

# HONG KONG VETERANS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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## *President's Report*

To all who may read this report, we wish you a very Happy & Prosperous New Year and may it bring you nothing but good health & prosperity. During 2002 we saw a great many changes in our Association with the loss of many of our stalwart members and they will be sorely missed.

Our reunion dinner was once again a huge success, thanks to Juliet and her very capable helpers. Carol Hadley and Barry Mitchell and all the others, who joined in to make it so, please accept our sincere thanks for your help.

The display of Hong Kong artefacts in our Mayor's office foyer was well received by both the general public and the media alike. Although people who were in attendance for the placing of the display were few, we were told that a lot of interest was shown during the time it was in the foyer. These artefacts will eventually be turned over to the Manitoba Museum for safekeeping and will also be shown from time to time.

The interviews that were filmed during our convention in Winnipeg in August 2001 were finally shown on the History channel on November 13<sup>th</sup> last year, under the title "Turning Points of History, Slaves of the Rising Sun". This episode is supposed to be aired again but we were not given the exact date. For those of you who phoned and asked where a copy could be obtained, at that time I told you to contact the History Channel direct, now I am pleased to tell you to write to Barner-Alper Productions Inc., Suite 700- 366 Adelaide St. W., Toronto, ON, M5V 1R9. Or you may phone (416) 979-0676 for more details, as I do not know the cost of the tape.

In November last year I received a package from Phil Doddridge, our National President via Derrill Henderson that contained five of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medals that were awarded to Carol Hadley, Lora Wachtendorf, Bob Lytle, Bill Maltman and the fifth medal posthumously for Bert Delbridge. It was my honour to present these

medals to the well deserving recipients at our monthly luncheon meeting in December. Bert's daughter Linda accepted the award. I understand this medal was also awarded posthumously to Harry Atkinson and was presented to his daughter, Lori Smith, at a ceremony that took place earlier in Toronto. I believe it was Phil who made the nominations for these people to receive these medals. I was also asked to attend a ceremony held in Transcona on December 15<sup>th</sup> in which their Member of Parliament, the Honourable Mr Bill Blaikie, honoured three members of our colour party with this award. One of the necessary qualifications to receive this award states "the recipient had made significant contribution to Canada or to a particular province, territory, region or a community within Canada or have made an outstanding achievement abroad that brings credit to Canada". I believe each of these people has done that and I congratulate them whole-heartedly and thank them for a job well done.

The second meeting of the DVA Prairie Regional Advisory Council was held at DVA headquarters in Winnipeg on December 4<sup>th</sup> with approximately 40 people in attendance from all 3 Prairie Provinces. It was a good meeting with a lot of discussion on how DVA could better serve the needs of our aging veterans; another topic was the preparation and the serving of food in the various hospitals and nursing homes, where some of our veterans are now living. Their trays are checked as to the quantity of food they consume daily and if any food is uneaten the veteran is asked why, is it because there was too much or was it not suitable to their taste, etc. All subjects that were discussed will again be brought up at the next meeting to be held in Calgary Alberta some time in March of this year. I haven't quite decided if I will attend but I'm seriously thinking about it.

Carol Hadley & Juliet Lafortune looked after placing our wreath at the Remembrance Day service in Winnipeg & our colour Party also participate in the service at the Convention Centre. They all deserve a big thank you for their performance. I did attend the service but did not play an active role this year. I was asked to be the guest speaker at the Remembrance Day service held at Churchill High School in Winnipeg on November 8<sup>th</sup>, which I was very pleased to accept. Unfortunately the time allotted to me was very short, so I made a promise to return at a later date to talk to the students.

On reviewing this report I can't think of anything more to tell you, so enough for now. I leave you once more with the wish of all the best to

you & yours & once again may the wind always be at your back.

Sincerely & in Comradeship, George N. Peterson

\*\*\*\* Derrill Henderson has been in touch with the producers of the video and working on a price (\$15 – \$20) for the “Slaves of the Rising Sun”. We will take orders and let you know when they are available. Should be soon \*\*\*\*

(\*\* Our President and humble George was also the proud recipient of the Queen’s Golden Jubilee Medal\*\*)

### **Hong Kong Veterans’ Commemorative Association**

Hello to one and all!

