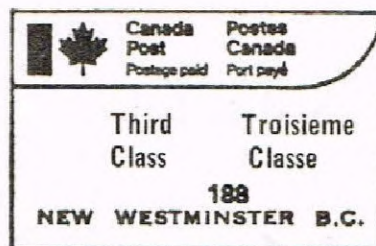


THE ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 854, New Westminster, B.C. V3L 4Z8



J. A. DUMONT,
1762 CHRISTMAS AVENUE,
VICTORIA, B. C.
V8P 2K8

RETURN
REQUESTED



The GROUND SHEET

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF
THE ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

104th — 47th — 131st — The Royal Westminster Regt.

Dedicated to the Ideals and Comradeship We knew in Two World Wars

Vol. 27, No. 4

BOX 854, NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C. V3L 4Z8

NOV. - DEC. 1978

W. NELSON SCOTT "SCOTTY" - PRESIDENT - 335 Churchill Avenue, New Westminster, Phone: 521-3294
ED SHANNON - EDITOR - 9400 Dixon Avenue, Richmond, B.C. - Phone: 277-6525
NORM McASKILL - SECRETARY - 7828 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C. - Phone: 521-4280

WHAT BECAME OF KELLY?

For the month of November 1978.

When sending your change of address - please include your POSTAL CODE.

W.F. Radbourne
- 3313 E. 26th Ave.,
Vancouver, B.C.

Jim Baron
- 632 Fraser St.
Kamloops, B.C.

Cecil R. Grinsted
- Box 2246
2076 Coldwater Ave.,
Merritt, B.C. V0K 2B0

R. Dashwood
- Box 473,
Hatzic, B.C.

- c/o Lord Nelson Hotel
Vernon, B.C.

H.S. Scribner
- Jacquet River, N.B.
- Spencer Memorial Home
Box 518
Moncton, N. B.
- Hillsborough, Ont.

SMOKER AND ANNUAL XMAS DRAW



THE ARMOURIES, NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.



SATURDAY DECEMBER 9th 1978

TIME: 19:30 HOURS (For those who forget, that's 7:30 PM)

COME AND MEET YOUR FRIENDS AND ENJOY THE FELLOWSHIP - REFRESHMENTS

The Smoker and Draw on December 9th, 1978, is an occasion for fellowship, nothing special is planned except for the draw. Come and meet your old friends, hang loose as they say in Hawaii and shoot the breeze. Refreshments in liquid form will be available at a reasonable price and a light snack will suffice to get you home satisfied.

Remembrance day has come and gone once again. It is now a holiday, has the true significance of Armistice been lost. How many school children or even adults realize why the holiday; they pay lip service to the memory but the holiday is the event. So it is except in the Association where our members have memories of a history inscribed in blood; fathers in 1914 - 1918 sons and daughters in 1939 - 1945!!

The Christmas draw tickets are going well, if initial returns are a true indication. Some disappointments in that members still refuse to participate. No doubt their reasons are sufficient unto themselves however the draw committee would like to know, consequently, those who have refused to participate will be politely asked why. Due respect has always been given to those who object on religious grounds or illness or age, but it becomes frustrating (I believe that is an appropriate word) to get tickets back which have been refused without even being opened.

I saved this piece of choice news to the end. Basil Morgan, more affectionately known as "Bas" completes the team as Vice President. His election follows my elevation to President, it was all done according to the by-laws. I cannot recall an Executive of this Association wherein the name of Bas did not appear. I have a picture of an Executive meeting held in Ernie Dayton's home in South Vancouver we all looked a great deal younger in those days - Duhig, Lynch, Hou, Lyle, Morgan. It was the night that we adopted by-laws and our first official publication of this Association took form. How many remember the "News - Views". Bas has a vast wealth of experience in all matters of the Association, he is quietly confident in making any presentation, presentations which are well thought out beforehand; he does his homework; he has served in every capacity, from President down, willing, reliable, sincere and a staunch believer in the "why for" of this Association.

Be of good cheer!

