

NANCY KONG

THE HONG KONG DEFENCE FORCE
THE VOLUNTEERS



***The Hong Kong Defence Force
Ladies Champion Marksman
1952***



This story is written and produced by her Husband Bill Griffiths in her memory

She sadly passed away on 24th May 2011 aged 85 years R I P 'Nancy'

Miss Nancy Kong

The Hong Kong Defence Forces answer to Annie get your gun.

In 1949, the Hong Kong Regiment was reorganized and became part of the Hong Kong Defence Force, which also included separate Air and Naval units, and a certain young Chinese girl, Nancy Kong who had lived in constant danger and suffered under the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong during World War two, joined up to serve as a Naval Rating determined to do her best in serving as a volunteer.



It was not long before she was introduced to the service rifle, and started learning to shoot using the



old Lee Enfield bolt action 303 .

She initially tried to hold the rifle left handed, and from the very beginning seemed to be a natural, hitting the target with great accuracy. This in itself was quite amazing as she was such a petite young girl, only five feet tall and weighing only a mere seven stone.

Her Instructors were impressed and managed to persuade her that she should try shooting right handed so that she could then manipulate the bolt action and enable her to take part in rapid fire.

This she did and the effect was outstanding, as she became even more consistent and was soon shooting at distances of over six hundred yards with a high degree of accuracy.

It was not long before she was entered into competitions, so confident were her instructors of her talent and capability.

Nancy trained almost every weekend shooting on ranges on Stonecutters Island, and Kai Tak



and also shooting from on board ship at floating targets at sea.





The Wrens relaxing at sea

This was one determined and confident young sailor girl, and it was not long before she started collecting trophies in the form of silver cups, Medals and silver spoons to mark her success.



She was entered in to competitions in the Hong Kong Bisley, often competing against seasoned veterans on the rifle range, and not only held her own as a markswoman, but often beat much more experienced servicemen who had spent many years shooting at competition level.

One story she loved to tell was about the time she was on the range just about to start a competition, and she was on the firing point next to a British Army Colonel, who when he saw her made some rude comment on how ridiculous it was to allow girls on the range and to be amongst experienced riflemen who would probably be upset by their presence. He was definitely upset a little later on when he discovered that Nancy had beaten his score by quite a considerable number of points and won the trophy for that particular event. Nancy just smiled and walked away with her winning trophy. What a great feeling that must have been for her, especially as the Colonel was nowhere to be seen at the prize giving ceremony.

This determined little Wren had been awarded three Riflemen certificates from the National Rifle Association for having made high scores at ranges between 200 and 800 yards.

In addition to which in just a couple of years had collected eleven silver cups, six silver spoons, and six medals, one of which was for becoming the **Hong Kong Ladies Champion** in 1952.

This was just before she married her English Husband Bill after meeting him on a blind date in 1950

Nancy was a very proud little sailor girl, and a credit to the Hong Kong Defence force



Wren Nancy Kong relaxing on board HMS Cornflower 1952



Wren Nancy Kong circled

Picture shows Wrens on Remembrance Day parade November 1951

In 1951 The Hong Kong Naval Defence Force was presented with a fully equipped Minesweeper formally 'HMS Lysander', and this was renamed 'HMS Cornflower' by Lady Grantham at a special ceremony on board the ship. His Excellency The Governor, Sir Alexander Grantham also attended.

HMS Cornflower was used by the Hong Kong Volunteers as a training ship.



Hong Kong Ladies Champion Nancy Kong second from right

Being presented to the Governor Sir Alexander Grantham, during his visit to their new ship



'HMS Cornflower'

With the ships proud new crew waving goodbye to the Governor after his visit



The Wrens can clearly be seen on the upper deck just above the figure 9 of the ships number.

NAVAL VOLUNTEERS

Colony's R.N.V.R. Shows Old Sea-Dogs A Thing Or Two

CAMP AT STONECUTTERS

(By GEOFFREY GILBERT)

The sea! the sea! the open sea!