Hope you all had a great Christmas and New Year. I don’t know about any of you but I’m having a hard time getting off my butt to get things accomplished. I moved at the end of November and had Christmas Dinner for 22 people. But while all this was going on, we had the HK display at City Hall. We presented the Grenadier Cadet with a musk ox and they gave us Ferdinand. Barry’s media release was well done. The media picked up on it and did great coverage. The traffic of people going to City Hall to see the display was in the high numbers. The display came down November 21 and it now in safekeeping at the museum. Hopefully it will be all on display at the Museum by spring. If you have any articles you would like to preserve please call or write me at:

Juliet Lafortune, 4 – 42 Donwood Dr,  
Winnipeg, MB R2G 0J9  
PH – 204-338-3354, CELL 204-294-9335

I’m still working on getting out the certificates of appreciation, so if you haven’t received yours yet – it should be out shortly – like I said – I’m in slow speed right now.

**William Nicholson** (WG) is in hospital in the states and is too critical to move back to Canada. He is from Victoria.

If you have any information or would just like to talk to me – don’t hesitate to call.

All the best to you in 2003.

Juliet Lafortune, Regional Director

### **Winnipeg Grenadier’s Hong Kong Trust Fund**

- Donna Remillard

We are seeking donations for the Winnipeg Grenadiers Hong Kong Trust Fund and cheques should be made out in that name (not HKVA). The Hong Kong Veterans’ Association makes donations to this fund in memory of each deceased veteran member.

The monies in this fund are used for the issue of the Winnipeg Grenadiers Hong Kong veterans, for their higher education.

Contributions can be directed to:

Donna Remillard at 303-740 Kenaston Boulevard, Winnipeg, MB R3N 1Y3 or phone her at 489-0008.

### **Website Updates**

Don’t forget to keep monitoring these websites as information is continually being added.

[www.hkvca.ca](http://www.hkvca.ca) - new info here, check it out.

[www.geocities.com/rcwpc](http://www.geocities.com/rcwpc).

[www.cofepow.org.uk](http://www.cofepow.org.uk).

[www.hongkongwardiary.com](http://www.hongkongwardiary.com)

[www.blackyvero.com](http://www.blackyvero.com)

<http://ca.geocities.com/surfchops/index.html>

[www.geocities.com/jeffyam/hongkong\\_war](http://www.geocities.com/jeffyam/hongkong_war)

### **Last Post**

Ron J. Routledge, P-7541 R.C.C.S died September 11, 2002

Ted Kurluk, K-36009 R.C.C.S died October 3, 2002

Carl Olsson, E-30502 RRC died October 21, 2002

Allan Whitman, # H-6434 died October 29, 2002

William Overton, C-97584 C.P.C. died November 23, 2002

Arthur Diehl, H 6785, WG, died November 24, 2002

Bertrand Roy, RRC, F-30452, died December 10, 2002

Duncan A. Benton WG, H-2403, died January 1, 2003

Lorna Fox, widow of Stewart W. Fox, H 6274, WG, died October 23, 2002

Ethel Cake, special friend of John Pollock, died October 14, 2002

Martha Adams, widow of Frederick George Adams, H-6502 WG, died December 29, 2002

*Our thoughts and prayers are extended to all the families and friends.  
“We will remember them”*

### **Notes from Barry Mitchell, Treasurer and Membership**

Greetings to all in the HKVA and the Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association. I extend my best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year!!

The past year was certainly a busy one for all those involved with Manitoba's Hong Kong Vets Commemorative Association and I commend my fellow executives on the work they did in organizing the display at City Hall, the annual Reunion Dinner and the many ceremonies at which

we were represented. I know George Peterson made numerous appearances to lay wreaths and give talks to various groups in Winnipeg and across Manitoba, as did Juliet Lafortune and Carol Hadley.

The mailbag has not been as busy as I would have liked, but let's hope slow and steady wins the race. The memberships have been arriving a few at a time and I'm sure this will pick up now that the New Year has arrived. In any event, I'll be sending out a reminder in the coming weeks, as we like to have the dues in hand at the beginning of the year and not wait until the end. Please don't hesitate to send in your cheque with a little extra to cover the ever-increasing cost of putting together the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from everybody, so even a cheerful 'hello' would be welcome! Thanks to those who were kind enough to send us a Christmas card. Much appreciated!

We have a couple of notes to share with you from some of our members, although correspondence has been light of late. **Lloyd O'Leary** of **Thunder Bay, Ontario**, sent a generous donation to the HKVA after winning big on Saint Patrick's Day. Lloyd forwarded a nice card and photo of himself holding up 50 new \$100 bills and all dressed up with his Irish good luck charms--Notre Dame Irish jersey, 'Erin' hat, shamrock badge, etc. etc. Many thanks to Lloyd for sharing in his good fortune. We were also pleased to receive a note from **Ladena Mabely** of **Winnipeg** who was looking forward to travelling to Brandon, MB for a family function which unfortunately conflicted with our Annual Reunion. Ladena sends her best wishes to all. It was also nice to hear from **Shirley Andrews** who dropped us a line along with her donation in memory of husband Frank. Thanks for your thoughtful gift, Shirley.

