



The GROUND SHEET

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF
THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSN.

104th — 47th — 131st — The Westminster Regt.
Dedicated to the Ideals and Comradeships We Knew in Two World Wars

Vol. 19, No. 1.

Box 854, New Westminister, B.C.

Feb.-March, 1970.

Annual General Meeting

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Thursday, March 19, 1970

TIME: 8:00 P.M.

**PLACE: Hut Below Drill Hall in New Westminister
Parking in City Hall Parking Lot**

**IF YOU ARE EVEN REMOTELY INTERESTED IN
YOUR ASSOCIATION YOU WILL BE THERE!**

These Are Crucial Times For YOUR Association

WE NEED YOUR ADVICE AND SUPPORT

SECRETARY'S CORNER:

As our fiscal year draws to its close I urge you to attend the Annual Meeting and Election of Officers on Mar. 19, 1970 This past year has been most active and had its share of ups and downs with respect to the administration of your association . . . You will probably

remember that the 500% increase in postage forced us to reduce the number of issues of our Groundsheet. Whereas we used to pay some 9 or 10 dollars for each mailing it is now approximately \$50.00. I believe our decision to reduce the paper has proved a wise one. It has also established that the amount of material submitted for the paper, by the members, does not support

THE GROUNDSHEET

President JOHN R. FORD
 3757 W. 35th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. AM 3-3682
 Editor & Secretary RON HURLEY
 2229 Bonnyvale Rd., Vancouver 16, B.C. FA 1-8464

the publication of more than is currently printed. It is to be hoped that the Annual Financial Statement will prove that we have cut costs from the previous year or at least show no increase . . . You will note that your Dues Cards and Receipts have been enclosed in the paper and this itself has resulted in a saving of 6 cents for every item of this kind mailed to the members . . . The addition of the \$1.00 levy for the Groundsheet has aided immeasurably and it is only hoped that ALL members will REMEMBER TO INCLUDE THIS EXTRA DOLLAR WITH YOUR 1970 DUES . . . With respect to 1970 Dues it is disappointing to report that there is no appreciable increase in the percentage of those who pay their annual dues and returns seem to indicate that those who do are always the same faithful members who have paid in the past . . . WE DO NOT EXCLUDE ANY NAMES LISTED ON OUR MAILING LIST PAID OR UNPAID ALL RECEIVE A PAPER, IF THERE IS A CORRECT ADDRESS, AND ALL OF THE OTHER BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP. Unfortunately only slightly over 50% ever contribute so it is apparent there is a considerable subsidy borne by those who do pay every year . . . We know that, in many cases, non-payment of dues is merely an oversight and for that reason we live in hope that more of you will remember. ENCLOSED IN THIS EDITION OF THE GROUNDSHEET SOME OF YOU WILL FIND ANOTHER DUES REMINDER ENVELOPE . . . IF YOU HAVE ALREADY SUBMITTED JUST IGNORE IT . . . IF YOU HAVE NOT . . . REMIT YOUR \$1.00 Dues and \$1.00 FOR GROUNDSHEET RIGHT AWAY . . . To those of you who complain of not getting your paper there is a simple explanation. WE DO NOT HAVE YOUR CORRECT MAILING ADDRESS AND THE PAPER IS RETURNED AS ADDRESS UNKNOWN.

On checking the files for the past years it is noted that there was some post collecting of dues and the Dues Cards subsequently marked as paid for one year for every \$1.00 collected. This has not been the practice of most Dues administrations in the past and I personally, can not presume that the Dues rate will remain constant in the future. To those of you who kindly pre-paid Dues

for a couple of years in the future I say a most hearty thanks but I have ammended the files to include Dues and Groundsheet Levy up to and including 1970 for those involved, and will send out Dues notices to ALL members in 1971 (excepting Life members, of course). It may well be that some Annual meeting will decide that the dues structures should change and, if so, it will be wise to have the ENTIRE membership involved in any revision . . . A last word on dues. It must be obvious, to most, that a good number of us are fast approaching the magical age of 60. There should soon be more and more applications for Life Membership and in the not too distant future MOST of our membership will consist of this category. Perhaps it is not too soon to consider possible revisions in our dues structures . . .

