you," for his father. His father had lived in Hong Kong, and witnessed the battle as a youth. He did not speak English, and did not understand the significance of the maple leaf. When he emigrated to Canada, he recognized the maple leaf. This man attended a ceremony every year and his son, like many, kept the tradition to say thank you for his father. Like this gentleman, we were all there to say thank you to those who served, to those who stayed and to those who came home.



Ceremony attendees. (Used with permission)

Lest we forget.

will continue into all areas and long into the new year.

Once again our fall newsletter recognizes those who have made an effort to commemorate our veterans by visiting a cenotaph on VJ DAY.

It's difficult to gauge the number of members who actually place a wreath but in reality there are many more who take a moment of quiet reflection to think of their loved ones on this the most important date for the saga of our HK Veterans.

This year my sister from Chicago was visiting and she took the opportunity to accompany me to the local cenotaph and share that sombre moment with her sibling. The act of commemoration is even more memorable when shared with a loved one.

We Will Remember Them

There has been a spurt of activity in the BC Region due to the diligent efforts of our inspired member Mr Jim Laidlaw. As you may have read in a previous newsletter Jim has approached Legions in his immediate area that may have had HK veterans as members. It would seem that even if no one on the executive board can remember an HK veteran on their WW2 honour list they are still captivated by the poignancy of the story.

As a result, they are receptive to the suggestion of installing our HK commemorative plaque.

This was the case for these three Legions who were more than amenable to our plaque placements. The following are abbreviated notes from Jim's activity report:

Royal Canadian Legion Br114 Lynn Canyon.

The formal presentation of the commemorative plaque was initially planned for Monday, June 24, 2024 during their Annual General Meeting. However, with Game 7 of the Stanley Cup playoffs occurring at the same time, the presentation, and the Annual General Meeting, were rescheduled for Sunday, June 23, 2024. The formal presentation of the plaque was made by Jim Laidlaw to the Executive Committee and membership of RCL 114. Following the presentation, the formal business of RCL 114 was conducted, as it was their last meeting before the summer break.



Left to right: Executive Committee of Royal Canadian Legion 114 (Lynn Valley) with the HKVCA Commemorative Plaque. Accepting the plaque Joe Phillips, President is second from right. (Photo used with permission)

While initially planned for installation within the main area of the hall it has since been decided that the plaque would be installed at their main entrance, where it could be viewed by all who enter and exit the Legion.

Royal Canadian Legion Br 83 South Burnaby

Once the plaque was obtained by Mr. Laidlaw, arrangements for its formal presentation were finalized. On Friday July 19, 2024, Jim provided another brief summary of the plaque and of 'C' Force to the assembled Legion membership. At the conclusion of the presentation, the formal hand-over of the



plaque was made, with Mr. Joe Cairns (President) accepting the plaque on behalf of RCL 83.

Joe Cairns (President) accepting a plaque from Jim Laidlaw (HKVCA). (Photo used with permission).

The RCL 83 Branch is located on the main floor of a relatively new, purpose-built building. The Legion Hall is on the ground floor and the Legion-owned apartments above. The main hall

contains various memorabilia on its walls, and the Commemorative Plaque was placed near the main entrance of the hall, for all to see.



Exterior view of the Branch 83 building.

Many thanks to Tammy Marchioni for arranging the meetings, and to Joe Cairns for introductions and receiving the plaque on behalf of the South Burnaby branch.

Royal Canadian Legion Br 008 White Rock.

Once the plaque was obtained by Mr. Laidlaw, arrangements were made for its formal presentation. On Saturday, July 27, 2024, Mr. Laidlaw visited RCL Br 008, and provided a brief summary of the plaque, and of 'C' Force, to the assembled Legion membership. At the conclusion of the presentation, the formal hand-over of the plaque was made, with Chris Voisey (President), David Williams (1st Vice President), Susan Comeau (2nd Vice President), and veteran Mr. Percy Smith, accepting the plaque on behalf of RCL 008.

The RCL 008 Branch is within a stand-alone building, with several sections for meetings, recreation and other activities. Mr. Laidlaw was told that a couple of years ago, the interior of the Legion Hall was repaired and repainted, with most of the old memorabilia removed and placed in storage. Mr. Voisey was quite pleased with the commemorative plaque, as it would represent "something new" to install, as it had yet to be decided what, if any, of the old memorabilia would be reinstated.



Left to right: Mr. Percy Smith (WW2 Burma Veteran), Mr. Chris Voisey (President), Mr. Jim Laidlaw, Mr. David Williams (1st VP) and Ms. Susan Comeau (2nd VP). (Photo used with permission)

One memorable encounter at the plaque handover event was meeting Mr. Percy Smith, a World War II veteran (102 years young), who had been part of the Burma campaign and was well aware of the Hong Kong story.

Many thanks to Gail Green for arranging the meetings and making the order request, and to Chris Voisey for his warm welcome and arrangements for the formal presentation.