It was recently brought to my attention that with the widows now receiving free membership in the Commemorative Association, they no longer require an updated card each year and thus don't receive a decal. I know that most of us have become used to having one of our classy decals on the back window of our cars, or perhaps on a fridge or tool box, and expect to be able to update the decal each year. I would be more than happy to accommodate any request for a decal from any of our honorary and lifetime members but humbly suggest that a small donation accompany such a request. We currently have an ample supply of 2002 and 2003 decals and would be pleased to send you one by return mail.

Which reminds me--**Barry's Mail Order** hasn't been nearly busy enough in the last couple of months and we want to do our part in 'waving the flag' with our paraphernalia. Remember that we now have a wide range of highly attractive merchandise, including:

- Sweatshirt--\$20.00 (M, L, XL, XXL)

- Lapel Pin--\$5.00 (Torch Logo)
- Large Pin--\$20.00 (Maple Leaf Logo)
- Tie--\$30.00 (Winnipeg Grenadier)
- Honour Roll--\$15.00 (Ready to Frame)
- Blazer Crest--\$20.00 (Commemorative)

If you are interested in any of these items, please drop me a line and we'll rush your purchase right out to you. Remember all those who will be attending the National Convention next summer, that we want to see you well dressed and urge you to take this opportunity to order your pins, crest, etc.

Now is the time for everyone to be sending in their dues for 2003--and of course for 2002 if you are a little behind. If you aren't sure whether or not you have paid, just give me a call (204-269-1497) and we'll bring you up-to-date. I will be sending a notice to all those owing at the end of January but you need not wait for the bill. Please send your \$15.00 membership cheque to P.O. Box 381, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3C 2H6. Widows and Veterans are automatically members of the Commemorative Association free of charge and for life.

My best wishes for health and happiness in 2003!! Cheers, Barry Mitchell

### *Annual Dinner*

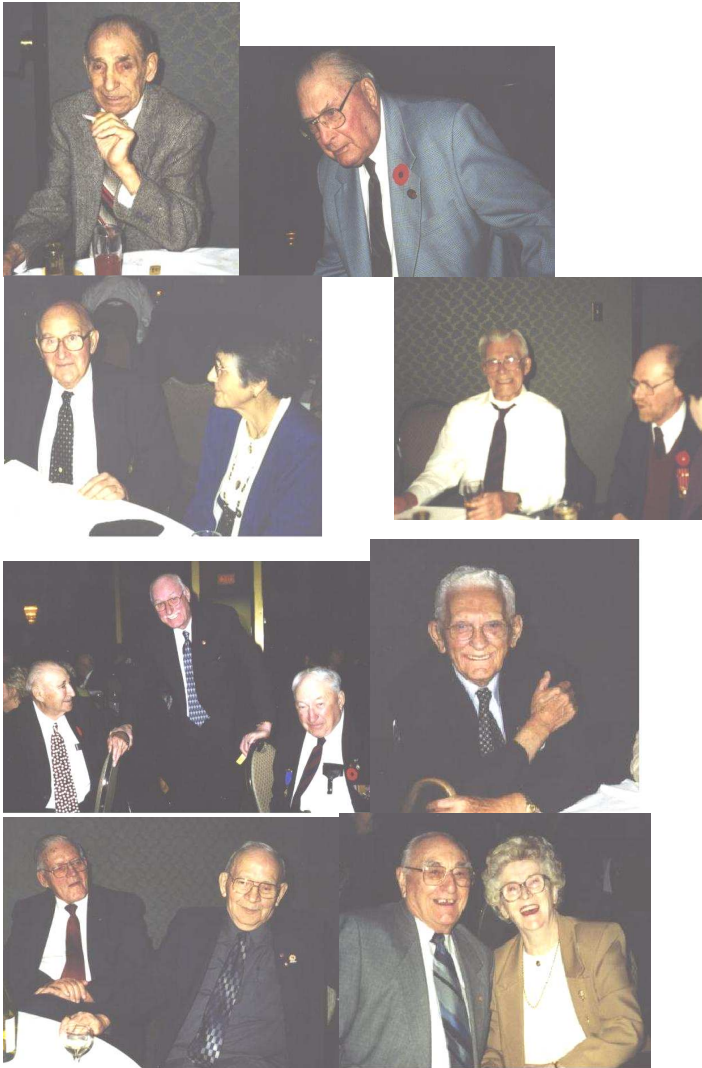
Our Annual Dinner was held on October 26, 2002 at the Holiday Inn Airport West with 175 people attending. Juliet Lafortune, Regional Director of Manitoba HKVCA, did her usual terrific job of organizing the dinner to the delight of all who attended.