COMMANDING OFFICERS' REPORT - GROUNDSHEET

On most occasions the achievements and efforts of the unit go unrecognized and sometimes when we do receive recognition the CO forget to pass on the good news. In this regard I would like to respond to the "young" fellow who at the D Coy reunion expressed his concern about the shooting efficiency of the unit. Perhaps because my senses were dulled by the refreshments consumed I did not respond with some very significant information. This past year the unit did very well in the Lieutenant General S.C. Waters Trophy competition. This is a shooting competition opened to all Reserve Infantry Battalions, designed to improve weapons skills and attain a higher level in range proficiency. Results were as follows;

- a. Small Arms Competition - Overall - First Place - Westies
- b. Rifle Competition - First Place - Westies
- c. SMG Competition - Fourth Place - Westies
- d. Pistol Team - Second Place - Westies

The unit has a higher effective strength now than it had one year ago, however, it is a constant struggle to keep up our strength. One of our tasks is to augment the Regular Force either on a temporary or permanent basis. Unfortunately it appears that we do very well in this area but receive no recognition for our efforts. Last year, for instance, about ten percent of the personnel on our effective strength joined the Regular Force. The computer merely records this movement as another S.O.S.

Effective September 1978, for a number of reasons, the unit has commenced training every Tuesday and every second Saturday. This change should result in an increase of unit strength as our training previously was geared solely to the volunteer who could parade on Saturday.

Regimental Plaques The unit has in stock forty plaques bearing the Regimental Cap Badge mounted on a Royal Blue and burnt orange background. The plaque was prepared as per specifications laid down by NDHQ and are sized four inches by six inches. The plaques may be viewed in the Officers' Mess or through the RSM. The plaques are selling for twenty four dollars and cheques should be made out to the Commanding Officer.

Decals In stock are fifty decals, four inches by four inches, and are selling for nine dollars.

The Royal Regiment of Fuseliers is your Regiment's Allied unit in the U.K. This year we have had four officers from the Battalion visit us. In July Capt. John Woolbridge was here, from 3 - 7 October Majors Derek Burton and Tony Coutts-Britton and Capt. John Mills paid their respects. The latter three officers visited the Jr. Ranks Club and were readily acquainted with some of the more elaborate drinking customs of our soldiers. Their comment that our soldiers were not unlike others was taken as a compliment. Space is limited and I must stop writing. As always I would like to remind members of the association that our doors are open and we would like to hear from you.

J.N. Gangur
Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer

* * * * *

MUSEUM DELEGATE'S MUSING

After attending the Military Collector's Club convention in Toronto, and the Organization of Military Museums of Canada seminar in conjunction with the U.S. Army Museums, held at West Point, N.Y., I have only to say that they were both informative and satisfying to your delegate. I hope, that in the future, some of the ideas discussed and the method of the displays in the various museums visited, may be incorporated in the museum of The Westminster Regiment Association, and so improve the attraction to the visitors in our museum. There have been compliments on the improved layout of artifacts, a result of last years seminar in Halifax.

The most noted points of this meeting were discussions on lack of space, inadequate lighting, financial difficulties and staffing problems - all of which we suffer here.

There were some very capable speakers, but it struck me that, in the subjects dealing with American blunders in their skirmishes since 1776 to date, the speakers seemd to be apologizing and excusing; the most notable being a speech by Martin Blumenson, (Gen'l Patton's Biographer) on "Gen'l Patton, G.S. Jr. trying to explain and excuse that General's behaviour and disregard of Military Customs and Protocol. Another interesting speech was "Memory of a War" 1812.- Myth-making in 19th century Canada and U.S.A." by Prof. S.F. Wise, Director of Canadian Studies, University of Carleton, Ottawa. It seemed to be a "Draw" between U.S. excuses and Canadian Modesty. Never heard mention of the Riel Rebellion!

But they fed us well, and took us sightseeing to points of interest; Fort Putnam, Governors Island, Metropolitan Museum of Art (for Medieval Arms and Armour) Washington's HQ at Newburgh and Final Encampment at New Windsor 1782-1783. That country is full of history that is not learned from textbook in school.

* * * * *

RQMS W.A. RODDICK

There was a time, when some of you were terribly young when the Armoury was a quiet place. After the "war to end all wars", especially in the 20's and early 30's, The Armoury which for some reason was called "The Armouries", even "The Drill Shed" -- seemed to have been left high and dry and lifeless, as if the stream of human activity had found a new and distant channel. The passerby, in daylight hours and during most weeknights, might fail to detect any pulse and conclude that the thing, whatever it had been, was now dead.

