



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

# THE GROUND SHEET

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF

THE ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION  
P.O. BOX 854, NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C. V3L 4Z8

VOL. 34

ISSUE: 2

APRIL, 1985

BASIL MORGAN  
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ED SHANNON

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1944

1985

MELFA DINNER  
SATURDAY, MAY 25, 1985

PROGRAMME

9:00am.-Golf Tournament, Richmond  
Stan Moorhouse, Chairman

2:00pm.-Royal Westminster Regt.  
Annual Inspection and  
Change of Command Parade  
Queen's Park Stadium.

6:15pm.-Cenotaph Service  
Assemble at Armoury  
Wreath laying.

7:00pm.-Cocktails, at Armoury.

8:00pm.-Dinner to commence  
One minute silence  
Grace  
Toast to The Queen  
President's Welcome  
Introduction of  
Head Table Guests  
Toast to the City of  
New Westminster  
Toast to the Royal  
Westminster Regiment  
Toast to Comrades-in-  
Arms  
Toast to The Melfa

SUNDAY, MAY 26, 1985

10:00am.- Sunday Brunch,  
Officers and Sgts. Messes, Armoury.



MELFA GOLF  
 TOURNAMENT  
 -----  
 SATURDAY,  
 MAY 25, 1985  
 -----  
 MYLORA GOLF  
 CLUB



9411 SIDAWAY RD.  
 RICHMOND

Cost per person: \$12.00. Tee-off time: 09:00. Foursomes posted by 08:30. An easy course to play, no hills to climb or shoot over, and with the scoring system used anyone can win. Come prepared to enjoy yourself, but do let us know if you are coming. Thank you.

1939-45

1914-18

- MELFA CROSSING
- GOTHIC LINE
- CORIANO
- LAMONE CROSSING
- MISANO RIDGE
- NAVIGLIO RIDGE
- ITALY 1944-1945
- IJSSSEL MEER.
- DELFIJL POCKET.
- NORTHWEST EUROPE 45

SUNDAY BRUNCH  
 MAY 26, 1985

Time: 10:00 Cost per person: \$6.00  
 Place: Officers & Sgts. Messes  
 in the Armoury

A convivial social get-together where you can remember what you forgot the evening before, and enjoy renewing old friendships.

- SOMME 1916
- ARRAS 1917-1918
- VIMY 1917
- HILL 70 1917
- YPRES
- PASSCHENDAELE
- GROCOURT QUEANT
- CANAL-DU-NORD
- AMIENS
- VALENCIENNES

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REPORT ON THE REGIMENT

Mr. Editor,

At the Annual General Meeting, I was interested in what LtCol. Wilks told us about the regiment today, particularly as to the awards accumulated in this, his last year as O.C.

For two reasons, I resolved to find out all I could about these trophies. First, to inform the readers of the Groundsheet exactly what these awards are and how important they are, for I am sure that few of my contemporaries know anything about them, even some who were at the meeting. Secondly, though he must be very proud about the winning of the awards, the Colonel was very matter-of-fact in detailing them and I suspected he may have been indulging in a bit of the understatement the British use when dealing with the most important things.

The first of the trophies won is the Sir Casimir Gzowski, for which all of the 52 of Canada's Militia Infantry Battalions must compete, which fact shows much about the intensity and competition that thus must surround it. The judging for this best Infantry unit in Canada's militia is done by a team of Regular Army inspectors who are charged with selecting the winner on the basis of (a) Shooting Ability; (b) Strength Ratio to Establishment and (c) Qualifications as to Trade or Rank. This is the fourth time the Royal Westminsters has won this award but this time, it has won it together with,

The General Waters trophy which is strictly a shooting competition whereby everyone, from the Colonel down, fires. The total over-all score becomes a percentage of the total possible score. It is open to every Canadian Militia unit (any Corps) of which there is well over a hundred. It is certainly a great competition to win, especially to win it together with the Gzowski, an achievement never reached before by any regiment.

