

ON Director's Report to AGM – May 2024

I'd like to start by thanking all of our Ontario members who volunteered their time in 2023. In various ways they did their part to maintain the memory of 'C' Force, which is so much more important now that we have lost our last remaining Veterans.

It's always risky to name names and events for fear of leaving someone or an event out, but I would like to mention a few:

- Ian Englehart and Brian Tang for once again organizing and running a wonderful V-J Day ceremony at the Hong Kong Veterans Memorial Wall in Ottawa.
- Debbie Legg for organizing an excellent display on the Battle of Hong Kong in London, ON for Remembrance Day.
- Sam Chiu, a native of Hong Kong now living in Canada. Sam is a well-known philatelist (a stamp collector). He has collected covers or postcards sent by 'C' Force members, and late last year visited Sai Wan War Cemetery in Hong Kong to photograph 6 of his covers in front of the gravestones of the soldiers who had sent them. You can see these on our web site.
- Mark Purcell and Lori Atkinson Smith for their devotion to the HKVCA. Lori handles a number of tasks for Ontario, including maintaining our membership records, making many contributions to our Facebook page, and managing our national gravestone marker program. Mark has been our Ontario Treasurer for many years.

I mentioned the ceremony in Ottawa, but there were also ceremonies elsewhere, including V-J Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies at the cenotaph in Markham ON, north of Toronto. These were both notable for the involvement of the Chinese-Canadian community and the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (The Volunteers).

There were also a few special events, including a Military History Night presentation at the Royal Canadian Military Institute in Toronto given by Jon Reid and Mike Babin, and an event at the War Museum in Ottawa featuring the documentary film "The Fence". Both Jon Reid and Mike Babin participated in this event.

I'd also like to recognize two of our Ontario widows, Oda Barlow and Barbara Hardy, who celebrated their 100th birthdays in 2023. Congratulations to both!

I'd like to close by encouraging everyone to look for opportunities to install one of our terrific commemorative plaques in a Legion or other suitable location in your community. It's a great way to educate our fellow Canadians!

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Babin
Ontario Region Director