



*"Wainfleet -
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NEWS RELEASE

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Port Colborne POWs Honoured



Mayor April Jeffs joins well-known Legion member and member of the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association, Michael Mascitelli, who helped to spearhead efforts to honour two Port Colborne veterans. (Photo by L. Gudgeon).

Port Colborne, ON – On July 7, at King George Park in downtown Port Colborne, the Canadian flag flew a little higher as members of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 56 and the Hong Kong Veterans Commemorative Association, as well as family members, gathered to remember the sacrifices of two Port Colborne men who served in WWII.

The Hong Kong Veterans Association presented the Port Colborne Legion with a plaque to honour Nicolas Stepanchuk and Arthur Edward Randall, as well as all those who fought in the Battle of Hong Kong and were taken as prisoners of war.

“A lot of times we lose touch with what has been sacrificed for us in the past,” said Michael Mascitelli, member of the Hong Kong Veterans Association and Port Colborne Legion. “It’s crucial that we remember those who have fought for these freedoms.”

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During the war, Mr. Stepanchuk and Mr. Randall served as riflemen in the First Battalion of the Royal Rifles of Canada. In October 1941, both men and their comrades fought to defend the British colony of Hong Kong.

After suffering staggering casualties, the Canadian soldiers had no choice but to give up their arms and become prisoners of war until their prison camp was liberated in 1945.

With much attention paid to the European battles of the Second World War, the veterans' families were pleased to see their loved ones recognized for their service in the Far East.

Mayor April Jeffs spoke at the ceremony where she offered her respect and thanks to Mr. Stepanchuk and Mr. Randall for their exemplary service to Canada. "These two men and their comrades are the reason we are here today," she said.

The plaque honouring both men, and all those who helped to defend Hong Kong during WWII, will have a permanent home at the Port Colborne Legion and will provide a valuable reminder of the sacrifices made by veterans for years to come.

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For more information, please contact:

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