

## HKVCA AGM – April 25, 2023

### Ontario Region Report

As I am also the Ontario Region Director, I will provide this report. Some of our activities in Ontario overlap the HKVCA's national responsibilities, so please excuse me if there is any confusion!

At the end of 2022 we had 1 veteran, 13 widows and 135 regular members for a total of 149 members. Of course, we have very sadly now lost our region's only veteran.

As in the other regions, COVID has somewhat constrained our events.

But in spite of that, our Ottawa contingent has maintained the tradition of a large annual ceremony at our Memorial Wall, for the last two years in August on or around V-J Day. Technology has enabled us to livestream the ceremony so that everyone could watch it. Brian Tang and Ian Englehart have made the ceremony possible.

Jon Reid did several presentations last year at libraries in Ontario discussing his book "The Captain Was a Doctor" about his father, Capt John Reid.

I had the honour of speaking at the dedication of George MacDonell's medal set at the Royal Canadian Military Institute last June. George couldn't attend in person due to his health, but did watch from home, again due to the wonders of technology! Not only were George's medals dedicated, but also those of nursing sister Lt Kay Christie, which had previously been in the RCMI's collection. Both sets are now prominently displayed in the RCMI's medals room, along with a plaque commemorating Canada's Victoria Cross awardees, including CSM John Osborn.

In London, ON last August, Debbie Legg and her sisters dedicated a memorial stone at London's Remembrance Gardens, a lovely area set aside by members of the community to pay tribute to the city's veterans. A large group, including city and provincial politicians, attended.

One of our Ontario members, Jason Kelly, has moved to Hong Kong and has ably represented the HKVCA at several commemorative events there, including the annual ceremony at Sai Wan Military Cemetery and the reopening of the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence.

Lori Atkinson Smith continues her yeoman work keeping our membership information up to date. She has also encouraged our members to switch to receiving the national newsletter online instead of on paper, and I believe that Ontario leads the country in this cost-saving measure. She is also heavily involved, along with Lillian Rosch and Dan James, in maintaining our Facebook presence. We have over 1,600 Facebook followers, many of whom actively contribute!

And finally, Shelagh Purcell regularly telephones our members who do not use email, and although their numbers are dwindling, Shelagh's contacts are essential to keeping these members as part of the HKVCA family. She also coordinates the HKVCA's presence at the Remembrance Day ceremony in Cobourg. Thanks, Shelagh!

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Respectfully submitted,

Mike Babin

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