We were pleased that the following veterans attended and many brought family members:

<b>Garfield Lowe</b>	<b>Joe Michalko</b>
<b>Grant Shepherd</b>	<b>Bill Maltman</b>
<b>William Bell</b>	<b>Fred Wright</b>
<b>Freddie Poitras</b>	<b>John James</b>
<b>Tom Dewar</b>	<b>Glyn Chipping</b>
<b>John Maruschak</b>	<b>Cliff Matthews</b>
<b>George Peterson</b>	<b>Roy Robinson</b>
<b>Alf Matthews</b>	<b>Harry Gyselman</b>
<b>Soren Paulson</b>	<b>George Harbour</b>

Gentlemen, we enjoyed seeing you, meeting with your families and hopefully you will be at the monthly luncheon at Rae & Jerry's on Portage Ave every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month.





until they get results. They understand that the delays may be upsetting to the vets- and have asked us to reassure everyone that they will work at this until they are completed.

Hopefully we will have good news in the New Year that the projects are complete. We'll let you know and possibly have pictures to show you.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

- Back in August, I received an email from a man in Ireland who was searching the internet to find information on **Pte. Komorsky** (nickname Komo), HKVDC only to find in one of our 1999 newsletters that he had died. He explained that his mother's adopted brother, Barney kept a diary while he was a POW in Hong Kong. 'Komo' and his mother (Zenis) lived in Hong Kong when the war broke out. When Komo and Barney were interred together, Zenis was able to get small packages of food to them to keep them going. This generosity and sacrifice helped to save both the men's lives. Our Irishman was looking for more information about his uncle Barney and hoped that by contacting Komo's family he might learn more. Through inquiries in Hong Kong, I learned that Komo's widow lived in BC. Our BC members sent her address and I have given Mrs. Komorsky the contact in Ireland.

It is so exciting to unite people this way and Mrs. Komorsky has promised to let me know the results of their communication.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Our website is so important for many families who are trying to find family or friends that may have been lost in the war or just lost track of over the years. They use the site to link to us in an attempt to fill the gap so they have closure to their loss of family or friends. This is why it is important for the veteran's stories to be captured in print before they are lost and an important part of Canadian History is gone.

An example of a specific search is this -- a grand nephew of **Private CLIFFORD MARSH**, H/41672, who died on Saturday 12 February 1944 in Japan. Does anyone have any information for the family on his time as a POW or how he died?

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Then there is Russ from Ontario who is trying to find an old girlfriend from grade 3 and her father was possibly in Hong Kong and his name was Burkett. The only record that could be found was a Brit from the Middlesex unit. Oh well, we aim to help everyone. It was cute anyway.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

Rick Bullock is looking for info, pictures etc., on the Sham Shui Po P.O.W. camp. His late grandfather, **Thomas Ward** was in this camp, he was with the Grenadiers. His grandfather was Thomas L. Ward, H 6649 and if anyone has information about Thomas Ward as a POW please let me know. He writes: "Thomas Lawrence Ward was my grandfather, he passed away in 1965, I was only 8 at the time. My Mother (Thomas's daughter),

### *Miscellaneous Items*

- Many months ago I was contacted by friend, Tony Banham, in Hong Kong, informing me that the 3 plaques that were dedicated to our veterans at the 2000 Pilgrimage had not been put in their proper place yet and the dedicated site where John Osborn died was still not finished.

Through our National Executive, the Government of Canada was asked to look into this. While the Government was looking into the matter, I received a note from a former Winnipegger, Doug Nairne who is a Deputy Editor for the South China Morning Post, a newspaper in Hong Kong. He offered his assistance and the power of the press to try and move the governments to complete the projects. Mr. Nairne's article, admonishing both governments in their tardiness to complete these projects, was picked up by the Globe and Mail and ran in their October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2002 edition in Canada.

In the meantime a representative, of the Canadian Consulate in Hong Kong, sent the explanation that with the new Cabinet system that they have in place, not all responsibilities have been allocated. There have been delays in the land transfers for the historical sites to be established. Also there has been a large turnover of staff in the Antiquities and Monuments office to add to the delays.

