



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: 4

FEBRUARY, 1987

Annual General Meeting

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Thursday, March 19, **1987**

TIME: 8:00 P.M.

PLACE: ARMOURIES – NEW WESTMINSTER, B. C.

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

MELFA

87

MAY 16 TH

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EDITOR'S CORNER

THE TUMULT AND THE SHOUTING DIES:

So it would seem. My personal High Dungeon has descended to the ground floor. My personal letter, in the last issue (AND IT WAS A LETTER NOT AN EDITORIAL) and was meant to arouse and inform. It would seem that it has, in part, achieved that purpose. Appreciation to the large number who wrote and phoned to express their complete support for the objectives of YOUR SPECIAL MUSEUM COMMITTEE. Particular appreciation for the long distance phone calls (at their expense) to Wally Lockhart in Ontario and Mel Glover in Arizona. I regret that I did not reveal the REAL SOURCE of my verbose irritation and any misunderstanding therefrom. I acknowledge some minor criticisms received - for that also is a member's democratic right. Their remarks are equally appreciated. I acknowledge correspondence from one member, who voiced considerable displeasure, but have not published his letter verbatim as it was sent to me personally. The writer, a former member of our revered Sniper Section is bemused and quite taken aback by my remarks. He chides me for my "unique method of writing to myself" and credits, or discredits, me for "setting a precedent for editors all over the western world". Arguably some impertinence on my part - hardly original however. He upbraids me further for "separating the good Colonels from the bad". Sorry there - not intended and I do not subscribe to that theory. We have had some fine commanding officers both in W.W. 2 and since. Post W.W. 2 C.O.'s like Herb Hamm, Mike Steede, Les Deane and Jerry Gangur are but a few who come to mind. Current C.O. Col Bradford will perform likewise, I'm sure. In fairness to the old Sharpshooter, he could not know that my seeming strong words resulted from a virulent and scurrilous verbal attack by The Area Commander - A Brigadier, no less. He might be interested to learn that this officer has written a follow up letter confirming his original expressions. I can share in some bemusement but reiterate. I DO NOT TAKE TOO KINDLY TO ANY ONE LABELLING OUR ASSOCIATION MEMBERS A BUNCH OF DISLOYAL AND DISRESPECTFUL MISCREANTS. Brigadiers should know better. I respect our Sgt. York's observations but would remind him to adjust his sights, keep objective and forget the cheap shots - such as "Stop Taking Over Our Newsletter - it's not YOURS". Of course it isn't but; partly his and partly mine. Also "Have your own newsletter printed and mail them at your own expense". Now that's a cheap shot. Seriously and not being facetious, the old 'Eagle Eye' has a nice turn of phrase. He may note my editorial role is an acting one. The position is open. Please apply. The President will be delighted.

R.H.

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SPECIAL INVITATION TO ALL ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

FROM: ELSIE BALDWIN, MARY & SAM SOUTAR
TO ATTEND

BRANCH #3 ('D' COY) ANNUAL PICNIC AND MEMORIAL SERVICE

DATE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 2nd, 1987 TIME: 12:30 P.M. - ??

Ladies and Gentlemen bring your own picnic baskets and your personally desired liquid essentials. Picnic type folding tables and chairs would be an asset to all who can bring them.

DIRECTIONS: Not too difficult - Proceed around south side of Cultus Lake, past golf course, then look for a large flag on your right. Easy access from Hwy #1 via Cultus Lake to Circle 6 Ranch, Lindell Beach.

SEE YOU IN AUGUST!

