

VOLUME 2000 / ISSUE 2

Dedicated to the ideals and Comradeship
We knew in Wars and Peace and in
Our services both Home and Abroad.



THE GROUNDSHEET

The Official Publication of

The Royal Westminster Regiment Association
P.O. Box 854, New Westminster, BC V3L 4Z8

April, 2000

Melfa 2000

Friday 19th

Golf

Saturday 20th

Dinner

Sunday 21st

Brunch

&

Annual General Meeting

Executive

President	Len Wohlgemuth	534 Ailsa Avenue,	Port Moody,	BC V3H 1A6	415-6000
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Editors Corner Jerry Gangur email: jgan@telus.net

It is interesting how the objective and focus of the regimental association is slowly evolving. Where once friendship and comradeship were the *raison d'être*, the current members must add to this the responsibility of preserving the history of the regiment's deeds, both in war and peace and with ever diminishing human resources that lived the history. The association also finds itself dealing with sick and visiting in a more intensive manner. To achieve these added objectives, we must also ensure that the financial resources are in place in order to accomplish all of the above. This all comes with the commitment *We Will Remember Them*.

Must take the time to thank those members who write or phone to pass on information. We have become aware of members hospitalized, dying or just losing touch with us and with your continued help, we can be of assistance or comfort to the individuals or families as the needs arise.

Patience and understanding is a virtue. Sometimes if you find that something is not done as quickly as you might wish, remember that everyone in your association is a volunteer. We can forget and sometimes we can fail you, but when we do it is not intentional and we ask that on such occasions, you do have the generosity to forgive us.

A new executive will be elected at the upcoming AGM. If you would like to serve on the executive, just let us know. Not only do we need executive members, we always need help on numerous committees where time commitment is minimal. One way of finding out how you can participate is to attend any executive meeting which is held on the first Monday of each month in the armory at 7:30 PM.

Finally, the most important way in which you can help your association is to present yourself at the Melfa activities. Do your duty and attend Melfa.

President's Report

Len Wohlgemuth

Hello again. Well the Melfa weekend, May 19th through the 21st, is fast approaching and the dinner, brunch, and AGM will be held in the armoury this year. We hope to put a few interesting things together at the armoury, so come on down a see what is happening. My appreciation goes out to the commanding officer and the members of the regiment for making this possible. It takes a lot of work to make this weekend together and the regiment is supporting us quite well. Alan Morton has the golf tournament well in hand and should prove to be the sporting event of the year.

Apart from the Melfa weekend the executive is hard at work in other areas. **Gary Brooks** has completed last years gaming funding report and is preparing this years for submission. Additionally, **Jerry Gangur** is working, with the commanding officer and others, to ensure our representation at the unveiling ceremony of the **Filip Konowal** monument in the Ukraine this August.

Apart from these activities I would like to talk about recruiting for the association. As all of you know, the association was formed from World War II veterans over 53 years ago. The association welcomed the veterans from World War I and the severing regimental members into

the association. Unfortunately, since the number of members from WWII was so large not much activity in recruiting new association members after they moved on from the regiment. As time as marches on our ranks have dwindled and will continue to do so unless we put some significant efforts into bringing in new association members. The executive has set up a subcommittee, headed by Al Morton, specifically for recruiting. Al has produced a membership package that contains a letter, membership form, and a copy of the latest Groundsheet. All members of the executive have been actively seeking new members and we have had some success. Additionally, all members from the association can do their part for attracting new members. In particular, we are looking for former members of the regiment if you know of someone talk to them about the association and drop us a line with their name, address, and a little information about when they served. We are also looking towards recruiting the existing members of the regiment after they have moved on from the regiment. Again, all members can help by talking to the unit members at events such as Remembrance Day, the Melfa Weekend, or other regimental functions. I am confident that with the whole membership working on this we can start increasing our numbers.

Pro Regie et Patria

The Regiment LCol. Mark Fisher

As the Regiment crosses into the new millennium it finds itself in the enviable position of being acknowledged by the Commander of 39 Brigade as the best unit in British Columbia. Our strength in soldiers continues to grow and we are intending to send some 43 recruits off to training this coming summer. A solid core of Senior NCOs exists as it always has done with some 18 stalwarts making up the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess.

The unit has divided itself into two main locations, Aldergrove (in the old station supply building) and at of course the Armoury in New Westminster. B Coy in Aldergrove continues to grow and it is strategically placed to take advantage of the population growth occurring in the Fraser Valley.