The Consulate assured us that they are very committed to this and understand how important this recognition is to the veterans and their families. They are monitoring the situation very closely and will continue to raise the issue at the highest levels

said he never talked about it much only to say that he remembers **Sgt. Fred Able** giving his rations to some of the more needy P.O.Ws. Sgt. Able died in camp of dysentery; any info on Sgt. Able would be of interest to me also. He was married to my great Aunt Eva who never remarried, she resides in Winnipeg. The little pieces of info are very interesting and my Mother is very grateful for the help I am getting to recover these tidbits.”

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

### Member Update:

*(Editor: I received this beautiful tribute from John, as many of us couldn't be there to honour Ethel and give him support. He asked me to share this with you.)*

### Ethel Cake - Eulogy by John Pollock

I first met Ethel at a Valentine's Dance at the Y.M.C.A in Toronto on February 14, 1975. I asked her for a date for the next Saturday, she accepted and that is how our friendship started. We went for a lobster dinner, then dancing and we danced very well together. For the next 27 years we traveled the world together, mostly by ourselves.

Ethel was a widow and traveled by herself to Russia, Germany, Peru and Cuba. She had the experience that I didn't have but I soon learned. The same year that I met her, she mentioned going to Hong Kong. I told her that I was a Hong Kong veteran and a former Prisoner of War (PoW). That August, our trip took us to Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Singapore and we met some very nice people. When we got home we decided to plan our next trip and to go to Mexico for the winters.

We went on Mediterranean cruises over the years. One trip took us to Rome and Greece. The second trip took us to Port Said where we travelled by bus through the hot desert for 5 hours to Cairo, where we had our picture taken on a camel. When we got back on the bus to go to the hotel, we discovered that we didn't smell that good and had to go to the back of the bus. We stayed at the Holiday Inn where we went immediately to our rooms to shower before we went for a buffet dinner and a bottle of red wine.

We went to different parts of Mexico. Our first stop was Acapulco, next year Cancun, then **Puerto Vallarta**, where we stayed most of the time. We would go in March or April and there were good bargains.

We went to Conventions and reunions in Winnipeg where Ethel got to be well liked by the people there, especially Lionel Speller.

Ethel and I went to western dances mostly in the winter and took a mickey of scotch. B.Y.O.B. We both drank scotch over the years until her doctor said she had to quit, so 3 years ago we both quit.

The last 3 years I noticed a change in Ethel's habits and memory, her family said they knew 5 years ago. Every time Ethel had an appointment with her doctors, her daughter asked me to take her,

so she didn't have to lose time at her job. So I took her to the hospital for her appointments.

Ethel was an accountant over the years and she was 78 when she died. I will miss her after 27 years. On our anniversary on February 14 we would go to an expensive restaurant. The last 2 years I gave her a dozen red roses.

Ethel passed away October 14, 2002 at 8 a.m. Thanksgiving Day, she had Alzheimer's disease. Carol there is a lot more but no more. - John

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥

### BC Region - Murray Doull

It is with a heavy heart that I am relaying the news of the passing of our comrade Duncan A. Benton WG, H-2403. Duncan passed away on January 1, 2003 from complications arising from double pneumonia and kidney failure.

I was talking to Duncan on December 16, 2002 as he marked his 88th birthday. Duncan read a very emotional poem that he had written at our luncheon in Vancouver on May 25, 2002. He was a very kind and considerate man and he was very appreciative of the efforts of our Association on behalf of the Hong Kong Veterans and their widows.

Duncan's wife passed away several years ago. There were no services held as per his request, and his remains were cremated. We will not forget Mr. Duncan A. Benton.

The following poem was written by Duncan a week or so before the Vancouver luncheon:

### "Rest in Peace comrades"

*In Hong Kong and Japan my comrades*

*Lay so quiet and still.*

*While in Hong Kong at Sai Wan Bay,*

*They lay on a grassy hill.*

*In Japan, I don't know where,*

*Because I was never there.*

*We who grow old and weak*

*Will toss the torch on high,*

*So generations will know, by and by.*

*We must keep the Canadian flag flying high,*

*In respect and honour*

*For those who died.*

"Rest in peace Duncan"

\*\* **“Honour & Pride”** is a CD produced by **Cove Records Inc.**, with the assistance of our Padre - Rev. Gordon Shields, to assist anyone that is organizing a memorial or funeral service for veterans. At our VJ Day Memorial in August, we used excerpts of the CD. The CD has the correct order of service and music to enhance any event. There are 2 distributors for **“Honour and Pride”** now, Royal Canadian Legion – Dominion Command Kit-Shop, 359 Kent St., Ottawa, ON K2P 0R7 and McNally Robinson Booksellers at [www.mcnallyrobinson.ca](http://www.mcnallyrobinson.ca). The cost of the CD is \$25.00 plus taxes (and shipping and handling where applicable).