The passerby was wrong, of course. The pulse of regimental life had slowed, certainly. For two or three years the 4th had carried on to be succeeded by the present regiment under two or three different names; but whereas every day of these recent years the Orderly Room is fully manned and busy, the Q Stores operate, living artifacts from The Museum pad about, a tight schedule governs the full use of all training facilities, and daily maintenance keeps the place in good regimental order, the old "Armouries" found several days per week when there was nothing doing, apparently.

The appearance was, fortunately, not the fact. There was a vital force that kept the unit life stream moving. That unique force was RQMS W.A. Roddick. "Bill" Roddick was for so many years so valuable a member of the unit that The Museum Committee, many of whose members remember him vividly, has commissioned the preparation of his biography. The purpose is to frame the biography suitably and mount it for display in The Museum. Old timers who remember RQMS Roddick well have contributed personal recollections for the project. Basil Morgan wrote the tribute that follows

Ian Douglas

BILL RODDICK

1933 to 1939

Bill's prime responsibility was caretaker of the Drill Hall (on a 24 hour shift). He also served as a full time quartermaster.

With these hours he was always available for a fitting, a bull session, advice on any subject from latrines to Windsor Castle.

The Band availed itself of his services as a playing member and fill in bandmaster. The Drum and Bugle Band was the better for his attentions. As instructor he was always there and the Drill Hall resounded to the lusty sound from after school to eleven at night.

My earliest recollections of summer camp found Bill cooking the meals as well as ordering, butchering, storing and whatever else Q.M.'s do. I recall his utter dejection when everyone scorned his "Johnny Cake". Even the cows who dined next to our mess tent spurned the offering.

Wednesday night was our official parade time. The evening always ended with a basketball game followed by cheese with crackers and coffee. No one could find a stronger cheddar and I am sure no one could find a cheddar with so much mould. The crackers were as great a challenge. Course and dry but large and filling. The flavour has lasted in memory. The coffee had to be something to compliment the cheese and crackers and it was. It repeated all the way up sixth street to home.

One had only to talk with Bill to know that he was as expert on all things Regimental to Royal. For a lonely teenager he was a Haven and Escape. He was rough and overbearing at times, always an authority figure, direct of speech, even somewhat awe inspiring. With all this he was kind. He wanted only that we all had an even break. What he gave us was caring and confidence.

After our War Bill undertook the task of training the bugle bands of the Regimental Cadets and the Sea Cadets. He carried on the same Q.M. duties and during this time he manufactured all the white trappings for the Sea Cadets Band. Again he was always on hand when someone wanted a "friend".

Every youth needs a "Bill Roddick". We can thank God we had ours.

Bas Morgan

* * * * *

MAIL BAG

The summer was too long and nice for mere letter-writing it looks like, so those odds and ends of news and patter from out yonder are pretty scarce this time around. Of course, our erratic mail system doesn't help any, and maybe that's where the trouble lies, eh?

Anyway, we received a nice letter from Don Motzer, R.R.1 Sechelt, B.C. just too late to make the last issue, but we were most pleased to hear from you Don and hearty thanks for the dues and the extra, also for the "Maple Leaf" copies which are very welcome to the Museum and interesting to those of us who used to read them regularly.... A telegram from Doug Glenn in May, from Hawaii (how these guys get around!) wishing us all a happy day. Have seen him at the meetings since then, so it's apparent he survived the gruelling ordeal. A note from Ruth Meek to say she was sorry she missed the Melfa Ladies Dinner, as she was in Edmonton that week-end, but she enclosed a generous donation to the Dinner expenses regardless. You are a rare type, Ruth.... Norman Dunn writes from 2192 Calder Ave., Ottawa, Ont. enclosing dues for 1977 and 1978. Our thanks and appreciation Norm, for this is what helps to keep our Association functioning. I believe the secretary has forwarded you your card and the information you requested, and we hope to hear from you again.