Prairie Prose

Carol Hadley

Greetings to all our members.

We hope you are enjoying some great times as we rejuvenate and relax over the summer. Our region has experienced many challenges with the weather, but I guess that's to be expected, especially with the northern fires, changes in the climate, and it's shared with other regions, so we are not alone.

The Prairie monthly meetings are held in person at Smitty's Restaurant on Pembina and Grant at 11:30 a.m. on the second Thursday of every month. A request has been made to have a zoom meeting as part of our monthly gatherings as many members have a distance to travel and we will try this at our September 12th meeting.



The Lethbridge City Hall was lit up on August 15th for VJ Day. Local media were notified, and an article was available for the press as to the history of the Battle of Hong Kong. The 80th

Anniversary of VJ Day in 2025 with the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association Reunion, will be held in Ottawa on August 14th to 17th, 2025.

There are other small projects on hold and we're looking for volunteers to take them on: 1. Pull up banner on the POW

Cheers again Jim Laidlaw for your dedication and as we publish this article RCL Br 44 Vancouver is scheduled for a September 19th installation too! If you're close by drop in.

One thing of note we can all say about our plaque installations across the country is that the Legions find the best location in their buildings to display them. That is a true testament to the fresh look and feel of the graphics on the plaque and of course how the message of remembrance and sacrifice still resonates with Canadians everywhere.

I wish you all a very pleasant end of summer and great fall colours to enjoy. I am also hopeful you are busy making plans for the 2025 Ottawa convention. See you there!

camps in Japan; 2. Pull up banner on the Indigenous/Métis HK members; 3. Scanning materials to be sent to the website for archiving; 4. Identifying unmarked graves of HK vets and requesting Stones from Last Post Fund; 5. Identifying gravestones that don't have the HK disk on them.

I finally received the service records for my father, Borge Agerbak, WG HK (it took 6 months, so be patient if you have done the same). There were 252 pages of information – some things I knew, and some were new to me. However, there were many facts of his medical information that were missing or not accurate. I did confirm that he was in 3 POW camps, and he was only a mountain range away from Hiroshima when the A bomb was dropped which is why he and others that were in that camp had bouts of cancer. Here is the link if you wish to spend the \$5 for your family member's information - [Library and Archives Canada](https://www.libraryandarchives.ca).

There will be a Museum in Pilot Mound, Manitoba that will feature items and information on the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Battle of Hong Kong. It's due to open in September. The 38 Service Battalion Combat Service Support Museum (CSS) (website www.servicebattalion.ca) will receive some of the items that came from #1 ANAVETS in their showcases. They are located at Minto Armouries in Winnipeg as are the Winnipeg Grenadier Cadets.

The Colour Party (Alex Taylor and Stan Lopata) attended a Peacekeepers ceremony at the Cenotaph on August 9. At the VJ Day service, we welcomed back Tim Klumper

(former WG cadet) to the Colour Party. We will be attending the Portuguese Veterans ceremony on September 7th in Winnipeg. Stan Lopata escorted the HKVA flag to the Legislature buildings for them to have it fly at the cenotaph for the month of August. Stan and Alex have registered to attend the teacher's conference (MSSTA) at the end of October where they will share valuable information to

educators to use in the classrooms.



Roxanna Fenning and Joyce Sewell laid a wreath for HKVCA (Photo used with permission)

Our VJ Day was held on a blistering hot day on August 11, 2024, at

Brookside Cemetery with the wreath laying part of the ceremony in the Field of Honour with many trees to shelter our attendees. Our Padre Rev. Canon Murray Still, grandson of Howard Joseph Oige, WG HK, gave the blessings for our service and we were honoured to have Drummer Lance Guilbault perform the "Memorial Song" to honour our 'C' Force. Our wreath was laid by Joyce Sewell, escort Roxanna Fenning, daughter and granddaughter of Edwin Swanson, WG, HK. We were pleased to have Robert Ouellette, grandson of Joseph Ouellette, WG HK as escort for those wreath layers who didn't have one. Wreath layers were Pam Shaw for VAC, Justin Woodcock – Southern Chiefs, Minister Shawn Nault, Red River Métis Veterans, Brian Mayes St. Vital Councillor and Shawn Dobson St. James Councillor, Veteran and Military Affairs, Roger Mussard, RCAF Ass'n, Peter Corriea Portuguese Veterans, Charles Cameron and Len Barnsley from Peacekeepers, Terry McCharles from 283 ANAVETS escort Donna Hartie, Ken Marley, St. James Legion #4, Dave Harper, President Prince Edward Legion #81, Judy Bradley, IOOF.