FROM MELFA 87 CHAIRMAN

Details Re Melfa 87 appear in this issue but I take this opportunity to urge ALL to attend in record numbers. Usually we tend to attach significance to prime calendar years; such as 15th, 25th, 40th, etc. These 5 and 0 ending dates do seem to attract more attention but believe me THIS 43RD ANNIVERSARY IS MORE NOTEWORTHY THAN EVER. You have noticed, no doubt, the increased thinning of our ranks by notices in the In Memoriam section of your Groundsheet and it begs the question: HOW MANY MELFAS DO WE ALL HAVE LEFT? No one can be sure, but we all realize, there is a pending finality. The current average age of our membership, including the so called 'Young Vets' of 1939 vintage, is now 69 years. This is above the national age of all W.W. 2 veterans of 65 years. Recognizing these factors, I encourage ALL regular attendees to be sure and come again and, perhaps more importantly, a special invitation to all those who have not yet been present at a Melfa Dinner. Believe me, your former comrades and friends would like to see you again. This is particularly directed to those who live in the Lower Mainland area as we are aware that there are significant numbers who fit into that category. Any Chairman's job, like that of the Editor's, becomes increasingly difficult with each passing year. It is a real challenge to maintain relevant continuity after 43 years. I reiterate. ALL MEMBERS AND THEIR LADIES, THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN IF OF ADULT AGE - PLEASE COME OUT FOR A GRAND REUNION. The delayed DRAW will be added incentive so REMIT YOUR RETURNS PROMPTLY. FINALLY AND MOST IMPORTANT, PLEASE RETURN THE ENCLOSED MELFA ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Thank you and look forward to seeing you in record numbers.

Doug Glenn



NOTE IMPORTANT CORRECTION: RECIPIENTS OF EARLY MELFA DRAW LETTER NOTE DATE CORRECTION IN TEAR OFF SECTION. IGNORE TYPO ERROR OF MARCH 16 MELFA DATE IS MAY 16, 1987.



The Royal Westminster Regiment Association
P.O. BOX 854 · NEW WESTMINSTER B.C. V3L 4Z8

PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF

MELFA DRAW 1987

ROYAL ENGINEERS

TIME MARCHES ON !

NEW WESTMINSTER VOLUNTEER RIFLES

COMRADES:
How true, with our various creaking joints that is! Our friendships, loyalties and patterns become even more precious if that were possible. That is why we changed the format for the yearly draw last year, and have changed to a fully catered Melfa Dinner this year. No more lifting, erecting and dismantling tables and chairs this year, no more complicated draw either!

SEYMOUR BATTERY OF GARRISON ARTILLERY

FIRST, all members will receive two Draw tickets, value \$10.00 each. There is one \$2,500 prize, to be drawn at the Melfa Dinner on May 16, 1987, and notified to all. These tickets are in two parts, if you participate tear off half the ticket(s) at the perforation(s) and mail it (them) back to us in the self-addressed envelope with your remittance. If you do not wish to participate please return any unused tickets in the same envelope.

104TH WESTMINSTER FUSILIERS OF CANADA

131ST BATTALION CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

DOUG GLENN
DRAW CHAIRMAN

47TH BATTALION CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

SECOND, We hope you will join us for our 43 th MELFA DAY DINNER. We all know that it takes more to prod one into getting started these days, but we want to see you all no matter how many dinners we have held. Surely all the stories have become more tuned and refined - lets hear the new versions!

THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT (INF)

Tear Off - Mail in to Box 854, New Westminster, B.C. V3L 4Z8

THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT (MG)

MELFA DINNER, May 16, 1987
Royal Towers Hotel
Sixth Street & Royal Avenue
New Westminster, B.C.

THE WESTMINSTER REGIMENT (MOTOR)

I will be attending	Yes	No	Number
DINNER	---	---	---
SUNDAY BRUNCH	---	---	---
GOLF	---	---	---

THE ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT

Costs to be notified in Groundsheet.

DOUG GLENN
MELFA CHAIRMAN



MELFA '86 PROGRAM

MELFA 1987 MAY 16TH

PLACE: ROYAL TOWERS HOTEL, NEW WESTMINSTER B.C.