There are still some 100 or more of the very handsome Crests on hand and we would welcome an order for them as soon as possible. This is a real bargain at \$5.00 and cannot be duplicated elsewhere for under \$15.00. The Association has on hand some 90 Red Berets (The Current Official Color of the Infantry Corps) and they are for sale at \$2.00 each. Another genuine bargain. . . To those of you who will be unable to attend the Annual Meeting, sincere thanks to all those who have contributed articles and material for the Groundsheet. To all those who pay their dues again most sincere appreciation. It is through YOUR efforts that ALL can enjoy the activities of THE BEST DAMNED REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION IN ALL OF CANADA.

Ron Hurley, Secretary.

NOTE: It has been my practice, since receiving dues, to divert any surplus i.e. anything over \$1.00 Dues and \$1.00 for Groundsheet submitted by any member, to either the Sick & Visiting or for the publication of the Groundsheet as equitably as possible. This is done, of course, only where NO SPECIFIC written requests are mentioned with the enclosures.

EXECUTIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Well here we are, just on the edge of Springtime. The Executive meets each month and it is like passing a milestone on the way to a nice warm summer. Our winter this year was one of the mildest we've had for many a year. This has helped us keep up our everage attendance at the meetings, not that it needs good weather to get the executive out, because they are a pretty dedicated bunch. But it sure is nice to go somewhere in weather that is not frosty and cold.

Our January meeting was attended by fourteen of us with Johnny Ford presiding. Ron Hurley as the secretary, he's the one who gets all your letters, and they are read by him at the meetings, for most of us this is a highlight of the meeting, it is nice to hear from you fellows, even if it is a complaint. Those sitting around the room at the meeting were John Hou, Trev. Whitehead, Bert Stephens, John Rosso, Nelson Scott, Lt. C. R. Hues, Walter Lyle, Andy Hunter, Doug Glenn, Stan Conway, Bill Williams, he is about to have his eighty fifth Birthday on the twenty second of March. His health is good and he enjoys our meetings. Some of the coming events are the Annual Meeting 19th March, and the Big one The "Melfa", and the game of golf on Melfa Day. So it looks like a good lead into summer. We would like to see a good turnout at the Annual Meeting, there is voting to be done and it is great to see all of you. There is no need to boost the Melfa because this is YOUR Day and we know there is fun to be had here.

If you ever need a boost take your membership card out of your wallet and have a look at it, you won't be alone. We all do it. While we are on the subject of the membership there are about thirty five of you we are sending mail to, who don't get it because we are sending mail to the address you have just left. If you happen to think it might be you, just send in your present address.

Annual Meeting March 19, at Westminster Armories 6th and Queens, it is usually held in one of the shacks below the drill hall, mainly because so few come, there are good seats and it is quite comfortable in there. Also keep the Melfa Day Dinner in mind.

Dave Crossfield writes also W. R. Saunders, his letter came all the way from Santa Lucia. George Bayne wrote from Antigonish Nova Scotia, and we heard from Ernie Dayton in Winnipeg, also from Natal in the interior of British Columbia, we heard from Andrew J. Billy, he does more than a little cougar hunting, he uses hounds for the chase; for us city bound fellows that seems like an excellent way to keep in shape. The cougars probably have a different opinion.

Our liaison with the Regiment is in very good shape right now. To further this end there is a plan to have attend the executive meeting, two men, one from the Sgt's. mess and one from the men's mess (now officially called the Junior Ranks Club). It works out that anyone leaving the present regiment becomes eligible to join the association. This is where perpetuity begins.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Royal Westminster Regiment and Association Museum

We have just ordered nine show cases for OUR MUSEUM to display our regimental mementos.

The show cases will be ready by the end of March, so we are calling on all our members to help pay for them, as we are in desperate need of funds. We shall be very grateful for all donations received whether large or small and all will be acknowledged.

