

**HONG KONG VETERANS' ASSOCIATION**  
**QUEBEC MARITIMES BRANCH**  
**BANJO GOSSIP NEWSLETTER 5.3 BAMBOO TELEGRAPH**  
**MARCH, 1998**

**REUNION 1998**

I may as well start off with news of the 1998 reunion .

As mentioned in the December letter, the reunion will take place in Sherbrooke on August 13, 14, 15, & 16, at the Hotel Le President, 3535 King Street. By the time you read this you will have received the details from Lucette Muir. Please answer as soon as you can so that her job will be made easier. As mentioned also, Ossie Clark and Charlie Gordon are spearheading the operation, with Lucette Muir and Derrill Henderson (are you surprised?) doing the heavy work. Lucette carried the ball for the reunion in Granby a few years ago when husband Ken died while in the process of organizing it. She also organized the Legion Provincial biennial meeting in Granby a couple of years ago, so she knows how it should be done. Derrill is no amateur in organizing conventions. Remember the Ottawa reunion of 1995? Derrill was the mainspring of that operation.

Since starting this letter I received my package of documents from Lucette. There is no doubt that she has things well in control and we should look forward to a great reunion.

Please note the change from previous years. The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING will take place on FRIDAY morning, August 14. This is an important meeting, since we have a decision to make on the future organization of the Branch. If there is to be no change in the organization, there will be an election of officers for the next two years.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Albert Russell has taken on the job of chairman of the Nominating Committee. Albert wishes you to submit to him names for the various offices. The elected offices are as follows: President, First Vice-President, Second Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chairman, and five directors. These offices are presently held by: Philip Doddridge, President, Arnold Ross, 1st Vice President, Reginald Law, 2nd Vice-President, Robert Barter, Secretary, Harold Englehart, Treasurer, Lawrence Rattie, Membership, and

Directors Alex Archibald, Lionel Hurd, Lloyd Doull, and Oswald Clark. One directorship remains vacant due to the death of Joseph Bujold.

If you wish to suggest names for any of these offices you should contact Albert Russell, 125 de Navarre, #105, St.Lambert, QC, J4S 1R5, tel. 514-671-6500.

**LAST POST**

As of this writing I have only one death of a HK Vet, Q-M Branch, to report, and that is the passing of JAMES CHRISTOPHER WEBB. His wife, Norma, tells me that Chris died on December 11. He had been very ill for a number of years. The last time I saw him was at the reunion in Fredericton. He was in a wheelchair then and hooked up to oxygen. NELSON WEST of the BC Branch passed on on February 19. WE WILL REMEMBER THEM.

Charlie Gordon's wife, Betty, died suddenly at Christmas time. Although Charlie is not a HK Vet, he has been a staunch supporter of all things concerning the Hong Kong Vets and is an honorary member of the Q-M Branch. On behalf of the Branch I extend sincere condolences to Charlie in his time of sorrow.

**LOST TRAILS**

I have had letters returned from Herbert T MacKay, Mrs. Wanda Mann, George Barron, Mrs. Helen MacAulay, Mrs. John Martin, Mrs John Shalala, and Mrs. Larry Wilson. Any help you can give me will be appreciated.

**BOOKS**

Paul Dallain has introduced me to a book which should be of interest, especially to the Grenadiers. The title is "17 Days until Christmas", written by Leo Paul Berard, ex-Grenadier, Pub. 1997 LP Berard, ISBN 0-9683049-0-7. Printed by Barrie Press. Berard chronicles his experiences starting with peace-time soldiering until his imprisonment in Hong Kong and Japan and his return home after the war. I enjoyed it and I think you would too.



3

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**GREAT MOLASSES FLOOD**

In 1919 the US Industrial Alcohol Company of Boston had over 2 million gallons of molasses stored in a giant tank near the corner of Commercial and Causway Streets. It is believed that it was a sudden unseasonable rise in temperature that caused the tank to burst and send most if not all of the molasses surging down the street on January 15, in waves up to 15 feet in depth and at speeds of 35 miles per hour. The flood killed 21 people and injured 150 others, while knocking down buildings, crushing cars, and knocking over a train trestle. Imagine the clean-up process. It is said that streetcar seats were sticky as far west as Worcester. Just thought you'd like to know.

**PENSION REVIEW**

By now you have received a letter from Susan E. Ruttan, District Pension Advocate in Victoria, explaining that a review of pensions is being undertaken, the main purpose being to determine whether all cases, Canada-wide, have been treated equitably with regard to pension benefits.

As you know, Harry Atkinson, our Pensions and Welfare Officer, has been labouring long and hard on our behalf, and it is mainly because of his efforts that this review is being done. He has asked me, by way of this letter, to urge you to sign and return the duplicate copy of the letter. It will give strength to the attempt to have everyone's pension adjusted upwards, so even if you are receiving the maximum, or are otherwise contented with your assessment, please sign and return the copy. If you have questions, there is a telephone number listed at the top of the letter that you can call and reverse charges. Please do so. No one's pension will be reduced.

**SLAVE LABOUR**

I have been told that some of our members have the notion that some favoured few have already received a sum of money in connection with the bid for slave labour pay from the Japanese. Please believe that there is no substance whatsoever to this rumour. If ever any money is forthcoming I am sure that all eligible persons

will receive it at the same time. In the meantime, don't spend it until you get it.

**DUES**

Membership dues are \$15.00 per year and are payable to Lawrence Rattie, 508 Thorncrest, Dorval, QC, H9P 2M6. If you do not have a card dated Sept. 1997 Aug 1998 your dues have not been paid for this year. Lawrence would be overjoyed to hear from you. He and Colleen are back home after spending a couple of months in Florida. Your dues are what keeps this Association alive and allows it to serve you and keep you informed of events which are important to Hong Kong Veterans and their wives or widows.