(Directly across street from Armouries & Centotaph)
Table Service Dinner

PROGRAM: SATURDAY, MAY 16, 1987

GOLF: Tsawwassen Golf & Country Club - Near Ferry Terminal. Signs on Highway

TEE OFF: 9:00 am - Green Fees \$14.00 each.
Ladies welcome.
Golf Chairman - Stan Moorhouse

14:00 - No Host Bar Armouries Sgt's Mess

18:00 - Cenotaph Service - Wreath Laying - Last Post.

19:00 - Cocktail Hour - Royal Towers, plus Hospitality Room.

20:00 - Dinner (\$15.00)-Royal Towers Hotel. All seated.

FORMAT: - One minute silence for fallen comrades.
Grace - Toast to the Queen - Dinner.
Toasts & replys to the City, the fallen comrades, to the Regiment - the ladies - the MELFA.

PROGRAM: SUNDAY, MAY 17, 1987

11:30 am - CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH - The Armouries Off/Sgt's Mess
Price: \$6.00 each - Chairman; Martin Hilmer

ACCOMODATION:

Available at the Royal Towers Hotel

Prices: \$39.00 S. \$49.00 D. or Twin

Phone to Reserve (604) 524-3777 OR contact Chairman Doug Glenn
Box 854
New Westminster, BC

The Importance of This Year's Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting for 1987 is fast approaching. Perhaps this will be the most important A.G.M. in our history.

The collection of Museum artifacts is perhaps our most valuable asset. The Special Museum Committee (S.M.C.) and the majority of the Association Executive believe the artifacts owned by the Association must be relocated. This would guarantee as far as possible the necessary care and attention, space, and security of fire proof premises. In addition, reasonable and regular public access to the Museum would be guaranteed.

The Museum is composed to approximately 5 percent of artifacts owned by the Regiment and D.N.D. and 95 percent by the Association. We do not intend on relocation of the Museum perse - just the collection itself.

OBJECTIVE

Our objectives are 3 in number. We must:

- preserve the integrity of the collection;
- ensure, to the greatest extent possible, its existence in perpetuity; and
- be sure the collection be available for public viewing on a regular basis.

CONTROL

We, the W.W. II veterans, are rapidly becoming fewer with each passing year and are less able to maintain the Museum to proper standards. It is in pretty good shape now! But for how long can we continue! Within the foreseeable future the Museum will wither and become something less than it is now. The Regiment have admitted it is totally unable to maintain the Museum in its present state. It is our opinion that in due course D.N.D. would inherit it. This we do not want. We wish to see a satisfactory relocation before we lose control. Your S.M.C. is actively working to accomplish this.

RELOCATION

It goes without saying that relocation within the City of New Westminster is the most logical and desirable step to take. However, it is by no means certain the City will be able to accept our collection as a gift to the City. They have stated they wish to see it stay in the City. A recent indication by them, however, is that they are a long way (years?) from being able to give us any assurance in this direction and even then, a future Council could negate any undertaking given by the present council. It follows then, that the S.M.C. might be forced to recommend to you relocation to some (civic?) premises outside the City. It would be



regretable but it may be necessary. Should that move take place, we know we will have no support for our decision from the Regiment.

ATTENDANCE

We need to muster as many votes as possible at the up-coming A.G.M. All the members who care about this issue should either attend in person or complete the enclosed proxy and mail it back to us AND should make sure they are paid up members. Be sure to date the proxy and to sign it legibly.

ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to cast a vote at the A.G.M., one has to be a "dues paid-up member". It is not necessary to pay up any arrears (unless of course, you want to!). If you have not already done so, please send in your dues for 1987 with your proxy. We would like to have all dues paid by March 1.

PROXY

What are you doing when you send a proxy? Well, you are empowering the person named by you to vote and act on your behalf, at his/her discretion, on any and all issues that arise that require a vote, including voting on all motions and in the election of officers. This is the main issue that will face us -- the election of the slate of names as shown on the list to be drawn up by our Nominating Committee.