The third award is the Wallace Efficiency Trophy for the most efficient Militia unit in B.C. of which there is 15.

Finally, there is the Canadian Infantry Association award for the best Infantry battalion in the Militia in B.C.

Colonel Wilks also told us about some of the training going on this summer. Of prime interest is the arrangement where a platoon of 36 is already engaged in training in parachute jumping. When qualified, the platoon will go east for training in survival, forced marches, infiltration, living off the land, and airborne "commando" tactics. All that, is with the aim of being ready with the skills required, to work with the Second Commando Airborne Regiment by the end of the year.



Being selected for this type of training is, in itself, a great honour, for only five or six have been selected from amongst Canada's Infantry Militia Battalions. Surely it must reflect a high regard the Regiment has earned, over the past several years for such plans do not happen overnight.

Up to this point I have simply reported the bare facts about the "honours" and left the facts to make their own impression.

In the face of these facts, can there be any doubt but that the "Westies" of today is the top militia unit in Canada? and if that gives you a feeling of nostalgic pride, like the pride we had in war-time when we knew there was none better, you might say to yourself, "Good for them, a chip off the old block", My own feeling is, that the winning of these awards, especially the two national ones, is so remarkable, so deserving of our pride and of our applause, that it simply had to be emphasized.

Of course, all this success didn't just happen. There are reasons for everything and the obvious reason here is leadership. Leadership, in the first place from LtCol. Fred Wilks and the regular force training staff and also from other officers and nco's of the battalion. Also the calibre of the young soldiers is high.

The Colonel noted some other facts of interest in the Regiment. He introduced his 2ic, Major Chris Bradford, who would assume command on April First. The changeover parade will take place in the afternoon of Melfa Dinner day. For those attending the dinner and not golfing, a good suggestion would be to attend that parade to observe the smart young soldiers of today, which may bring back memories of when we were young.

The strength of the unit is 160 all ranks. New vehicles have been arriving. Soon there will be an entirely new "family" of weaponry, the "grandsons" of the Bren, the Sten and the Lee-Enfield.

LtCol. Wilks has done a tremendous job with the Regiment and he will be a hard act to follow but it is fortunate that the new C.O., LtCol. Bradford, was 2ic and had much to do with the success of this year.

Thanks for the space Mr. Editor,  
Walter Lyle.

I am sure your 'contemporaries' echo your sentiments most heartily, Walter.  
Editor



THE EXECUTIVE  
of  
THE ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

NOMINAL ROLL for 1985 - 86

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- Walter Lyle, 614-4th.Ave.,New Westminster,V3M IS4  
521-3265
- Stan Moorhouse,704-700 Hamilton,New Westmr.,V3M 2M6  
522-3507
- John Rosso,50I Amess St.,New Westmr.,V3L 4A8 525-2910
- Bert Hoskin,(Chmn.,Museum)4736-62nd.St.,Delta,V4K 3L7  
946-2277
- Lt.-Col.C.Bradford, O.C.Regt.

INFORMATION REGARDING  
ITALY LIBERATION REUNION

The Dept. of Veterans' Affairs has notified the Association that no organized group can be accommodated in the ceremonies arranged for the anniversary trip to Italy in May. Art Miller, Kamloops, was chosen by draw to represent the Assn.on this one.

REGIMENTAL PARADE

The Change of Command Parade and Annual Inspection of The Royal Westminster Regt. will take place at Queens Park, New Westminster on May 25th.,1985 at 14:00 hrs.

## MAIL BAG

Out of the rumblings and rhetoric of the Annual General Meeting has come a newly-elected Executive to guide the Association for the next year, and the return of a former editor to the Groundsheet. It remains to be seen whether a year's sabbatical has improved or detracted from his ability.

We have been hearing from quite a few of you lads, which is good, and the way we like it. It keeps reminding us that there is still a lot of guys out there interested in the Association and in contacting old buddies. Some have appeared out of the woodwork to say they had never heard of the Association or the Groundsheet! That's possible; but all we need is their current address (and Postal Code!) and the Groundsheet will be forwarded.