### ***Humour***

Man walks into a restaurant with an ostrich behind him, and as he sits the waitress comes over, and asks for their order. The man says, "I'll have a hamburger, fries and a coke and turns to the ostrich." "What's yours?" asks the waitress. "I'll have the same," says the ostrich. A short time later the waitress returns with the order. "That will be \$6.40 please," and the man reaches into his pocket and pulls out exact change for payment. The next day, the man, and the ostrich come again, and the man says, "I'll have a hamburger, fries and a coke" and the ostrich says, "I'll have the same." Once again the man reaches into his pocket and pays with exact change.

This becomes a routine until late one evening, the two enter again. "The usual?" asks the waitress. "No, this is Friday night so I will have a steak, baked potato and salad," says the man. "Same for me" says the ostrich. A short time later the waitress comes with the order and says, "That will be 12.62."

Once again the man pulls exact change out of his pocket and places it on the table. The waitress can't hold back her curiosity any longer. "Excuse me sir. How do you manage to always come up with the exact change out of your pocket every time?" "Well," says the man, "several years ago I was cleaning the attic and I found an old lamp. When I rubbed it a Genie appeared and offered me two wishes. My first wish was that if I ever had to pay for anything, I just put my hand in my pocket, and the right amount of money will always be there."

"That's brilliant!" says the waitress. "Most people would wish for a million dollars or something, but you'll always be as rich as you want for as long as you live!" "That's right! Whether it's a gallon of milk or a Rolls Royce, the exact money is always there," says the man. The waitress asks, "One other thing, sir, what's with the ostrich?"

The man replies "My second wish was for a chick with long legs!"

• • • • •

An old preacher was dying. He sent a message for his doctor and his lawyer, both church members, to come to his home. When they arrived, they were

ushered up to his bedroom. As they entered the room the preacher held out his hands and motioned for them to sit, one on each side of his bed. The preacher grasped their hands, sighed contentedly, smiled and stared at the ceiling. For a time, no one said anything. Both the doctor and lawyer were touched and flattered that the preacher would ask them to be with him during his final moments. They were also puzzled; the preacher had never given them any indication that he particularly liked either of them. They both remembered his many long, uncomfortable sermons about greed, covetousness and avaricious behaviour that made them squirm in their seats. Finally, the doctor said, "Preacher, why did you ask us to come?" The old preacher mustered up his strength, then said weakly, "Jesus died between two thieves and that's how I want to go."

• • • • •

### ***Bill Maltman 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday***

Bill Maltman turned 80 in November of 2002. This event was celebrated with a gathering of about 60 family and friends in the activity hall in their community. Pam and Bert Heinrichs, with Fred Poitras were present, representing the HK. Many of the Khartum Pipe Band were also present. We wish you many more Happy Birthdays, Bill.

Pat's birthday was January 6 – belated Birthday



wishes to you. Hopefully 2003 will give you both better health.

### ***Reminders***

**Monthly lunches** at Rae & Jerry's Restaurant on Portage Ave. at NOON every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month.

\*\* PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS\*\*

**The Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association address in Ottawa** is: 1 Stafford Road, Ste.164, Nepean, ON, K2H 1B9. This new address should be noted by anyone who purchased one of the earlier grave markers, as it will have the old address on the sheet to send in to register the location of the grave.



*Winnipeg cenotaph, August 2002. The HK Veteran's flag flies here in August and December. We will remember them.*



Your Branch Council Phone Numbers - Keep Them Handy:

<b>George Peterson, President</b>	<b>256-7174</b>
<b>Bill Maltman, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice</b>	<b>669_4941</b>
<b>Carol Hadley, Secrtry/Newsletter</b>	<b>837-6754</b>
<b>Barry Mitchell,</b>	
<b>Treasurer/Membership</b>	<b>269-1497</b>
<b>Juliet Lafortune, Social</b>	<b>338-3354</b>
<b>Terence Jackson, Memorials</b>	<b>452-1460</b>
<b>Phil Dodderidge, Nat'l President</b>	<b>418-392-5838</b>