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SEC./TRES.

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EDITOR'S CORNER: Autumn 87 is officially here-one could hardly tell from the lingering hot summer weather. Your Executive was not idle, nor The Royal Westminster Regiment during the summer hiatus. The Association exec and many guests enjoyed the Annual 'D' Coy picnic held in August. Earlier many attended the testimonial dinner for Major General Bert Hoffmiester. 'Hoffy' to most of us. Sponsored by The Seaforths, this was a grand occasion indeed. Many Ad Hoc summer meetings were called by President B. Eaton to research and plan for busy events to come.

In particular The 125th Anniversary of The Regiment in 1988. Committees from both Regiment and Association alike are busily planning many events for that momentous occasion. The climate of co-operation and mutual respect vis-vis The Regiment and The Association has retained the warmth and respect that it always had. Bruce Eaton accepted the presidency with a stated committment to insure that this respect be maintained. Commanding Officer of the Regiment Col. Chris Bradford alluded to this in his address at the summer picnic. Both Bruce and Chris are to be commended for their joint efforts. Col. Bradford deserves particular praise. He was placed in a tenuous position by those unfortunate incidents reported in the February 1987 issue. History now proves that the turmoil caused by sources outside The Regimental Family was unfortunate and unecessary.

The Museum is in good hands and happily, if somewhat ironically, proceeding in the same general direction as that suggested by The Old Spec. Museum Committee from the outset. Rational, meaningful negotiations were late in maturing. National and international negotiations re arms and trade talks seem to be suffering similar fates. To those who deplored the Groundsheet Message and it's Editor's somewhat matted and convoluted prose.; perhaps you will reconsider. It is our only means to communicate with our members. The Association is not dead, bent and worn perhaps, but still functioning and still a loyal and vital component of The Regimental Family. Respecting, as always; The Sappers of 1863 and the young men and women of The Regiment today. The World War 2 vintage has given and earned the respect of all. So be it; See you this fall.

R.H.

5

FOR ALL WHO REMEMBER

Cold as the North, along this western run The white stuff comes aboard like streaming snow— A job to finish, and a job begun; Warm blooded flesh must go where convoys go.

Sbadou's move on the bayfield; uplands dream in the sun.

Shudder of wind and sweep of gusty rain. And gas-caped columns moving up the line; Up to the rubble and the guns again,

The shrappel and the mortar and the mine.

7.5

Laughing crowds in the drugstore, corner of Bridge and Main.

Ywelve hundred deadly feet and flaming grey, The sky aftre with flak from field and town:

"Steady now skipper" now the stuff's away" The multi-coloured parachutes go, down.

Frozen ruts' in a woodroad, southwest wind on the

CHARLES BRUCE

COMING EVENTS MARK YOUR CALENDAR

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICES - NOVEMBER 11, 1987

PLACE: The Armouries 6th & Queens, New Westminster, B.C.

TIME: 09:30 hours; Service commences at 10:00 hours.

CENTOAPH SERVICE: Adjacent to Armories at City Hall.

ASSOC. DRESS: Blazers, Berets and Medals.

If lacking above dress, come anyway. We want the largest turnout we can get. There will be no forced marching and for those who can, its only approximately 200 meters.

IMPORTANT SPECIAL EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

PLACE:	The Armouries, 6th & Queens, New Westminster, B.C.
TIME:	19:15 hours, meeting very short, smoker to follow.
DATE:	December 5, 1987

ANNUAL SMOKER - DECEMBER 5, 1987

PLACE: The Armouries, 6th & Queens, New Westminster, B.C.

TIME: Approximately 19:30 hours (after brief meeting)

DRESS: Casual

Come and enjoy an evening of good fellowship and some chow. Smoker Chairman: Walter Lyle.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Summer is past and a good one it was. Many things have been happening and plans are underway for The Regiment's 125th Anniversary in 1988. A committee has been established with former Commanding Officer, Les Deane, serving as Chairman. The Association will be represented by Bert Hoskin and myself. Bert has been appointed as Activities Chairman and has many plans for the special events in 1988. A schedule of events will be published in the next issue of your Groundsheet.

A new society has been incorporated entitled... The Royal Westminster Regiment Historical Society. This Society will be the body that will officially receive the legal transfer of Museum Artifacts etc. as soon as the membership at large approves of said transfer. This will be accomplished by the sitting of a duly called Extraordinary Meeting to be held on December 5, 1987. This will be held the same night of the 1987 Smoker and is consistent with the Bylaws of The Association.

We are requesting your approval of the Director's motion that we transfer the artifacts of the Museum to the newly constituted Royal Westminster Regiment Historical Society. This motion was unanimously passed, in principal, at the last Directors (executive) meeting of September 14, 1987. The Royal Westminster Regiment Society (The Regimental Family) consists of serving members of The Regiment, The Regimental Senate, The Chief Librarian of New Westminster Public Library, the curator of Irving House Historical Centre Alderman Mal Hughes representing the City of New Westminster, George Hughes, Glen Gates and myself as President of the Association.