In the proxy you are given two names, that of Bert Hoskin and also Bruce Eaton. If, however, you wish to delete one or the other, do so by drawing a line through the name and initial beside the line. Additionally, if you wish to have a name of your own choice, then delete one of the names, initial the deletion and print the name of your choice above it, but be sure it is the name of a person who you are quite sure will be attending the meeting.

CONCLUSION

We consider that anyone who votes for the names we put up will be giving a sign of approval of the past actions taken by the Executive and by the S.M.C. and will also indicate confidence in their ability to settle our problems in the future in the best way possible. The main single problem facing us now (aside from the election of officers) is the future of our collection in the Museum. The S.M.C. is spending a great deal of time on this matter and we feel confident their solution will meet the wishes of the great majority of our members.

We are not blindly opposed to losing control of the Executive of this Association. That is inevitable and the passage of time will take care of it. What we are concerned with is that we make effective plans for the future of our collection BEFORE we do lose control. That means we

have to elect our slate of officers in March. This will allow our SMC sufficient time to attempt to complete present plans to see our collection under the wing of some civic authority where we can be assured to it still being in existence as a properly run and maintained museum in the year 2000 and beyond.

Stan Ardagh (For SPECIAL MUSEUM COMMITTEE)

RESOLUTION

Resolve that the By-laws of the Society be amended by adding a Section 9 to part 2 MEMBERSHIP to read "January 31 of each year to be the deadline for payment of membership dues, such dues to be paid 30 days prior to an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting.

**PROXY - If you are unaware of names here are some who are regular attenders:

Stan Moorhouse, Norm McAskill, John Ford, John Houn, Doug Glenn, Dave Adlem, Walter Lyle, Dick Shannon, Ed Shannon.

You may of course appoint those printed on the Proxy Form, any of the above or any others that you may know of.

PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 1987 - BY NOMINATING COMMITTEE

President	- Bruce Eaton	Secretary	- David Adlem
Vice President	- Doug Glenn	Treasurer	- Vernon Ardagh

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dick Armstrong	John Ford	Dave Gowler	Walter Lyle
Stan Conway	Alex Gibson	Bert Hoskin	Dick Shannon

Additional nominations may be nominated from the floor at the Annual General Meeting.

REGIMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS

The new training cycle, which traditionally commences in September, is now well under way and all aspects of the program are going well.

During October/November our new Recruit Platoon commenced basic training and have already spent several weekends in the field at Chilliwack. For some time now recruiting for the Battalion has been relatively easy and we always seem to have more applicants than vacancies. This of course, enables us to maintain a very high standard amongst the intake and also ensures that we never fall short of our Unit established strength.

A Coy's Second rifle platoon - comprised mainly of last year's recruits, is currently undergoing Winter Warfare indoctrination which will culminate in a three day exercise in the Chilcotins during the latter part of January. The platoon, plus a small Coy HQ element, will be airlifted by Chinook helicopter from Vancouver and provisions have been made for

training with helicopters during the exercise.

The senior rifle platoon - our operationally tasked airborne platoon, has recently embarked upon a revitalized program of specialist training and will have a number of opportunities of participating in airborne exercises with their Regular Force counterparts during the next few months. Our remaining senior soldiers are now well into an Armoured Defence Course and will be attending a gun camp at Yakima, Washington State during the Easter break.

In Area and National courses, soldiers from the Battalion did particularly well in 1986, providing the top three candidates on the Junior Leaders Course in Nanaimo during the Summer, as well as the top candidate on a Nationally run Senior NCO's course. We also had a record number of 'A' gradings from Unit members who attended other specialist training.

On the equipment side, 1986 saw the last of the veteran "Duece-and-a-half" trucks retired, to be replaced by the Canadian made MLVW (Multi Load Vehicle Wheeled) which are a definite improvement but have had their fair share of teething troubles. We have also recently started to receive the new Iltis four wheel drive field car replacing the ubiquitous jeep. The Iltis is also of Canadian manufacture and is based upon a Volkswagen design.