The blue, the fresh, the ever free!

These lines were written by B. W. Proctor in the eighteenth century; the call of the sea is still as strong as ever.

In seagirt Hongkong the R.N.V.R. is drawing boys and girls away from their office desks and giving them a taste of life afloat.

At Stonecutters Island a number of them have been in camp for the past fortnight but their tents are often empty—for the occupants are taking a trick at the wheel or doing some equally important job in one of His Majesty's ships.

The Hongkong flotilla welcomes these amateur sailors and any suggestion of derision has long been replaced by an air of respect on discovery that

Local girls, who have joined the W.R.N.S. have introduced a note of glamour in naval circles, but they are also proving that they can "do their stuff." Not only are they becoming experts in administrative work but they are also showing themselves a force to be reckoned with when provided with rifles or sten guns. "Super-duper" was how one of the ratings described them, and I gathered

the R.N.V.R. man could often teach his professional brother a thing or two.

After a recent exercise in the Colony's waters for the benefit of the Commodore, an ordinary seaman R.N.V.R. on board one of the destroyers watching a gun's crew in action, was heard to remark: "I could do better with my eyes shut!"

His remark came to the ears of Tamar's captain who said: "Better take him up on this and put him through a test."

The ordinary seaman was put through a test and "shaped exceedingly well" according to Lt-Commander W.G. Wilcock, Officer Instructor to the Hongkong R.N.V.R.

Little incidents like this have gained for our men a prestige among the R.N. petty officers who instruct them and on whose goodwill they largely depend. These instructors can make or mar the efforts to build up in Hongkong a useful reserve of man-power for the Navy.

that this was also the opinion of their C.O., First Officer M. M. Staples, who herself was a Wren in the last war.

The Navy seem to have a particular regard for Nancy Kong, an expert with the service rifle. At routine shoots Miss Kong always makes a good show, often beating experienced Service competitors.

There is plenty of good-natured rivalry between the volunteers and the Hongkong flotilla. Recently the former were engaged in a night exercise 20 miles off Hongkong in which the frigates Amethyst and Alacrity, the destroyer Charity, five S.T.M.Ls and two M.F.Vs took part. The weather was bad and the S.T.M.Ls were ordered to take shelter in Repulse Bay and continue operations on their own. Two of the volunteers, suffering from acute mal-de-mer, decided to take a sampan to the shore.

HONG KONG BISLEY RESULTS 1951

<p>Event I — 200, 300 & 500 yds, 2 sighters & 10 rounds (possible 150) Winner Lunar Cup and Replica — Capt. De'Ath R.M. ... 132 & Winner of NRA Silver Medal</p> <p>S. R. (b) Class Winner Silver Cup — K. C. Hoo 130</p> <p>S. R. (a) Class Winner Silver Cup — Cpl. Atfield R.A.F. 131</p> <p>Handicap Class Winner Silver Cup — SQMS Crosby R. Sigs. 145.15</p> <p>Ladies Winner Silver Cup — <u>Miss N. E. Kong</u> 100</p>	<p>Event III — 300, 500 & 600 yds, 2 sighters & 10 rounds (possible 150) Winner Watson Cup and Replica — W. K. Y. Eu 136 & Winner of Donegall Badge</p> <p>S. R. (b) Class Winner Silver Cup — Capt. De'Ath R.M. 132</p> <p>S. R. (a) Class Winner Silver Cup — Cpl. Atfield R.A.F. 132</p> <p>Handicap Class Winner Silver Cup — E. P. W. Morgan 146.49</p> <p>Ladies Winner Silver Cup — <u>Miss N. E. Kong</u> 116</p>
<p>Event II — 600 yds, 2 sighters & 10 rounds (possible 50) Winner Silver Cup C.P.O. L. Haines R.N. 45</p> <p>S. R. (b) Class Winner Silver Cup — K. C. Hoo 44</p> <p>S. R. (a) Class Winner Silver Cup — G. A. Lemay 44</p> <p>Handicap Class Winner Silver Cup — P. E. Cox 48.77</p> <p>Ladies Winner Silver Cup — <u>Miss N. E. Kong</u> 41</p>	<p>Event IV — 500 yds, 2 sighters & 10 rounds (possible 50) Winner Silver Cup — Sgt. McCleary R.A.F. 46</p> <p>S. R. (b) Class Winner Silver Cup — W. K. Y. Eu 46</p> <p>S. R. (a) Class Winner Silver Cup — 2 Lt. C. C. M. Sweeney R.A. 45</p> <p>Handicap Class Winner Silver Cup — F/Lt. Apps R.A.F. 48.86</p> <p>Ladies Winner Silver Cup — <u>Miss N. E. Kong</u> 40</p>

