

"In quiet places like this, we come face to face with the price of freedom"...
Prime Minister Chretien, at the Yokohama Commonwealth War Cemetery

Hong Kong Veterans
Association
Quebec-Maritimes Branch

Banjo Gossip Newsletter 7.2

December, 1999

This issue of the "Banjo Gossip", (it really should be spelled "bEnjo") will be coming to you a little early because of a two-week shut down for Christmas holidays at my printing source. Therefore, some of the regular features, such as a complete list of donations, may not be included. Rest assured that they will appear in the next issue.

The Campbellton, NB newspaper, The Tribune, publishes a column called "Restigouche in History". In the November 10, 1999 column, under an item called "Fifty years ago (1949)" the following paragraph appeared: "In November, eight years ago, almost a thousand handpicked volunteers forming the 1st Battalion of the Royal Rifles of Canada landed at the tiny island of Hong Kong. Four years later they returned with 263 missing from their ranks."

The item goes on to describe the battle in some detail but says

nothing about the deprivation of the prison camps. One is left to wonder why. Perhaps, in the euphoria of release from four years of captivity, we did not speak about the horrors of the camps, so that the word was not yet out.

"Hand picked volunteers???"

LAST POST

Since the last letter I sadly report the passing of more of our comrades.

LESLIE STICKLES, RRC,
ARNOLD PORTER, RRC,
GLENFORD GREGOIRE, RRC
HENRY MILLITAIRE, WG
JOHN SIMCOE, WG
GEORGE HARRISON, WG
NORMAN BROOM, WG
LUCIEN BRUNET, BDE
KENNETH DAWE, RRC
HAROLD ENGLEHART, RRC
ALSO,

COLLEEN RATTIE (LAWRENCE)
LEILA HEATH (GRAYDON)

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

It may be a good place to comment on the service in Campbellton for Glen Gregoire. Twelve HK Veterans were in attendance, namely, Charlie Chesser, Allison Pollock, Reggie Law, Freddie Kelly, Dick Keays, Arnold Ross, Bob Barter, Henry Lyons, Vic Bujold, Graham Boudreau, Bob Olscamp, and myself. Glen was buried in Quebec City, and Betty Firth attended the ceremony.

When you go home, tell them of us, and say for your tomorrow we gave our today.
Location of Far East WW II memorial bearing inscription sought by veteran. Joan Schultz

"In quiet places like this, we come face to face with the price of freedom"...

Prime Minister Chretien, at the Yokohama Commonwealth War Cemetery

YOUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee met in Lennoxville on October 30. Present were: Lawrence Rattie, Lionel Hurd, Allan Marshall, Derrill Henderson, Lucette Muir, Malcolm MacDonald, Arnold Ross, Ossie Clark, Bob Barter, as well as yours truly. Also present and contributing to the proceedings were Bill Kellas, national secretary, HKVCA, Sheila Rattie-Sheridan, Kay Hurd, Vivian Henderson.

It was decided to finance the printing of George MacDonell's book, "This Soldier's Story". The book should be out soon, and will be well worth the price of \$20.00 plus \$4 shipping.

It was also decided to look into the possibility of printing another edition of Grant Garneau's book, "The Royal Rifles of Canada in Hong Kong", because of the numerous requests for copies of the book.

Henry Martin, Hong Kong Vet from the Maria MicMac Reserve died in a car accident in 1964, and is buried in a cemetery on the Reserve. It was decided that a HK marker should be placed on his tombstone. Also, it was agreed that a donation be made to assist in the erection of a cenotaph on the Reserve.

The possibility of holding a joint reunion next year was suggested. Since we are relying more and more on the Commemorative Association, this matter was left with them to study and make a suggestion as to the time and place of next year's get-together.