The social side of the battalion has also been active, November seeing the Annual WO's and Sergeants Mess Dinner well attended, and on New Year's Day the Officers Mess welcomed a large number of visitors and guests for breakfast and the traditional celebrations. In early January the Battalion hosted the Brigade Senior NCO's training weekend attended by over eighty WO's and Sergeants from Militia Units in the Lower Mainland. At the formal Dinner held on the Drill square on the Saturday evening, our Honorary Colonel as guest speaker gave a presentation on the history of the Regiment.

We look forward to 1987 with our usual enthusiasm. Brigade training is now concentrating on the attack phase of War, so the exercises in Wainwright in June/July should see us a little less static than we have been during the past three years when we have been sharpening our defensive skills to a fine edge. Anybody who believes that the modern day Militia soldier is in the Reserves solely for the money should witness the performance of our young lads during "unseasonal" Wainwright weather, or in Slesse Creek on exercises in the depths of a good old fashioned B.C. Winter.

Finally some two years after the project was started, I can now report with considerable pleasure that the project to re-equip the band with new uniforms, helmets and accoutrements has been successfully completed at a cost well in excess of \$20,000. Sincere thanks to all who assisted with donations, notable amongst these the Association, The New Westminster

Lions Clubs and Rotary Clubs, the City of New Westminster and the Provincial Lottery Fund, not to mention many individuals who gave so generously. Special thanks also to both our Honorary Colonel and Honorary Lieutenant Colonel who between them masterminded the whole operation. Best wishes to all members of the Association from a very healthy and busy Battalion.

Lt. Col. C.B. Bradford

SMOKER REPORT

The annual Smoker, held in combined messes in the Armoury on Dec. 6th, was very poorly attended, either because of a very poor night from point of view of the weather, or more likely because many people felt that because there was no Annual Draw to take place it wasn't worth their while to come.

Well it certainly was worth while, for the winners of the following prizes

MIKE DRAGEN	- GALLIANO LIQUER	GORDON FINLAYSON	- GRAND MARNIER
			PASSION FRUIT
JOHN FORD	- RASPBERRY LIQUEUR	GLEN HOLLING	- SARONNO LIQUEUR
STAN DRUMMOND	- IRISH CREAM LIQUEUR		

When it is considered that there were fewer than thirty people in attendance the odds of gaining a prize was better than one in six to say nothing of a very excellent clam chowder of which there was plenty for sixty, then the losers were those who did not come. Incidentally I make no apology for the claim of excellence about the chowder even if I did make it myself, but I have to thank Dave Gowler and David Adlem who made it possible to get the food served, and to an unknown army master cook who happened to be on loan to the Regiment that evening. Finally, thanks to Fay Holling for the loan of two fine "keep-it-hot" appliances.

Walter Lyle

T R I B U T E S

A TRIBUTE

Just before Christmas Malcolm Stewart slipped away from us. He had been ill for some time, spending many years at the Coquitlam Intermediate Care Centre, where he died.

It was surprising to learn from his obituary that he was 78. We remember him, especially the early members of C Coy, as a cheerful, obliging young soldier. And then we realize he was as old as most of us, and we were as young.

.../11

His military career came to a near-tragic end during training in Britain when the infamous base ring ejected from the PIAT in weapons training, and severed his jugular vein. Bert Hoskin, who was on the scene, stopped the rush of blood with his hands and held on until, miraculously, the vein closed and proceeded to function. However, a fragment of the ring had entered Malcolm's body and was the cause of disabling him and preventing him from war theater action.

Museum workers will remember Malcolm's period of service as their Secretary-Treasurer. His natural shyness and modesty made the formal presentation of minutes and other reports too formidable a task to endure for long, but we have a solid memento of him in our first-class map case, which he purchased very advantageously through his business connections.

Malcolm is survived by a sister in Edinburgh, his birthplace.