HONG KONG BISLEY RESULTS 1951



In 1955 Nancy's husband was posted back to Hong Kong and of course took Nancy with him, and there she joined a rifle club where for the next three years she continued to display her talent as a competent marksman, although now just as a civilian member, shooting just for pleasure

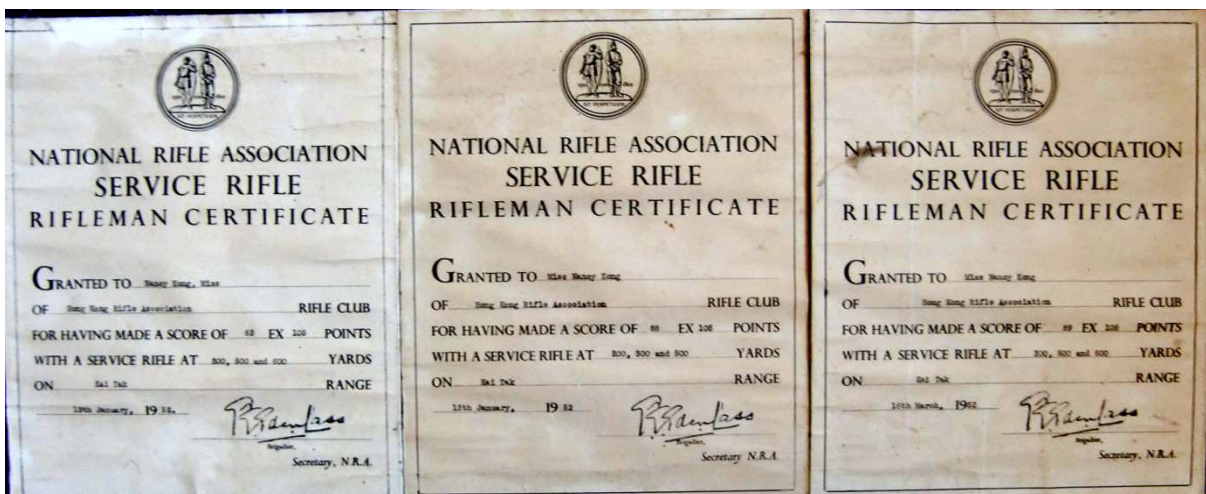




NANCY'S SHOOTING MEDALS



Nancy's silver spoons won between 1950 and 1952



Nancy's Rifleman Certificates Granted in 1952



Nancy's silver cup trophies won between 1950 and 1952

It is worthy of note, that Nancy was the first Lady ever to hold the title Hong Kong Ladies Champion, and that when she left Hong Kong in 1952, and up until the Hong Kong Defence Force was disbanded in 1997 nobody else was ever awarded that title.

Nancy's husband Bill, took all these shooting trophy's and memorabilia back to Hong Kong in 2012 and presented them to The Hong Kong Maritime Museum, which is now situated on Pier eight of the Hong Kong waterfront, where they will be on display for all to see, and that the name, and fame, of **Nancy Kong** will be remembered for many years to come.



The Hong Kong Maritime Museum, Pier Eight on the Hong Kong Waterfront.