Lucette gave a comprehensive report on the National Convention. She reported that 171 veterans and guests were registered and 160 attended the banquet. Even with all the freebies and giveaways, for example, those HK pins and those fine pens, she showed an overall profit of \$1920.49. Not bad! I include here a list of those generous souls who made donations to ensure the success of the reunion. The list is long, so I have to compress it in the interest of conserving space. Lucette wishes to express a special thank you to all. I add my sincere thanks as well. Cliff McDavid, Doris Davidson-Bent, Fred Mason, Annie Nolan, Charles Dallain, Thomas G. Jones, Jean-Paul Dallain, Mary Wardell, Kenneth Dawe, Iva Stogell, Wilma J. Thom, Bliss Cole, Florence Whalen, John Davies, Gladys Brazel, Ken Cambon, Gerald Doucette, Priscilla Reid, Geraldine Cunningham, Ruby Watters, Doris Hocking, Antoinette Gignac, Llewellyn(Bill) Doull, Milton MacDonald, Claude Corbett, Margaret Bannister, Wilbur Lynch, Elizabeth Dewey, Hilda J. Grimshaw, Margaret Holden, Madeleine Bernard, Grant Wood, Clara Flanagan Ricard, Florence Hawke, M.E. Wright, Leila Heath, Flash and Jessie Clayton, Kay Mann, T.Gordon Hutchinson, Frances Hutchinson, Los Amigos (Dancers), Carl Olsson, Pat Poirier.

When you go home, tell them of us, and say for your tomorrow we gave our today.

Location of Far East WW II memorial bearing inscription sought by veteran. Joan Schultz

"In quiet places like this, we come face to face with the price of freedom"...

Prime Minister Chretien, at the Yokohama Commonwealth War Cemetery

BIOKI

Lawrence Rattie is very sick and as of this writing is in hospital again. We pray for his recovery.

TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Harry Atkinson and Derrill Henderson, representing the HKVA and the HKVCA respectively, have drawn up a critical path for the transfer of powers and obligations from the Veterans' Association to the Commemorative Association, as proposed and resolved at the Annual General Meeting in Granby last summer. According to their recommendations, there would be seven steps in the transfer, as follows: 1) setting up of a joint council.(Already done) 2) Aligning of responsibilities: March 31, 2000; 3) Documentation of existing functions at HKVA Branch level: December 31, 2000; 4) Modification of procedures to allow for the incorporation of the functions of the various Branches, as required and/or desired; March 31, 2001; 5) Transfer of activities; June 30, 2001; 6) Transfer of bank accounts; July 31, 2001; Final signing and handing over of all functions; August 15, 2001.

This plan was passed by unanimous vote at the Executive meeting on October 30.

When the complete plan is implemented, we can relax and let the HKVCA do the job they were established to do. We will be placing our affairs in their hands, final authorization to be given to them on August 15, 2001.

MAIL

May I say again, it is great to get mail from members far and wide. Some are regular correspondents, but now and then comes a welcome letter from a friend who hasn't been seen or heard from in a while. Then there are the newsletters from the other Branches.

This time I can report receipt of letters from Lionel Speller of the BC Branch, Carol Hadley of the Manitoba Branch, and John Stroud of the Ontario Branch. Thanks, Comrades.

Other mail, in no particular order, from Doug Reese with news of his winter get-away, Mrs. Catherine Leblanc, (Louis) with change of address, Ethel Stickles, commenting on the death of her husband, Leslie, Bill MacWhirter, with comments on the M-G Reunion, Bob Baker of Veterans Affairs, a card and a nice note containing the quotation which I inserted in the footer of this letter, also, Bob says, "Mr. Doddridge, and all Hong Kong Vets, we do remember!". From Audrey Murray, commenting on the National reunion, from Flash Clayton with information on his winter quarters, from Yolande Ross through Lawrence, and from Lawrence with Branch business, from Madeleine Bernard for whom I had purchased the Book, "Prisoners of the Japanese".

from Bill Doull with comments on his health, from Lloyd Doull with comments on the work of the Executive, from Bernard Castonguay with a video tape of the parade in Granby, from Madeleine Charron's son with change of address, from Agathe St. Onge re monument badge, from Kay Mann with jokes and a donation. Thank you, everyone, for taking the time to write. I wish there I had more space to make further

When you go home, tell them of us, and say for your tomorrow we gave our today.

Location of Far East WW II memorial bearing inscription sought by veteran. Joan Schultz

"In quiet places like this, we come face to face with the price of freedom"...

Prime Minister Chretien, at the Yokohama Commonwealth War Cemetery

comments, but this operation is a pretty amateur effort, two-finger typing on my home computer.

I have had letters returned from Mrs. Willa Allen, Mrs. Alice Pappas, Mrs. J.A. Dempsey, Mrs. Ruby Lockhart, and Mrs. Murray Carr, Mrs. Mary Robinson, Mrs. Arnold Pryce, Mrs. Elva Steele, Mr. Morgan Davies. If anyone can help me find the right addresses for these people, I would appreciate it.