Ian Douglas

A TRIBUTE TO THE SOLDIER AND THE MAN

The long illness and death of John Rosso has brought back a flood of long stored memories and I offer this tribute to a man I believe to be AN EXAMPLE OF US ALL.

The first recollection I have of John Rosso was 1942 Christmas at Pippingford Park, England. John had come to the Westies from the Irish Fusiliers. He had served in the militia and had enlisted upon declaration of W.W. 2, served with the Irish in various B.C. locations.

John rapidly became a stalwart and respected platoon member. He was much admired for friendly attitude and his dedication and eagerness both for work and play. We enjoyed many ordeals but even more pleasureable moments together before going to Italy in late 1943.

Whenever we were tired or down in spirits John always pulled us out of the doldrums with his free and happy spirit. John was quick to organize a card game, a party, a sing song, etc. and he was always a tremendous boost to the spirits of the entire platoon; and to the Coy. and Regiment as well. We shared a Pup Tent in Italy and I thought, in John, I had made not only a friend but a ready found interpreter. John, however, was All Canadian and could not speak nor understand one word of the Italian language.

In course of battle, you could not find a more reliable soldier. He exuded confidence and displayed control and great initiative and skills. These characteristics became a trademark of his reliability to all who served with him.

John's sincerity and concern for others became widely known and can, perhaps, be best illustrated by an incidence I will recall. John had



IN MEMORIAM

John Rosso	Westminster Regt.	W.W. II
Malcolm Stewart	" "	W.W. II
C.S.M. Jack Hoskin	" "	W.W. II
W. Bill Sawicki	" "	W.W. II
Dr. George Waugh	" "	W.W. II
Julien Carrette	RCE & " "	W.W. II
John Fellingham	" "	W.W. II
T.L. Les Knight	R.C.A.F. & D. Coy	W.W. II
W. Filigano	Westminster Regt.	W.W. II

(Tribute to John Rosso, Cont'd)

owed a small sum of money to one of our soldiers killed on leave in England. He sought out the man's sister to repay the small obligation to that departed comrade.

After the war John became very active in Your Association and served as President and several executive capacities. John was The First Chairman of The Museum Committee and it was largely through his efforts that we have a Museum at all. He maintained his interest up until his untimely death and was a believer and firm supporter of the current Museum's Committee plan of action for the future. John was a good husband, father and left many grandchildren who did and still adore him. John worked for 35 years in L.C.B. and became for many of those years a much respected and admired Store Manager. Our many fishing and hunting trips will be cherished by me and his many friends and family who shared those good times. John was a good friend to so many and he passed a bit of his warm personality to all who met him. We are all the richer for that. John, we salute you. May you Rest in Peace.

JOHN FORD

MAIL CALL: Thanks to Ted Burnby and his sad news re Bill Sawicki... from across the sea in England some nice remarks re a visit to The Museum on 16 Sept. '86. Special mention to Bruce Eaton & Gord Armstrong who were on duty that day. Thanks to Eileen & Frank Iggleton of Kent UK for their kind remarks. Sincere appreciation to Lawrence Karpick of Winnipeg and his advice re the loss of two more comrades, Dr. Waugh & Julian Carrette. Steady writer Clarence 'Silent' Smith of Rosetown, Sask writes a nice note and we trust the price of wheat improves and the Grasshoppers have abated. Thanks for the dues also. A vote of thanks to loyal member John Parker, Your remarks have been noted and your '87 dues are most welcome. Regards from Art Miller in sunny Palm Desert, Calif. Deeply sorry to hear of your wife Phillis and her medical problems. We trust she is on the mend. From long time friend and associate Bert Stephens some kind remarks re The Groundsheet. Many thanks Bert, it helps to balance some of the flak. Long distance phone calls from Wally Lockhart in Ont. and Mel Glover in Yuma Arizona were most welcome, and your praise re the Groundsheet is most appreciated.