**ANNIVERSARIES**

Comrade Albert Russell and Mrs. celebrated their 51st anniversary this month. On behalf of all of us, here's wishing them many more! There must be others who have reached the half-century mark of married life. Let's hear from you. The personal lives and fortunes of our comrades are of interest to us all.

**NEWSLETTERS**

News from Lionel of the BC Branch and just today I received John Stroud's Newsletter from the Ontario Branch. Thanks a lot. Your news and opinions are of value.

**TRIVIA**

Here are some newspaper headlines that deserve a second look:

1. Plane too close to ground, crash probe told.
2. War dims hope for peace.
3. Red tape holds up new bridge.
4. Typhoon rips through cemetery: hundreds dead.
5. Panda mating fails; veterinarian takes over.

That's it for now, folks. You can expect to hear from me again in June. Don't forget to return your registration for the reunion to Lucette as soon as you are able to.

Be good to each other and may God bless.

Philip



2

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**BIOKI**

I have word that Lionel Lecouffe was in hospital in Moncton. I haven't heard recently of his condition. Reg Law keeps me posted on conditions affecting our New Brunswick comrades; Charlie Brady is in Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto. Apparently he was transferred there when the January ice storm restricted hospital service in the Montreal area. A call or a card to Charlie would help cheer him up.

**STE ANNE'S HOSPITAL**

Mr. Simon Coakely of Veterans' Affairs has been appointed to negotiate the transfer of some facilities of the Ste. Anne's Hospital to the province.

As I understand it from correspondence from Mr. Coakeley and Mr. Tony Manglaviti, manager of the transfer project, occupation of the hospital by veterans has dwindled to about 600. Although it may seem that we are losing some share in the institution, Mr. Coakeley assures us that there will be no reduction in the quality of care given to patients at the hospital. "The transfer will pave the way to civilian admissions, notably older people.....who also need excellent care and services."

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Your letters are great. They keep us all informed of what goes on in your neck of the woods and keep alive the old esprit-de-corps. In no particular order, I report reception of the following:

From Norma Webb reporting the death of husband Chris; from Margaret Bannister, commenting on the passing of husband, Ken, enquiring about dues, and other matters; from Phyllis Mann-McDavid with comments on the death of her mother, Mrs. Weston Mann; from Bob Dunlop with a generous donation "to help any of our fellows that may be caught in that bad weather"; from Ken Pifher with a clipping on the River Kwai; from Lionel Speller with a report on happenings in the BC Branch and items for our museum; from Beryl Kaine with a correction to her address; from John Stroud, a clipping from the Toronto Sun; from Lionel

Speller with news of BC Branch and newspaper clippings of reviews of two books worth reading: first, "The Rape of Nanking: the Forgotten Holocaust of World War II", by Iris Chang, Harper Collins; \$25.50; second, "C Force to Hong Kong; A Canadian Catastrophe, 1941-1945" by Brereton Greenhaus: Dundurn Press; Canadian War Museum Historical Publications. \$29.99.; from Sheila Sheridan with news of her parents (Ratties) and information on donations that Lawrence has received;

**DONATIONS**

From: Mrs Ruth Kellas, Mrs. Louise Coleman, Mrs. Dorothy Davidson, Mrs. Hilda Grimshaw, Mrs. Thelma Misson, Mrs. Irene Clarke, Mrs. Mildred MacPherson, Mrs. Celia Glendenning, and from the men: Milton MacDonald, Jean Lalime, Albert Russell, Arley Enright, Randolph Benwell, Donald Geraghty, Kenneth Pifher, Leonard Doiron, Arthur Roberts, Royce Sweet, LTS Doull, Donald Dainard, Ken Court,

**IN MEMORIUM**

Mrs. Rita Bujold in memory of husband Joseph  
Mary Robinson in memory of husband Cliff  
Lawrence Ross in memory of brothers Raymond and Leo.

A phone call from Lawrence last evening informs me that a letter is in the mail with more names for this column. To meet my March 30 self-imposed deadline, I must get this letter finished, printed and mailed this week. I have other commitments which also must respect March 30. Therefore, if your name is not recorded here as having made a donation, please be assured that it will appear in the next letter.

**REMEMBRANCE SERVICE HONG KONG**

A copy of the letter I received from the Canadian Consulate in Hong Kong will explain it all. Please see the letter attached. I will make a display of the photos and programme at the reunion in Sherbrooke.

Canadian Consulate General



Consulat Général du Canada

14/F, One Exchange Square  
8 Connaught Place  
Central, Hong Kong  
<http://www.canada.org.hk>

December 10, 1997

Mr. Philip Doddridge, President  
Hong Kong Veterans Association of Canada  
Quebec-Maritimes Branch  
365 Doddridge Road  
New Richmond, QC  
Canada G0C 2B0

Dear Mr. Doddridge,

Thank you for your continued support of the annual Canadian Remembrance Service, which this year was held on December 7 at the Sai Wan War Cemetery. I am pleased to inform you that the service went extremely well. Over 100 people attended the ceremony and 24 wreaths were laid at the Cross of Sacrifice, including the one laid on your behalf.

The sacrifice of 550 Canadians in defense of Hong Kong is an important dimension of our relationship with Hong Kong. This year's service had a particular emphasis on youth as we attempted to underline the debt of gratitude we all share. We are particularly pleased that this year's service, the 50th anniversary of the Canadian community in Hong Kong holding the memorial service and the first since the transition to Chinese sovereignty, was such a success. The support of your organization was instrumental to this success.

I am enclosing several copies of the service programme and photographs of the event for your retention. Again, thank you for your involvement with this 50th anniversary event.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Perry Cormier".  
Perry Cormier  
Consul