JOKE? TIME

Sisters Felicia and Eugenia, both nurses, had gone to the country to minister to an out patient. On the way home they ran out of gas and were standing beside their car when a truck approached. Seeing ladies of the cloth in distress, the driver stopped. The nuns explained that they needed some gas. The truck driver was willing to help but said that he had nothing to drain some gas from his tank.

One of the nuns got out a clean bed pan and asked the driver if that would do. He took the bedpan and proceeded to drain a couple of quarts of gasoline into the pan, gave it to the nuns and left. The nuns were carefully pouring the precious liquid into their gas tank when a QPP officer stopped. He watched for a minute, then said, "Sisters, I don't think it will work, but I certainly admire your faith!"

Talk is cheap because supply exceeds demand.

You don't stop laughing because you grow old. You grow old because you stopped laughing.

MONUMENT BADGES

A while back, the Commemorative Association began a program of offering metal discs to be affixed to the grave stones of departed Hong Kong Veterans. Many of our Hong Kong graves now have the disc installed, but on conducting a very brief and limited study, I find that there are still quite a few graves that do not bear the identifying disc.

The item in question is made of brass, and coated with a durable enamel with the HK logo on the face of it. It is guaranteed indestructable, and quite easy to instal. The cost is \$50.00, and it comes with instructions. If you send \$50.00 to Derrill Henderson (who else but? at 75 Priam Way, Nepean, ON, K2H 8S7, he will send the disc to you.

BOOKS

I hear from Vivian Henderson, who has graciously agreed to look after the printing and distribution of George MacDonnell's book, "This Soldier's Story", that the book is ready to go to press. As mentioned, the books sell for \$20.00 plus \$4.00 for mailing. Orders (and cheques) should be sent to

COMMEMMORATIVE
ASSOCIATION, SUITE 164,
I STAFFORD RD, NEPEAN, ON,
K3H 1B9.

When you go home, tell them of us, and say for your tomorrow we gave our today.

Location of Far East WW II memorial bearing inscription sought by veteran. Joan Schultz

"In quiet places like this, we come face to face with the price of freedom"...
Prime Minister Chretien, at the Yokohama Commonwealth War Cemetery

HAROLD ENGLEHART

After I had this letter printed and ready to go to the copying machine, I got word of Harold's death.

Harold fell and injured his chest a couple of weeks ago and was taken to hospital in Montreal. Plans were made to transfer him to the Veterans Hospital in Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, but, today, November 30, Harold passed away.

Harold was treasurer of the Quebec-Maritimes Branch for many years, and although he wished to retire from the job for the last several years, he agreed to carry on, even though his health was a problem and a worry to his wife, Marg.

Harold always kept the finances of the Branch under control. He attended meetings faithfully, and his advice on matters concerning the Branch and his fellow comrades was always of the highest order. Last spring his deteriorating health finally caused him to lay down his pen.

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Marg and the family on behalf of the Quebec-Maritime Branch and myself personally. He was a good friend. We will miss him.

MORE ABOUT BOOKS

Last letter I said that I would have more to say about the book written by Lester Tenney, "My Hitch in Hell: The Bataan Death March".

I received the book and have read about half of it. For some reason, I

have been unable to finish it. I'll have to try again.

That will be it for this time. Have the merriest Christmas possible. If my arithmetic is accurate, this will be our 55th Christmas of freedom. It seems so long ago, but the memories of those four Christmases can never be erased.

Be good to each other and may God bless.

Philip

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

Honourary President

Lionel Hurd, PO Box 235,
Sawyerville, QC, J0B 3A0

Honourary Vice-President

William Bradley, 1241 Richmond
Lane, Wilmette, Ill, USA 60091

- * President
 - * Philip Doddridge, 418-392-5838
 - * Ist Vice President
 - * Arnold Ross, 418-392-5763
 - * 2nd Vice President
 - * Reg Law, 506-753-3515
 - * Secretary
 - * Bob Barter, 418-392-6111
 - * Treasurer
 - * Allan Marshall, 819-562-1032
 - * Membership
 - * Lawrence Rattie, 514-631-3298
- 508 Thorncrest, Dorval, H9P 2M6
Daughter Sheila has agreed to act in the interim. Please address mail to Lawrence at his address.

When you go home, tell them of us, and say for your tomorrow we gave our today.
Location of Far East WW II memorial bearing inscription sought by veteran. Joan Schultz