I fully realize that we're all getting past our prime, and control of the old writing stick ain't near as simple as it once was, but please, when you sign your name and address try and make it readable! Our poor Secretary goes cross-eyed and develops the stutters over some of them!

We had a letter a while back (Dec.) from Charlie McQuillan, Westbank, B.C. with a bit of a problem. I understand Gerry wrote you in January, so I hope all is well. And our thanks for the dues, Charlie.

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Joe Strawson writes in from Pitt Meadows, B.C. with congratulations on the Directory most of which goes to Gerry for a lot of work on it. Too true, Joe, compared with the '67 Directory there are a lot of "they do not answer". But then not many of us are under three score and ten, and '45 is getting to be a long time ago. Hearty thanks for the dues and Sick and Visiting donation notes from Hal Campbell, Charlie Collison and Art Ward with dues, and many thanks for same, fellas. (Your brother Jack's address is noted, Art) Also Bob Reynolds from North Vancouver drops a line to get caught up and to mention his appreciation of the Directory. Your right, Bob, it was a good effort... A note from Jean Williams (Dec.) to tell us Ted is coming along fine, and we're sure pleased to hear that and sincerely hope the improvement continues. Best wishes to you both.

A letter from Cecil Grinstead, Edmonton, saying he hopes to make the Melfa Dinner this year, and wondering what became of some old 'C' Coy. comrades, namely: J.P.D. Tully, R. Meacrett, W.H. McIntyre, F.A. Stuart. Anybody able to help him out? Also his best regards to all the 'old sweats' from 'way back.

A long screed from Wick Stewart, Kitimat, B.C. detailing some trials and tribulations he and Tiny Robertson got into while sashaying around the hills of Italy with



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a carrier. We'll try and find space for the whole thing in a future issue, Wick. Thanks for the effort.

Our thanks to Mrs. F. J. Richardson of Sidney, B.C. for the donation to the Groundsheet, which periodical she says her husband enjoys. There is no subscription charge for the Groundsheet; the Association dues are \$5.00 per year, and this entitles you to receive the GS.

A nice letter from C. Wilkins, Nilon Junction, Alta., and our thanks for the dues and Groundsheet donation enclosed. Always pleased to hear you enjoy the Groundsheet, and we hope we can keep it interesting for you. There is a bit of confusion concerning the 'old Westie' name you sent in: Heinie Hinkleman, Onoway, Alta. The Directory shows a 'Henry Hinkle Onoway. Could be the same chap or two different people?

A newsy one from Jim Kyle, Manor, Sask., says he was up to see Ray Hockley at Weyburn

just before Xmas. All fine there, and Roger Hassard of Regina was away on a big trip (Love-Boat, maybe?). I'm sure Gerry will try to get a copy of "Ritorno in Italia" for you, if there's any left. The trip to Italy was for one member of the Association, Gov't.-funded, and Art Miller of Kamloops was chosen out of suggested names put in a hat. And we have Ray Hockley's current address, so if he doesn't get the Groundsheet,

blame it on the Postal Service!

A note from Herb Timpe, Edmonton, with dues, a donation and best wishes to all for '85, for which many thanks, Herb. Your new address is noted, and we hope you are able to make the 'Melfa'.... One from Scotty Low (way back in October) saying how much he and his wife enjoyed all the '84 Melfa festivities, and they are looking forward to the '85 get-together. He thought the July Groundsheet was very well done (take a bow, Bert) only he didn't get his copy, and had to borrow Bert Stephen's. If that Abbottsford address is your current one, Scotty, you should get the next one, Postal Service willing!

George McDonald from Hope B.C. wrote in (Dec.) enclosing dues and a nice donation, and hearty thanks for same, George and for your kind remarks for those who try to keep the Association alive and healthy. When you mention that the old eyes and muscles aren't what they used to be, there's a lot of us know just what you mean.