Please send your donation to:

JOHN N. ROSSO
Chairman Museum Committee
4065 Brandon St.
Burnaby 1, B. C.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

FROM THE POST:

A welcome and interesting letter from Dave Crossfield, 1007 Freeman St., Prince George, B.C. . . Nice to hear of you again Dave and appreciated your nostalgic reminders of years long gone by. Now you have found us again please keep in touch and attend the Melfa Dinner in May if possible. Many thanks to Hilda & George Carlson of Box 214 Bienfait, Sask. (My Wife's Home Stamping Grounds by the way) for submitting new names and for your kind greetings. Thanks to Doug Furlot but sorry we do not have a name such as Lightfoot in our files . . . A letter of appreciation from 1st prize Draw winner R. B. Salmon of Box 39 Assinboia, Sask. Our best to you and we trust you will become an ambassador of ours in the future. A nice note from William Woods, ex 47th of 2137 Pandosy St., Kelowna, B.C. Good to hear from you Bill and its always a most distinct pleasure to be contacted by all you fine chaps from the 47th. A word from present serving officer of The Royal Westminster Regt. in the person of Jerry N. Gangur of Travelers Ins Co., 905 W. Pender, Van. 1, B.C. Thanks for the name of Stan McConkey and we have added him to our files. From the east at 6700 Park Ave., Montreal 155, Que. Outremont 154 a most interesting letter and kind remarks to the Association. We trust you will enjoy the Crest and will wear it proudly. Sorry no trace of McMillan and Bean. A card of thanks from R. K. Johnston of Sarnia, Ont. Sorry I missed you personally when you visited but delighted that folks like Ted Hammersley, Jim Knill, Geo Hamilton, Ed Sweet, Curly Janelle, D. Armstrong,

Bill Barrett, Champ Craigen and other old "B" Coy stalwarts were able to entertain you. I am sure they enjoyed it as much as you and come back soon. A note and regards from Ed Lennie. Like your Hanes Hosiery stationery Ed. Do you by any chance have anything to do with the production of those most delightful T.V. Commercials ??? . . . From Box 157, Pitt Meadows a word from Joe Strawson. Thanks for donation Joe and appreciate your kind remarks re Groundsheet. Letter from old reliable H. Merv Sands now of G & S Ranch, R.R. No. 1 Cache Creek, B.C. Merv advises all you fishermen that you have to pass his house on the way to Loon Lake so pay him a call. Another Ex 47th Geo A. Dyson of 235 Beechwood Ave., Victoria, B.C. Geo mentions the name of yet another ex 47th, Lt. Fred Wells and continued good luck to both of you. From Wally Nelson of 1172 Huron Lane, Hayward, Calif., U.S.A. 945545. Phones Home: 782-7395, Office 556-8270. Wally is located in the San Francisco Bay Area and would welcome a visit from any visitors down that way. Hope to see you up this way Wally.

An interesting letter from John A. Breitenback of 1347 E. 63rd, Van. 15, B.C. Thanks for the Dues and your kind expressions John and yes I do agree the years seem to rush by on flected wings. Ah well better than the other alternative John. . . A word from Jack Houlit of Box 542 Comox, B.C. Yes Jack recall those athletic days long years ago. Nice to hear of you again and please drop over on Melfa Day . . . A card and best wishes from Ernie Hull of Smith Falls, Ont. Don't forget to wire your arrival time this year Ernie. Note from James A. Kyle of Manor, Sask. Pleased to hear you have seen some old buddies and keep in touch. Another nice letter from Geo Bayne of R.R. 3, Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Geo is one of the more steady and active correspondents with the association and it is always a pleasure to hear from him. Will see if I can locate a C Coy photo taken in Aldershot, U.K. George and my sympathy for your severe winter. Out here in the west it's been like Miami all winter . . .

Thanks to Fred Day of Westbank, B.C. Appreciate the poem Fred. It has been run before but intend to republish it soon . . . A nice memo from old friend and former Assoc. President and hard working executive member Ernie Dayton of 721 Furby St., Winnipeg, Man. Note your remarks re the Museum and yes many of us recall that you expressed the wish to establish same many years ago.

