

HKVCA 2018 Annual General Meeting

President's Report

It has been an honour to serve as your President over the last year. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank our Board of Directors: Emmie Flanagan, Carol Hadley, Bernard Leblanc, Lucette Mailloux Muir, Barry Mitchell, Mitzi Ross and Gerry Tuppert; and representing our Veterans, Phil Doddridge. They have all donated their time and energy to helping keep our Association working.

I would like to make a special mention of Ian Doull, who was elected Secretary at our last AGM. Shortly afterwards he suddenly and unexpectedly passed away. Ian was a dedicated and valuable contributor to the HKVCA and we miss him greatly. I want to thank Lucette Mailloux for stepping into Ian's role and being our Secretary for the last year.

As of today, 11 Hong Kong Veterans remain alive. Although as you heard in Barry's financial report, we have not had a major project to rally around such as the Memorial Wall, we have nevertheless continued to engage with Canadians in our efforts to keep the Battle of Hong Kong in the public view even as the members of C Force pass on. I'd like to use this opportunity to tell you about some of what's been done since our last AGM.

Perhaps the most visible is our program to place descriptive plaques into Legions and other locations where they will serve as education, a reminder of the Battle and of commemoration. Most of the 35 installed and planned plaques are in locations where Hong Kong Veterans spent time after the war. The program has proven very popular with Legion branches, and I encourage everyone to find places which would welcome the installation of one. Lori Atkinson Smith deserves huge credit for coming up with this idea and making it a reality. For those of you reading this online, you can click [here](#) for more information on how to obtain a plaque.

Our web site and Facebook pages continue to provide members, students, teachers and other interested parties with a wealth of information about the history, and about the Veterans themselves.

For example, Lillian Randall and Lori Atkinson Smith have been working on a fascinating project to add as much information as possible about the Hong Kong Veterans to our web site and our Facebook pages, including photos, dates of birth and death, cemetery, and any documents in the public domain or provided by relatives. Many people have been able to use this tremendous resource to find out more about their family member who was a member of C Force, no matter how distant a relative. You can add to this treasure trove by visiting the HKVCA [Facebook page](#).

And speaking of Facebook, we have over 1,200 followers of our Facebook page. It has proven to be a very popular way of sharing information about the Battle of Hong Kong. Dan James deserves a lot of credit for his work in keeping our Facebook presence going. Visit and add your thoughts!

We know that more and more people would rather pay their bills online than send a cheque through the mail. In response, Jim Trick and Barry Mitchell have developed a system that allows our members to pay their dues when renewing, and for new members to register and pay. This is a great step forward!

As beautiful and poignant as our Memorial Wall is, it lacks one thing: easy parking. On weekends visitors can use the parking lot across the street at the NRC building, but that is not convenient for those needing handicap parking. And during the week when the NRC is operating, the lot is unavailable. So with the help of Derrill Henderson and Randy Wing we are pursuing a project to provide several parking

HKVCA 2018 Annual General Meeting

spots close to the Wall. Randy was able to secure consulting services on a pro bono basis to do the initial study and design, along with submission to the City of Ottawa for its approval, and Derrill is working with Veterans Affairs Canada to attempt to obtain funding to mitigate the cost. We should hear in the next few months how much funding we should expect from VAC, and then we will have to mount our own funding campaign to make up the difference.

I'm sure you are all avid readers of our national newsletter, which we endeavour to publish 4 times per year. Since taking over the role of its editors and publishers, Jim and Anne Trick have done a terrific job of publishing and distributing a highly informative publication. In doing so they have found ways to streamline its production and reducing the cost of mailing out paper copies to those who continue to opt for them. I must tell you, though, that this is an expensive undertaking. Nearly all the revenue we receive annually from your membership dues is spent on printing and mailing the newsletter! I know that many of those who receive the paper copy find it the best option for their needs, but I'm asking you to carefully consider switching to receiving it online if you possibly can. Emailing costs us next to nothing, and frees up our funds for other uses.

I'd like to close by offering my thanks to all of you who volunteer your time to the memory of the Battle of Hong Kong. By doing so, you are honouring our Veterans and their sacrifices.

We will remember them.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Babin
President