Gordon Radmore writes (29 Aug) from Mission, B.C. to say "Hello" to all of us, and to mention that he is just out of hospital and that his general health is on the up-swing. We're all glad to hear that Gordon and hope it continues that way. We were sure sorry to hear that Gene Palmer had had his leg amputated, for that's a mighty rough go at any time. We wish him the very best in recovery, and some of the boys were going up to see him..... A nice letter from Clarence Smith, Box 247, Rosetown, Sask. SOL 2V0, with dues to end of 1979. Many thanks Clarence and you should have your card by now. Boy, does that name "Rosetown" bring back memories! I was trying to sell Fuller Brushes in 1937 just west of there (Netherhill, Kindersley, etc.). What a country! Eternal dust, fence posts just showing, and no money, of course. You could have bought a quarter-section for a hundred bucks (that's if you had it) and all that potash and oil just waiting there! Glad to hear crops were good and harvesting going O.K. Hope you made it to the R.M.R.'s reunion. I remember when you came to the Regt.....

We're always happy to hear from all you lads out there and to know that you're still with us and able to keep that Old Man with the Scythe at the "high port". So drop us a line and be sure and add your Postal Code number to your address. That way we not only hear from you, we can keep our address files up to date

Editor

A.G. WHITE SAYS IT ALL

Dear Sir:

Just a few lines to let you know that the Toronto Chapter of the Royal Westminster Regiment Association is still alive. Please find enclosed a cheque for \$10.00 my dues for 1979 and a little extra for the running of the Groundsheet a most welcome news sheet which we all look forward to receiving. Keep up the good work. I know how much work must go into producing each edition.

I am also right in saying that without the Groundsheet to keep us informed a lot of the interest in the Regiment would be lost.

We here in Toronto were shocked on October 13th when we heard of the death of one of our steadfast members, Jack Shorter, 27 Hart Ave., Toronto a former "C" Company Stalewart.

As in so many cases "Jack" had just retired from the Post Office in August and was looking forward to a life of ease.

Jack had just taken a month to drive out to British Columbia to visit his two sons who live there. He was on his way back to Ontario and stopped at a friends farm in Sask. for a few days. It was here that he was stricken with a heart attack.

We'll keep up the good work out west and keep us informed. I'm still hoping to get out West to one of the Melfa Dinners myself one of these years. I am just back to work myself after having a heart attack last July.

Hope this letter finds you in the best of health.

Best regards

* * * * *

NOTE

Due to a various assortment of circumstances including a sharp review of our shrinking budget, this issue of the Groundsheet is considerably off schedule, as you will no doubt have noticed. But changes in format and financing were deemed necessary, after serious discussion by the Executive, with the result of production being delayed. But bear with us, and we should be back on the track again shortly.

* * * * *

It always leaves a void and a feeling of loss when we hear of our old comrades passing on, even though we know it is inevitable. The guys we trained, drank and fought with were and are closer in many ways than brothers and it has never been our custom to extol one above another. But I think the passing of Ron Mannering deserves an extra mention.

A rare personality in himself and a busy man at his chosen vocation, he always had time for the Association's business, was a perennial on the Executive and was President when he died. His absence is very noticeable to those of us who worked with him, and the Association is much the poorer for his having left us.

Editor

SCHOLARSHIPS 1978

This year's awards went to PATRICK J. SPITTEL and CHRISTINE L. RICKARDS.

Patrick is 21 years old and is a corporal presently serving with the Regiment, having joined it in 1965 he was named "best candidate" in the Junior N.C.O course. His aim is the army, after his entry into the faculty of dentistry. He is certainly a young man who knows what he wants to do.

Christine is 18 and is a grand-daughter of Walter Jackson who served with The Westminster Regiment and is now a member of the Association Executive. Her aim is to equip herself to help handicapped children.

Congratulations and best wishes for the future to both these young people from the committee and from all of us.

The committee has recommended to the Executive that next year we go back to one award of \$500.00 rather than two of \$250.00 we have had since 1972. This may stimulate a greater interest in the scholarships. Of course this is contingent upon the availability of funds. This year's budget did not allow more than \$500.00 for Scholarships and Achievement Awards together. There were no Achievement Award recommendations which is a pity for many of us feel young people who achieve something worthwhile in their area are worthy of our recognition. We feel that you, our own members are the people who should be bringing worthwhile acts of young people in your area to our attention. Remember it may be a group or an individual and anything in the way of a good act may be considered.