Our Band continues to parade despite its ordered *disbandment* some time ago. Thanks to the almost unbelievable generosity of Mr **Peter Legg**, the band raised \$12K last year and can now outfit 25 members in full ceremonial scarlets. Our Colonel-in-Chief, the **Duck of Westminster**, not to be outdone, purchased 18 sets of new scarlets for our Guard of Honour which brings to the total of 22 soldiers we can put in full dress.

The entire Regiment was pleased to hear that His Grace the Duke was promoted to Brigadier

and given a very demanding position in the newly formed Territorial army Headquarters. We have managed to recruit 5 aspiring young officers who will go off in various stages of their training this summer. With new blood arriving the Officer Corps is in good shape! Currently seven members of the unit led by Capt. **Matt Haussmann** and the RSM MWO **Darryl Connick** are serving overseas in Bosnia as part of the 3PPCLI Battle Group. We look forward to their safe return in mid September. We also wish MCpl. **Daniel Suboski** God's speed as he leaves for the following Op Echo rotation #5 in Aviano, Italy

WWI Victoria Cross Recipient Filip Konowal, VC to be Honored in Ukraine.

Regiment plans to participate

We have been informed by Royal Canadian Legion Branch , Filip Konowal, VC Branch No 360 , that they will be unveiling a monument honoring **Filip Konowal, VC**, in Kutkiw Ukraine, the village where Filip Konowal was born. The ceremony will occur on 21 August 2000. Branch 360 is the same Legion that arranged for the construction and payment of the Trilingual VC plaque now gracing the Westminster armoury near the 6th street entrance.

The commanding officer, LCol. **Mark Fisher**, has responded to an invitation from Branch 360, requesting participation of the regiment. LCol. Fisher has submitted a request to headquarters send a Guard of Honour and the regimental band to participate in this ceremony.

Sick & Visiting

In George Derby Centre 7550 Cumberland St, Bby
Ethel Johnstone **Walter Jackson**
Bill Thoranson **Hector Roberge**

Hospitalized for a double hip replacement. **Vernon Ardagh**. Best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Mike Kedziora 988-1065. Recently hit by a truck while crossing a street in his motorized wheel chair. Not his fault. Two mounties happen to be near the intersection and saw accident. Driver charged. Mike says he is okay, but that's what he always says.

Colin McQuarrie Canada Lodge 7197 Canada Way,
 Burnaby

Doug Glenn continues to visit our members in George Derby Centre, but he says he is slowing down and he reminds us that our guys could always use some company.

Received telephone call from **Bert Wolverton** (living in California) and he took the time to tell me that **Gordon McCourt** was in hospital suffering with a tumor. Bert, we thank you for the call and you should know that Gordon received a nice flower arrangement from the association. ... Editor

It bears repeating. We need help with the sick & visiting. We are not asking for much other than for you to volunteer to visit a hospitalized or confined comrade. Just call or write us and tell us you will help.

⇒

More News

Tomorrow the Groundsheet goes to the printer. Thought I would make a few phone calls to see what scuttlebutt could be uncovered.

Ron Hurley tells me he has been a prisoner for the last few weeks, explains that he has been confined to house because hasn't been feeling well. Ron says write and I'll respond.....**Bill Jasman**, we say hello to you and out thoughts and prayers are with you... **Vernon Ardagh**, back home after hip operation. Seems progress is being made... **Doug Glenn** says he is going in for some tests, but says he feels okay. **Walter Jackson** has been on oxygen off and on, but tells us he will be at Melfa 2000..... **Ethel Johnstone** has some problems and to her we say a big hello. ... Editor

Flash! Beauty of computers, changes take only a minute... Just as I was tidying up the last touches of the Groundsheet, received a call from **Ron Hurley**. Ron wants Westies to be reminded that Maj. Gen, **Bert Hoffmeister** died. A few months prior to his passing, Ron along with an historian, spent two hours with the general. Ron says that "Hoffy" said that one regiment that never disappointed me was the Westminster Regiment (M), particularly at the Melfa and the Gothic line. This regiment to a great degree contributed to my success." Ron reminds me that the 5th Division was the first Canadian Motorized Division.

Remember

send in your Melfa Return

today!

Casino Accounts

Chairman - Gary Brooks

As we have noted in previous issues of the Groundsheet, our association has been the beneficiary of Provincial Casino Funds. Funds received have been spent in the following manner. This report has been submitted to the Gaming commission, with our request for additional funds for the coming year.