SUGGESTED EDITOR'S COMMENTS

The following letter from Holland is certainly interesting enough to be reprinted here because of the question as to what we do for our members which Mr. de Graaff poses.

The reply, an attempt to summarize our activities, might stimulate you as one of our members into telling the Executive whether there is something else you'd like to see the Association do or, indeed whether what is done is really worthwhile or not.

In particular, the Executive asks everyone to search their brains to come up with some bright ideas as to alternate or additional sources of the "Life-blood" mentioned.

EDITOR.

MR. de GRAAFF'S LETTER

VETERANEN LEGIOEN NEDERLAND

algemeen secretariaat:

Zevenhuizerlaan 91, Heiloo-telefoon (02200)3 18 25

postgiro: 32 38 11 te Driebergen-Rijsenburg

bank: Amsterdam-Rotterdam Bank n.v. te Ede

FOREIGN SECRETARY

Waalwijk (Holland)
Dr Schaepmanlaan 36

November 16, 1969

Mr Walter Lyle
The Westminster Regiment Association
614, Fourth Avenue
Post Office Box 854
New Westminster, B.C.
Canada

Dear Mr Lyle,

Just to improve the communication with our friends all over the world, The Dutch Veterans Legion has appointed me starting this month to act as Foreign Secretary.

Reading the files, I saw your letters of November 1968 about the trip you made through our country, but I take it that you never have received a copy of our monthly "Oud Wapenbroeders" with the report about this visit. I am sending you the relative pages enclosed.

We hope that this will not have been your last trip, and that we can await a new visit within short. We shall always be glad to give you any assistance you should need.

During the coming months we are going to make contact with the big world outside of Holland now, because we should like to know how other veterans in other countries succeed in keeping together their members and what they do for them. Most of the dutch soldiers and ex-soldiers are and always have been civilians in

uniform. It is typical Dutch. Therefore, most of the reunions are visited by 20-25% of the people involved. Much worse is the percentage of ex-soldiers who want to be a member of the veterans legion. We should be glad if only one percent would join us. How is that situation in other countries. Here one of the many questions to which we hope to receive an answer from the other countries.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,
Ant. P. de Graaff
Foreign Secretary
Netherlands Veterans Legion

614 Fourth Avenue
New Westminster, B.C.
Jan. 10 '70

Dear Mr. de Graaff,

Thank you for the interesting letter and for the pages from your magazine with the very complete story of our visit to Holland in May 1968.

In return, I am sending you a few copies of our paper, "The Groundsheet" (Souvenir edition) of that trip and I have asked that your name be placed on the mailing list to receive future issues. This letter will be re-printed in the next issue in the form of an "open letter".

From first hand, those of us who were on our tour, know what an excellent, lively, organization the Netherlands Legion is and we are not at all surprised that it has conceived such a unique idea as this, of appointing a Foreign Secretary. It is more evidence of the thoroughness in organization, displayed to us at that time. Such an appointment would not be made lightly and it would only be given to one who could make a success of it, so we send sincere congratulations to you on the appointment and our best wishes in the task.

Insofar as this organization is concerned, it is not a national one but a regimental one and so the direction of our efforts is quite different from national organizations such as yours or such as our own Royal Canadian Legion and others. So when you ask what we "do" for our members you must bear that in mind.

We certainly do nothing in the way of assisting any members as individuals financially. Mainly, I think, it is our members who "do" things for others, but of course, most of the work devolves on a very few. This is true of almost any group and, like you, we also would wish that more would be active.

Our membership is located all across Canada and indeed we have some in England and one, at least, in Italy, as well as a good number in the United States.

Perhaps the one thing we do best for our members is the fact, that we have this paper. The Groundsheet, which is our line, life-line really, to keep all these people in touch. Whether or not our members always pay their dues (and these are very small indeed) we continue to send the paper, until it is returned "address unknown" or the member has passed on to wherever old

soldiers go. Better, we think, to do so, than to lose touch forever for we find that, mainly, the matter of not sending dues is laziness or oversight. Eventually, most members get around to it in any case. The important thing is that, to have had service with our Regiment, is all that is required to be a member and for no reason whatsoever, do we wish to forget him (or her) and the Groundsheet is our one and only means of keeping us together.