Other news of the Awards Committee is that after about a dozen years as Secretary, then as Chairman then latterly as both I feel it is time (for the good of the Committee as much as for anything else) that I step aside. Les Deane has consented to take over and this is very good news for there is nobody with a better grasp of the needs and aims of the Association and the Awards and the Scholarships than he has.

Walter Lyle

** ** * * * * *

"MEMORABILIA"

75 YEARS AGO

The following is from the files of the Columbian, 75 years ago, "Sgt. T. Cunningham returned on Wednesday from Ottawa where he took part in the annual rifle matches as a member of the B.C. team. New Westminster's representative did a lot of very credible shooting, and materially assisted his team of eight in defeating a large number of Ontario cracks". Sgt. Cunningham returned from World War 1 as Captain in the 47th.

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY WESTMINSTER REGIMENT (MOTOR)

- headlined the welcome home card sent to members of the Regiment on their return from World War 11, and signed by Miss Evelyn Simpson, convenor 'returned men's committee on behalf of the Auxiliary.

I realized that we have little information on this Auxiliary in which so many of us were active and would appreciate former members phoning me in order that I may list their names and record any anecdotes that they remember from the 1939-1945 years. Phone 522-6793.

AND THE PRESENT -

DONATIONS OF ARTIFACTS

Miss J.K. Gilley donated a framed picture of the Engineers camp in Sapperton built in 1858 (on the site of the B.C. Penitentiary), also ships in the Fraser River - the Beaver, Leveithan, and Camelion.

An excellent variety of records from the Cloth Hall at Ypres was received from Reg LeBrun, Anacortes, Washington. We appreciate his efforts in sending them to us. These papers from Reg had been delivered to the Royal City Museum, and were given to Walt by Curator Archie Miller when we visited that Museum in April.

(By the way, the Royal City Museum, situated beside Irving House, a historical site at 302 Royal Avenue, New Westminster, contains not only artifacts of the city's past, but also contains a collection of militaria-rifles, bayonets, swords, etc. The Museum is well worth a visit, as is the adjoining Irving House which was built by the Royal Engineers from 1862 - 1864. Telephone 521-7656).

Many pictures have been received in the Regimental Museum in the past months - among them a photograph from H. Kirkpatrick, Regina, Sask. of the city of Emden, the last place in which C Company saw action in May, 1945.

COMMENTS ON THE MUSEUM

Walt and I attended The Royal Westminster Regiment Association Executive change-over dinner some months ago, and among the short speeches by the retiring Executive and others were remarks by LCol. Les Deane. Les said that in his travels across Canada he had visited a number of Museums of military units, and was proud to relate that though the military collections of other units were, in many instances larger than those of our Museum, our artifacts were the best presented. We thank Les for letting us know of this favorable comparison.

MUSEUM PUBLICITY

Many and various contacts have been made over the past year in order to further publicize the open hours. Some of these include; write ups in the Columbian and Vancouver Sun newspapers; the Corps Vet; notices of open hours in the New Westminster Public Library, New Westminster Senior Secondary School, Royal Canadian Legion Branch #2, the Surrey Leader; and announcements on Radio Station C.K.N.W.

Copies of revised pamphlet containing information on the Museum are now available as one enters the Museum - these of course, also listing the open hours. Mr. John Kyte, Provincial Museums Advisor, has requested permission to re-print this pamphlet at some future time in the publication "Museums and Art Galleries in British Columbia".

INTERESTING READING

"A History of the Men and Guns of the Lower Mainland Defences, 1859 - 1949" by Dr. Peter N. Moogk, assisted by Major R.V. Stevenson. Foreward by Reginald H. Roy, C.D., Ph.D., Professor of Military and Strategic Studies, University of Victoria.

This book is available at our local library.

NEW MEMBERS ON MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Bruce Hardy, CO's rep, and Jerry Churley, who will assume Dave Adlem's duties as Treasurer, are welcome additions to the Committee.

DIORAMA

Vern Ardagh will address the Museum Committee on Sept 18 on the method of presentation and display of the Diorama in the Museum, and the problems involved. Vern advises that he has attended model makers' meetings and has seen the work in progress on the Diorama. Whole numbers of models have already been made, with finishing details, painting, markings etc. now being done. He is hoping for completion by the end of the year, if not, next spring.