A reception with light refreshments, was held following at Neil Bardal Centre where we opened with the Protocol assisted by Barry Mitchell, son of Vaughan Mitchell, WG HK, Pam Heinrichs and David Heinrichs, daughter and grandson of Ferdinand Poitras, WG HK. A display with

some of John Osborn's medals, letters, etc and items of William Bell, WG HK brought by Marleen Bell. We had the popular portfolios available for people to browse the many newspaper articles that were put together by the WG Ladies Auxiliary. It was wonderful to see our members attend to pay tribute to their family members of 'C' Force. We had about 70 members and guests attend with members of the Winnipeg Grenadier Cadets and officers. The bugler and piper added a completeness to the ceremony.

Devin Beaudry, Manitoba Director of Aboriginal Veterans. (Pam Heinrichs photo)



Our guest speaker was Winnipeg Councillor Brian Mayes who was presented a plaque in

recognition of his work in 2013/14 with George Peterson on the Arden 7 park recognizing the 7 Winnipeg Grenadier "boys" from Arden Avenue in St. Vital. We also had a few words from Justin Woodcock – Southern Chiefs and Minister Shawn Nault, Red River Métis Veterans reminding us of the many indigenous and Métis members of 'C' Force.

We will be preparing for Remembrance Day soon and hope to have our display present at the site again this year as it serves as a reminder of Canada's involvement in Hong Kong. We will have some save the date flyers available to encourage attendance at our 2025 event.

Please check out [Barry's store](#) on the website if you are looking for some way to pay tribute to the HK vets – we have some lawn signs, copies of "NO REASON WHY" – by Carl Vincent, HKVCA flags, license plate covers, Coloured Honour Rolls, etc.

Our crazy weather continues with a cool, wet spell and then a scorching, hot spell so be safe and look forward to more moderate weather.

Take care everyone, God Bless.

Ontario Offerings



Shelagh Purcell

The sunshine was welcome Saturday August 10th after a monsoon-like rain Friday. It meant a perfect day to remember our Hong Kong Veterans. I hope that on the 80th Anniversary next year families can hear more of the stories of

Hong Kong. Some dads never spoke about their experience - some never stopped talking.

Barry Fair (John Grey Fair- RRC) remembers much of his father's return home and the endless medical appointments and hospital visits.

Donna Drimmie's father (Victor Oliver Fehr- RRC) spoke to her for a grade eight history project but asked her not to repeat it.

Susan Hytonen is taking her mother Irene Firlotte (Lawrence Firlotte- RRC) on long walks in the lovely summer weather. Irene will be 99 in January.

It was good to see Susan Ewing at the ceremony in Ottawa. She was able to connect with several old friends that day.

Barbara Drew (Winston Cunningham- CDC) is fine - just not as mobile as she would like, but enjoying the good summer days.

Oda Barlow (Edwin Barlow- RCASC) has received a letter from the museum - Bay Chaleur - that her Hong Kong memorabilia will be well taken care of at their facility. She appreciated hearing from them.

Quebec Region Report



Lucette Mailloux Muir

Greetings everyone,

Hope you all enjoyed a wonderful summer with family and friends. Our prayers go out to all who lived through or are still affected by the forest fires.

As usual, activities are slower in the region during the summer months. Many families and members gathered to pay respect to our veterans during V-J Ceremonies held in different locations across the province while others paid their respect privately.

Since our last newsletter, we lost two supporters for our association, Orly Benwell of New Richmond, QC and Francis Maguire Corbett living in Dollard-des-Ormeaux (Montreal) originally from Quebec City.

Recently our secretary Debbie Batley-Everett and her committee have been working on a local banner project to honour all our Royal Rifles of Canada Veterans to be displayed soon and during the Armistice period.

Jim Hurd (Edmund Lionel Hurd- RRC) was pleased to hear that two wreaths on Saturday were from Bury, Quebec from where 32 Hong Kong Veterans came.

Esther Jane Geraghty (Donald Geraghty- RRC) has moved to a new address, Alexandra Place in Waterdown.

Jean Killoran (John Killoran- RRC) is living in a nursing home which helps for things she can't manage herself. She enjoyed a recent day being taken out to have hot chocolate by a staff person on a warm sunny day.

Mavis Martin (John Martin- RRC) had mistaken the date for the ceremony in Ottawa. But a wreath was placed for her, knowing she had planned to be there .

In previous editions, there has been much talk about the 80th Anniversary "Legacy of Remembrance" to be held in Ottawa, ON, August 14 to 17, 2025. Please take note of these dates and if at all possible, let us know your intention in attending this very important gathering of commemorations. The committee is fast at work and would appreciate your help with this info in order to make this gathering a very memorable one.

More detailed information on the 80th Anniversary elsewhere in this edition. Thank you all for your help and looking forward to meeting you in Ottawa 2025.

Your regional committee is always working on keeping the memory alive. We will soon be sending out our local news to all our members and later, our Season Greetings and news at that time.

Thank you all from Quebec. Enjoy a wonderful, colourful and safe autumn season.

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.

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