And from away over on the East Coast we hear from George Bayne in Nova Scotia, and it's always a warming thought to know that distance has no effect on the ties of old comradeship. For the dues and donation, many thanks, George, and we're real glad to hear that Time is treating you fairly well, and we hope it stays



like that for a long time yet.

If all this seems a bit long-winded its because there was a lot of letters piled up, and I'm sure you guys like to know they were received and perused, and I assume other chaps enjoy the bits of news and like to hear that old buddies are still making out OK. So keep 'em coming, and cheerlo and best wishes to all of you.

Editor

REMINDER

Will the present holders of the Marshall Trophy and the Low Net Trophy be sure and bring them with them to the Golf Tournament on May 25 (someone else might just possibly win them.)

Stan being unavoidably absent on the 25th., Doug Glenn is taking over as Chairman. Call him at 522-0890.

MELFA '85

Enclosed in this issue of the Groundsheet is another tear-off section with which to confirm your attendance at the function on Melfa Weekend '85.

I would appreciate that those of you who are planning on attending do send me that section as soon as you can, as you can understand we must know how many are attending so we can notify the caterers.

Also you will notice on the programme, at 2pm on the 25th., the active unit is holding their Annual Inspection and Change of Command Parade at Queens Park(subject to weather). Come and enjoy yourselves at this important event and meet the young men and women who are making the Regt. what it is today.

Included in a few replies I have enquiries about hotels in the area of the Armoury. Here are a few if you wish to contact them. Remember this Melfa Weekend is also Hyack Weekend in New Westminster, which is the city's most important yearly event. So if you plan to stay in an hotel call early.

(1) Royal Towers Hotel - directly across the street from the Armoury. Phone:524-3777

(2) Coquitlam Motor Inn - 319 North Road.

Very nice accommodation. Phone:931-9011

Again, please send your replies as soon as you can. You can also call me at home if you wish; 530-2066

Ted Usher  
Melfa Chairman  
4097- 204B St.

Langley B.C. V3A 1Z7

SICK AND VISITING REPORT

At press time there isn't much to report on the S and V front, which should indicate that the old boys are bearing up reasonably well, for which we should be thankful. Malcolm Stewart is still in Intermediate Care in Coquitlam, and will be for a while yet, and Al Munn has just been taken to Queens Park Hospital in New Westminster with his condition so far undetermined. Ken hopes to have news on how he is shortly. Once again, if you should know of any member who is ill or in hospital, please let us know, so we can keep informed on how they're doing.

Ed.

**Long illness takes 'war hero' doctor**

Dr. Edmund M. Wilder, an "unsung hero" of the Second World War, died last Tuesday in New Westminster after a long illness. He was 75.

Wilder, a general practitioner, was made a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, an honor conferred on few family doctors.

Born in Winnipeg in 1909, Wilder graduated from the Medical School of the University of Manitoba in 1933 and, after interning in Minneapolis, practised in Saskatchewan and Alberta until the outbreak of the war.

He joined the Canadian army and, after serving as medical officer at Suffield, Alta., served overseas with the Royal Westminster Regiment, which he joined in Norfolk, England, in 1943, also as unit medical officer.

Wilder saw action in all the unit's operations and was mentioned three times for exemplary service in dispatches. He was named commander of 22 Field Ambulance Squadron in Northern Europe.

He is still remembered by regiment members as an "unsung hero" who worked with compassion and unflappable determination under extremely adverse conditions.

Following the war, Wilder returned to Canada and set up practice in New Westminster where he continued to serve with the Royal Westminster Regiment. His growing practice included many veterans and their families.

He is survived by his wife, a son, a brother and two sisters.

MELFA RESERVATIONS

To assist in planning we would like an early confirmation of your attendance.

GOLF:	YES.... NO....	NO. IN PARTY.....
DINNER:	YES.... NO....	NO. IN PARTY.....
SUNDAY		
BRUNCH:	YES.... NO....	NO. IN PARTY .....