Total Funds received..... \$9,000.00
(\$6,000.00 to be spent on Cadets \$3,000.00 on Sick & Visiting)

<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Balance</u>
		+ / -
Cadets:		
New Westminster	\$1,500.00	0.00
Maple Ridge	\$1,482.64	+ 17.36
Aldergrove	\$1,500.00	0.00
Surrey Delta	\$1,499.92	+ 0.08
Sick & Visiting	\$3,065.08	- 65.08
Interest & Bank Charges	79.96	+79.96
Total Expenditures:	\$8,967.68	+32.32

Future Fund

We remind members that the funds received from gaming, must be spent in the area for which approval was made. Our regular expenses for the groundsheet, assistance to the regiment and other items cannot be supported by these funds.

Our Future Fund continues to assist us in ensure the Groundsheet is published and mailed. Your financial support continues to be essential to support our ongoing activities.

Finances Long Term

As noted earlier on this page, we are receiving financial support from non traditional sources and together with the funds accumulated in the Future Fund, the association is in a better financial shape than it has been in a long time. However, and there is always an however, we cannot be certain that the latest or subsequent submission for funds from the gaming commission will be approved. So we must "be prepared" to be disappointed down the road.

Our greatest expenses are with the Groundsheet and providing financial support to the regiment. Gaming has declined to provide funds for these activities. Funds for these purposes are always needed and that is why we ask that you consider our Endowment Fund in your annual charitable giving..... It can be said without fear of contradiction that without the annual income received from our Endowment Fund, publication of this newsletter would have had to be curtailed.

To all those who contributed to our Future Fund or will do so, we say thank you.

VC Plaque Unveiling Video: Due to requests for the videos of the VC plaque unveiling 5 April 97, we are placing a bulk order. If you would like a copy of this historic event, please forward cheque for \$22.00.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF THE ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION**

**AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS
SUNDAY 21MAY 2000**

PLACE: WARRANT OFFICER'S AND SERGEANT'S MESS, IN NEW WESTMINSTER ARMOURY

TIME: 1130 HRS

PARKING IN HE CITY HALL PARKING LOT

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

WE NEED YOU ADVICE AND SUPPORT AND WE NEED YOUR 2000 DUES

**IF YOU REQUIRE A RIDE TO EITHER THE MELFA DINNER OR THE ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING, YOU NEED ONLY CONTACT ANY DIRECTOR AND
ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE FOR A TAXICAB TO COME AND GET YOU.**

WE SUGGEST YOU COME FOR THE BRUNCH AND STAY FOR THE AGM.

MUSEUM WILL BE OPEN

Melfa 2000 Return

Yes, I will attend Melfa 2000 and this is my return

Name _____

Address _____

		Number of Persons	=	Total Cost
Number in my party	Golf \$35.00 times	_____	=	\$ _____
	Dinner \$30.00 times	_____	=	\$ _____
	Brunch (no charge)	_____		
	Cheque enclosed			\$ _____

For planning purposes, we need to know the numbers attending each activity.

Act today !

PROXY

The Royal Westminster Regiment Association

The undersigned, being a member in good standing of the above mentioned Society,

hereby appoints _____, or failing him

_____ as proxy holder for the undersigned to attend, act and vote for and on behalf of the undersigned at the **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** of the Society to be held at the armoury on 21 May 2000.

Signed this _____ day of _____ 2000

Note: Forward this proxy to the member you wish to act on your behalf or c/o P.O. Box 854 New Westminster, BC V3L 4Z8

(Signature of member)

Note: This page was designed to tearoff. The address for returning in on the reverse side.

Melfa 2000

Friday 19 May - Golf

Tee Off: 9:00 am. (Please arrive by 8:45 to organize foursomes)

Place: Delta Golf Course

11550 No. 10 Highway, Delta

Cost: \$35.00 (includes lunch, trophies & prizes)

Chairman: **Alan Morton** @ 525-6814

Saturday 20 May - Dinner

Where: The Armoury

1830 hrs: Cocktails

1930 hrs: Buffet Dinner

Sunday 21 May - Brunch

Location: Officer's Mess, The Armoury

0900 -1130 hrs

Sunday 21 May - Annual General Meeting

1130 Hrs Sharp - Warrant Officer's & Sergeant's Mess

Returns for Melfa activities and the Annual General Meeting are prepared on the opposite page for your early completion and return. We need to know numbers attending in order to order sufficient rations etc.