REMINDER OF OPEN HOURS:

MONDAYS 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
 WEDNESDAYS 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
 FRIDAYS 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.
 Closed holidays. Other times by appointment
 Museum phone 526-5116 or W. Hogg, 522-6793

Donations of military artifacts are always welcome!

Until next issue,

Freda Hogg

EDITOR'S NOTES

It is understood that Ian Douglas is again active with the Museum; he has been appointed "Historian" 1945.

Volunteers required on a regular basis for translation of documents on hand in German, French, Italian and Belgian.

Would appreciate hearing from anyone with information concerning Cannon Scott's son believed to have been killed in action - World War 2

Reginald LeBrun of Anacortes, Washington submitted the article "To The German Army and The German Navy" that appeared in the May-June 1978 issue of The Groundsheet which he enjoys very much. He celebrated his 83rd birthday 22 Oct. 1977 and he and his wife will be celebrating their 60th anniversary in 1978.

THE PRESIDENTS REPORT

When I accepted the position of Vice President at the Annual General Meeting in March of this year, little did I realize that in a few short months I would find myself in the position of President. The passing of Ron Mannering was a blow to all of us and in particular, myself, as I was not totally prepared to undertake, nor knowledgeable of the workings of this Association, to confidently undertake the task thrust upon me. My main activity, for many years has been in the realm of the Christmas Draw which required attendance possibly only twice a year, at the Executive level, for reporting purposes and I was quite critical at time of the actions taken by past Executives. That is now all history; where do we go from here?

To be a good President, one requires the backing of the Membership and the Executive, in that order, as this Association is not a one man show. I'm the first to admit that it has been a hard core group of about fifty people who have hept things going these last thirty one years, and even some of these are becoming weary as time goes on, but in the short time that I have held this office, my fears and lack of confidence have been disspelled to the extent that I am secure in my own knowledge that I can provide leadership to the Executive and through the Executive to the membership at large.

I do not subscribe to the often stated remark that this Association has served its purpose and as attrition takes its toll we should sit on our hands and let it wind down into oblivion. At the same time, I do not profess to have all the answers to all of the problems relating to membership, attendance, finances etc.

At my first Executive meeting I remarked that someone once said that

" You will never make your foot prints in the sands of time, if you sit on the beach."

Roughly translated, the above means that you and I must get off our duffs.

I am very pleased to advise that Norm McAskill has assumed the full responsibility for the position of Secretary. This was previously a divided position which was found to be quite cumbersome from a communications viewpoint. My sincere thanks to Sgt Cull for her loyalty and hard work on behalf of the Association. Norm has now gone full circle - how many of you recall that Norm was the first Secretary of this Association under its initial organization following the return of the Regiment from overseas in 1945. Over the years Norm has gained a vast experience in work similar to the needs of our Association; he is factual, persistent and interested; I look forward to working with him.

Elsewhere in this issue you will note some comment on the delay of publication and the change of format. The delay is my responsibility and the change of format is due to necessity. At the time of writing this, it is uncertain how the issue will turn out; if it is not totally satisfactory, adjustments will be made. There is a committee looking into all alternatives. Cost is the determining factor; this issue is being put out at approximately one third of the costs of previous issues. I subscribe to the remarks made by Fred Bass; the Groundsheet is read because of what is in it not because of what it looks like. Needless to say we expect some comments; your constructive criticism is solicited and will be appreciated.

The Executive have approved a billing system for Dues; your invoice will be in the mail prior to the year end complete with a return envelope. True this will be an expense, but a justifiable expense in that we expect to increase tremendously the returns from this source and it will preclude the continuing harping in coming issues of the Groundsheet and at our fellowship gatherings where the usual opening remarks are; Have you paid your dues?. You will be asked once in a formal manner, so, damn it, when you get the invoice, please pay up.



LEST WE FORGET

N. M. Kenny, WW2
Cumberland, B.C.
May 20, 1978

Fred Day,
Kelowna, B.C.
November 1978

Jack Shorter,
Toronto, Ontario
October, 1978

R.H. "Bob" Davidson, WW2
4656 Brentlawn Drive
Burnaby, B.C.
August 21, 1978

W. Haines, WW2
9305 Kalamalka Road,
Vernon, B.C.
May 22, 1978

Ron Mannering, WW2
7290 11th Avenue,
Burnaby, B.C.
September 6, 1978