Very early in our existence as an Association, we decided, that one very important duty for us must be regular visits to our hospitalized comrades. There can be no more worthwhile or necessary function of any veteran's group, than this.

Our members, I said, do things for others and one of these is a Scholarship Award. We have set aside a sufficient number of dollars to provide \$500.—each year to further the higher education of a worthy student. This is a competition, open to descendants of anyone who served with the Regiment and attracts entries from all over Canada.

Then there is assistance we give the Regiment itself. You mention "civilians in uniform" as being typically Dutch, but it is no less true of us, for ours is a citizens' regiment. It is one with a long history (for this young country of Canada, at least) and a distinguished one. We, who have served in the Regiment, whether in World War I or II, are very jealous of the reputation we achieved during our service and we naturally want the good reputation to continue, so we try to help and encourage those, who still serve under the name of the Regiment. We do this by financial assistance, first to the Regiment's several Cadet Corps, of which we are extremely proud, because they have, over many years, shown themselves worthy of that pride. Also, we have assisted the Band, which is another source of pride, because it is recognized as one of the best military bands in Canada's Militia. Also, the Rifle Team, which has produced some of the finest marksmen in the country.

One of our latest projects is to help in forming a regimental museum, which we know will be of great interest, not only to our members but to the public who will be able to visit it.

For the members themselves, we have two main functions throughout the year. One is an annual dinner in which we celebrate, ostensibly, one of the greatest victories in battle of our Regiment in World War II, but which, in reality, is a celebration of all our service and all our battles since World War I. The occasion is called the Melfa Dinner; the Melfa being a river in Italy, across which we formed a bridge-head in May 1944 and in which one of our officers earned and received the Victoria Cross. This dinner is a focal point for us. Some of our members come from very far afield and as you know, when old soldiers get together, there is no need for other entertainment. Somehow the cost of this dinner always exceeds the price of it, so perhaps this is where we do something for our members.

Now you might ask, how do we find ourselves able to make all these considerable and continuing expen-

ditures? This leads us to our other annual function, which is called the annual Smoker, which incidentally, since everyone has stopped smoking (or should) should be renamed "Drinker", a name which will be more true for a number of years yet. This is the occasion, which is the culmination of a fund raising activity, entered into by members all across Canada for weeks before. If the Groundsheet can be called, as I said, the "life-line" of our Association, then the results of this activity can be called the "life-blood" of it. We have some very devoted members on our Executive Committee, devoted to the extraction of a dollar here and ten dollars there and they are the organizers of this activity, but it is the members themselves who make it a success through their support of it.

These then are the things we do on a continuing basis. There are other projects, such as publishing a history of the Regiment and our "sentimental journey" in 1968, which could be added to our effort.

I hope there is some help for you in the foregoing account. It may be, however, that the Royal Canadian Legion could be a better source of help to you (and you to them) because you are so similar and I have taken the liberty of passing on a copy of your letter to one of our members, who happens to be the President of the New Westminster Branch of the Legion.

With you, I hope that the trip of 1968, is not to be our last. Your letter may be the encouragement we require to get moving on a new "sentimental journey".

Yours' sincerely,
Walter Lyle.

WHAT BECAME OF KELLY?

E. F. Duncan, 103 - 4th Ave., Port Alberni, B.C.
Dick Sommerville, Ste. 102-323 Parklawn Rd., Toronto, Ontario.

R. Dashwood, Gen. Delivery, Cranbrook, B.C.
J. Ambrose, 24461 Dewdney Trunk Rd., Haney, B.C.

LEST WE FORGET



J. Piper, New Westminster, B.C.
H. S. Slemmon, Delta, B.C.

RETURN
REQUESTED

THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION
P. O. Box 854, New Westminster, B.C.

CANADA
POSTAGE - POSTES

5 cts.

PERMIT No. 2077

VANCOUVER, B.C.

E.G. SHANNON
940 DIXON ST
RICHMOND BC