LOCAL MEMBERS: Many of our members make a concerted effort to attend the Melfa weekend and go to considerable expense to do so. For many, making the journey is very infrequent. We ask you to come out and meet your comrades and welcome them home once again. The recognition of your name will trigger many memories. Make the effort.

Letters.....

February 7, 2000

Hi,

Just a note to thank you all for the beautiful bouquet of flowers that the Association sent while I was in hospital. Many thanks, it is deeply appreciated and received more compliments than I can say.

While in Cardiac care had angiogram and angioplasty and feel a lot better now although am still on Renal Dialysis 3 times a week at R.C.H.

Best wishes to all.

Joe Strawson

George Derby Centre
7550 Cumberland Street
Burnaby, BC V3N 3X5

March 01, 2000

Dear Mr. Hamm
Secretary

On behalf of the residents of *George Derby Centre* I would like to extend our sincere appreciation for the generous donation of \$1,500.00 for the purchase of a new electric bed and confirm that we will be honouring your request that the bed will be used by either a member of your **Regiment**, or the **47th Battalion**.

George Derby Centre is extremely fortunate for the consideration given by your organization and I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank you for the support given in our continuing efforts to enhance the quality of our resident's lives.

Sincerely,
George Derby Centre

Janice Mitchell
Administrator

Editor,

March 2000

I received the Groundsheet the other day and I quickly realized something. I don't really look forward to getting it anymore. I love reading it, however, I don't look forward to the back page. In Memoriam.

That list! Having been around the Association as an executive member and the organizer of the Melfa Dinner, I got to know many association members. To see their names in the In Memoriam list is surreal. I remember the first time I met **Jack Turpenning**, the golf games I had with **Jack Hartley**, talking to **Don Drummond** and **Bill Robson's** kindness. These gentlemen I will miss. I was also very saddened to see the passing of Dick Armstrong's and John Ginter's wives. These two ladies always went out of their way to thank me for my effort on the Melfa's I ran. I will miss them as well. My condolences for the others who have passed.

The other reason I write is for history. Did you know that the first paid police constable for the City of New Westminster was an ex-Royal Engineer from Colonel Moody's Columbia Detachment? Jonathan Morey. He stayed behind in the 1860's after the disbandment and later was hired by the City to be the first constable. So the Regiment and the Police Service's history are joined more than just by a parking lot. Many members of the Regiment have been members of the local police department. Of course, me being one after following my dad. My reason for all this? Well for the last eight years I've been researching the history of the New Westminster Police Service. This December I plan to publish a book on that history. A hard cover coffee table style book full of pictures and stories of the forces history. With the link between the two organizations, there will be a few pictures of members of the Regiment with members of the Police Service. This book will show just how close the two are. So please let the Association members know about the book as a few of them may be interested in reading about this local history. More information will be announced later this summer.

Keep up the work on the Groundsheet. Even though it's difficult to look at that back page, I really enjoy reading it.

Sincerely,

Ted Usher

News .. News

Commanding Officer to step down....

LCol. Mark Fisher, CD has informed the regiment that he will be retiring this year. Along with his family, he will be moving to Eastern Canada. The change of command parade will be held sometime this Fall, possibly in October.

United Nations Veterans

We have a new category of veterans, those who have or will serve in UN peacekeeping or peacemaking operations. The Groundsheet would like to focus on these post-war soldiers and the activities with which they were associated. We ask anyone who has served or who is currently service in UN operations, to write and tell us about the experience. Photographs, even from the time of departure would be of immense interest. **Veterans, it's up to you!**

Financial

- a. If you are not a life member and have not paid your 2000 dues, we ask you to remit.
- b. If you wish to assist in helping Branch 360 or the association help defray the costs associated with placing a memorial in Filip Konowal's village of birth, please send donation to this association.
- c. **Future Fund.** We have not yet reached our goal set at the commencement of our fund drive. We are about 60% of the way there.

Editor Opportunity!!! If you are interested and feel you can make at least a 2 year commitment to learn the task of editing the Groundsheet, we would be interested in talking to you. Contact the editor tel noted on front page or email: jgan@telus.net

In Memoriam

John Parker Westminster Regiment (M) WW2



Reminiscing about the Westies and the 5th Canadian Division of WW2 are (right to left) Ron Hurley and the Divisional Commander, Major General Bert Hoffmeister. Photo taken spring 1999.