Please send to: Melfa Chairman  
Ted Usher  
4097 - 204B St.  
Langley, B.C.  
V3A 1Z7

.....  
Attendee

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THE FORGOTTEN SOLDIER

Men from many races have served with great distinction in the Canadian Army during the First and Second World Wars. We have all heard and read of their contribution, but there is one race which I call "The Forgotten Soldier", our own North American Indian.

We never, in our unit, categorized, gave preference to, or allocated our men to any position, rank or trade on a racial basis, but rather on their ability in a specific area such as weaponry, signals, equipment (vehicle and other), logistics; so only memory recalls their participation on a group basis. One might, in view of this, ask why at this date isolate them and draw special attention to them? The answer is that in some small way it may help redress the distorted and unjust picture so many in our society still retain of these proud Canadians, and to record my own feelings as one of their commanders.

We had recruits from many Bands and Tribes, men from British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario in the main. All would agree in assessing their character that they were good soldiers - quiet, dignified, courteous and disciplined, but with individual personalities like any other soldier. They seemed to have a natural ability in their handling of weapons, many being excellent rifle shots with a great fondness for their own personal weapon. I remember one soldier who chose the ill-famed Boyes Anti-Tank rifle, a large brute weighing 36 lbs. and of .55 calibre, noted for its ability to fracture the collar-bone of anyone foolish enough to fire it. He lugged that monstrosity over half of England and had to be physically separated from it when they were withdrawn from service.

The old myth about Indians and liquor certainly was true, but only in the sense that many, for the first time, had free and easy access to liquor, as all soldiers did in the pubs of England, and later in the vino shops of Italy. However, while drink made many other soldiers bellicose and extremely difficult to control, they became in the main melancholy, but seldom if ever belligerent.

I can say too, as a commander and dispenser of discipline, that unlike many soldiers who had many a "tale to tell" when charged with an offense, all being completely innocent of course, the Indian was perhaps inclined too stoically to accept a charge without speaking in his own defence, and accepting whatever decision was reached in

(continued)

## IN MEMORIAM

Fred Bass, WW I  
47th. Batt.  
Vancouver, B.C.  
February 21, 1985

Robt. M. Thompson, K47466  
WR(M) WW 2

David Dailey  
WR(M) WW 2  
New Westminster, B.C.  
March 15, 1985

Dr. E. M. Wilder, WW 2  
M.O., WR(M)  
New Westminster, B.C.  
March 28, 1985

C. G. Acaster, WW 2  
Edmonton, Alta.  
March 21, 1985

(CONT'D FROM PAGE 11)

the case. One learned to recognize this in time and ensure both sides of the case were properly presented.

Perhaps the most honest and appropriate thing I can say is that I am glad and honoured that so many chose my Regiment in which to serve.

Bert Hoskin

## 'The Entertainer' passes away

Well-known entertainer Fred Bass died of natural causes on Thursday, February 21 at Shaughnessy Hospital. He had been an entertainer for most of his 87 years.

Bass began his career at 14 as a cinema pianist, providing "mood music" at the local theatre in Fernie, B.C. where he lived with his widowed mother.



Fred Bass

His career was interrupted by the First World War, in which he served as part of the 47th Battalion, New Westminster Regiment, and saw service in France and Belgium.

After being struck on the forehead by shrapnel, Bass retur-

ned home and resumed his career as a cinema pianist at New Westminster's Edison Theatre.

In 1928 he became an announcer for the fledgling radio station, CKWX. He remained with the station for 33 years, until 1961.

In 1962 Bass was appointed musical director for the first Barkerville Show, and he also assisted with Dawson City's "Gaslight Follies", which played at Expo '67.

Dressed in a bowler hat, satin vest, string tie and arm bands for the Follies show, Fred Bass was the epitome of Honky Tonk piano players — truly The Entertainer.

He once said that "being without a piano would be like being without my right arm", and is said to have gleefully pounded out ragtime on the hospital piano for a few hours before quietly passing away in his sleep.

Thanks to;  
South Van. Revue