

Prairie Region has 178 regular members, 15 widows and no veterans of for a total 193 members. We have been holding regular monthly meetings in Winnipeg and send out information by email. The Kathy Carlson in Alberta has held several events with the community and her area reps have been involved. We have attended regular monthly virtual meetings of the Board of Directors and had quarterly communication with our members through the national newsletter.

We have couple items on hold – The first is Julie Carver’s great uncle’s war medals dedication and a plaque at the Manitoba Metis Federation centre on May 16 at 1 p.m.; the second is a plaque dedication at the St. Boniface/Norwood Legion on May 21 at 7 p.m. if anyone wishes to attend.

Stan Lopata and Alex Taylor attend the Red River Heritage Fair in Winnipeg in May of each year where they engage with students regarding C Force history and again in October at the Manitoba Social Science Teachers conference where they display information for the teachers use.

HK flag will be flying at the Cenotaph in August and December in Winnipeg, thanks to the Provincial government and Stan Lopata for looking after dropping it off and picking it up.

We were pleased to have about 50 people attend the Winnipeg, MB service for VJ Day on August 19, 2023, that took place in the Field of Honour at Brookside Cemetery at the Winnipeg Grenadier Memorial stone. There were several of our HKVCA members in attendance and some participated in our service with the political representatives. We also had several veteran associations represented and a few carried their Colours with our Colour Party (Alex Taylor and Stan Lopata). The piper and bugler were a welcome addition to our service.

On November 11, 2023, there were several Remembrance Day services to attend but we attended the main service at the Convention Centre in downtown Winnipeg. Several members throughout Manitoba participated in services for VJ Day and Remembrance Day – Dennis Stewart in Selkirk, Gord Arbuckle of Pilot Mound, Judy Preston in Reston.

Prairie Region sold some lawn signs to encourage awareness of C Force and the Battle of Hong Kong. We have a few remaining from our original order. Anyone wanting one can contact Barry Mitchell.

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. She also

chaired our Elections Committee with Norma Fuchs, Cynthia Melanson, and Jim Trick.

We were saddened by the loss of widows and members whose names will appear in the Last Post at this meeting and we will remember them.

We are contacted every year by family members and friends of C Force for more information on their family member. We encourage them to use the website as an excellent resource and if they have information to send it along to our researchers to include in the history of the member.

Indigenous Veterans of C Force Project—Co-ordinated by Pam Heinrichs

The Indigenous Veterans of C Force Project began in the spring of 2021. It was determined that the project was being undertaken in the spirit of reconciliation with the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. As a result, a Reconciliation Statement of the HKVCA was developed and is posted on our website. The Reconciliation Statement is as follows and is kept in mind as the Project proceeds:

The HKVCA acknowledges the past and present harms of colonization on the Indigenous peoples in Canada. Among the injustices suffered by them was that many Indigenous veterans of Canada's military did not receive the same honours, benefits or assistance as did non-Indigenous veterans. We are committed to working to understand the injustices and to educating our members and the general public about them. The HKVCA is working to identify and recognize the Indigenous veterans of 'C' Force. Honouring them in our Association and learning their stories is a step on the path to reconciliation.

We have reached out in our newsletters, on social media, and by word of mouth, asking families of Indigenous veterans of C Force to contact us regarding the project. We have retained the services of the Centre des patrimoines/St. Boniface Historical Society to assist us in identifying the Indigenous vets, starting with the Winnipeg Grenadiers. To date, from a starting list of approximately 150 names, the Centre has identified about 80 families. There may be a more comprehensive report from Pam Heinrichs. This work is ongoing.

We have added to Barry's store copies of **"NO REASON WHY"**—by **Carl Vincent**. We have this book digitally on our website, but it can be a challenge to spend time staring at the computer screen. This book, of which we have an ample supply has been called the best book written about Canada's involvement in the defence of Hong Kong. It covers the background of the regiments; the politics

involved; the battle; years of imprisonment; and the return to Canada. No library on the subject on Hong Kong is complete without this book!

We continue this year with holding a VJ Day service – date to be determined and will be attending the November 11 services in Winnipeg and other members will attend in their areas. We are grateful to Kathy Carlson for chairing the 80th Anniversary in 2025. This is going to be a wonderful tribute to the members of C Force. Thank you to all the members who volunteer to help with our events.

Hoping that everyone is staying safe and keeping well.

God Bless

Respectfully submitted, Carol Hadley, Board of Directors - Prairie Region;
Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association www.hkvca.ca