In my opinion, we have a good mix of society who are all working towards a common goal i.e. The preservation of the Artifacts and Archives of the Museum with a shared view of having them, eventually, housed in suitable premises located in the City of New Westminster, B.C. It is also our joint wish to have these suitable premises more readily accessible with reasonable hours for the general public and that this may. continue in perpetuity.

The Association directors have voted unanimously to turn the Museum over to the management and organization of The Royal Westminster 'Historical Society' and we are asking for your ratification by either your attendance on December 5, or your acceptance by proxy vote (issued by separate sheet in this Groundsheet).

Further, and in addition to the above, we are requesting your ratification of your director's unanimous decision to: Dissolve the late Brig. Eakin's \$10,000 Trust Fund and transfer that sum of \$10,000 to the General Account of your Regimental Association. Both of these items require your endorsation by voice vote or by proxy. Those voting by enclosed proxy on both proposals should have their votes into Box 854, New Westminster, B.C. before November 30, 1987.

The Smoker is being held the same evening of December 5, 1987 so please come out for a night of socializing and also support your directors and your association in both of the above proposals.

This issue of The Groundsheet is larger than usual and will contain a special Souvenir written account of Ian Douglas's magnificent 'Toast to the Regiment' at the May 1987 Melfa Dinner. Ian's presentation was superb and this documentation of it is mainly for the benefit of those who could not attend. It is hoped that, in some small measure, you will be able to share and enjoy Ian's Toast will those of us who were fortunate to attend.

Walter Lyle has been appointed as Smoker 87 Chairman and he has also been added to your Board of Directors. November 20, 1988 will be the 125th Regimental Anniversary party for <u>ALL THE</u> <u>REGIMENTAL FAMILY</u>. Save that date and plan to attend.

Future plans of The Regiment and The Association re- 1988 will be circulated via The Groundsheet. The 1987 'D' Coy Chilliwack Br Annual picnic was a great success. The weather and the hospitality was warm indeed, and again sincere appreciation to Elsie Baldwin and Marion and Sam Soutar. Details of this event are published in this edition. Welcome back from a long hot summer. Let us see a record turnout for November 11th this year.

Bruce Eaton, President

MELFA 1987

Melfa 1987 now history, not the history for text books to be stored on shelves to collect dust, it is history stored in the human memory bank, of the 187 in attendance.

It all started in the rooms at the Royal Towers Hotel, where some of the out of town guests arrived, on Friday, May 15.

Saturday, 9:00 a.m., thirty some golfers left the starting gates, the outcome of the Golf I leave to others to report.

Saturday, 2:30 at Armories Officers & Stgt Mess. Out of town guests and local residents enjoyed fellowship, at least that was the vision I saw as I quickly passed through on my way to ABC Catering Banquet Hall. This I might say, was not on the original planning, but I paraphrase the words of others; 'The best laid plans of mice and men, follow that up with Murphy's Law' and the fact I am not in possession of a crystal ball, the bottom line - we dined in ABC Catering Banquet Hall instead of the Crystal Ball Room of the Royal Towers. Thanks to the President and Secretary and some fast shuffling of the deck, all aces came up. I presume a good time was had by all.

Our out of town guests are too numerous to mention. I have been told that to gild the lily is a no no but there were a few couples I will name, Mr. & Ms. Walter Barnum, Wes & Colle Fehr, Mr. & Mrs. Ed Lasher, Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Moore, G.W. Dominick, Mr. & Mrs. G.F. McCourt, R.E. McCourt, Mr. & Mrs. A. Lee, Angus Wilson, Mr. & Mrs. George Ralengauer.

Sunday, 11:00 a.m. Brunch was served at the Armories. That report I will leave in the hands of the Chairman in charge.

In a short foot note, I add my observations of Melfa 1987. In the late 1940's to 1980's, we went stag. In 1982, the Executive finally agreed that we invite our ladies. It appeared no one would accept the Chairman's position, so I volunteered. It turned out successful hence it has followed through. The remaining years to date during that period, some of the pomp glory and guest speakers have vanished, like modern society we have changed. The top line of the menu would appear to be fellowship, one can purchase theatre tickets at will, meeting old friends and telling old stories is a rarity.

In the future, I believe we should accept the change and make our Melfas a social evening.

I thank you one and all for coming and hope to see you next year.

Doug Glenn, Chairman

1987 DRAW

Winning Ticket #218, drawn by Mrs. Greta Corbould

WINNER: MRS. RON GRINSTED, WHITE ROCK, B.C.

THE NIGHT OF THE GENERAL

Military Major Generals are not always held in high esteem by the troops they command and lead; notably many so widely recorded in history. Major General Bert Hoffmiester does not fit into the latter category, however. General Hoffmiester affectionately known to all his troops as 'Hoffy' was accorded a most deserved testimonial dinner to honor this remarkable man.

The occasion was, quite naturally, a Seaforth Show, for the history of that fine Regiment and 'Hoffy' complement one another admirably. The rise of Bert Hoffmiester from early Seaforth Cadet days to N.C.O. to Officer, to the command of his beloved regiment in the Sicilian and Italian campaigns is truly a soldier's story. His meteoric rise to the rank of Major General and command of, as he quotes, 'His Mighty Maroon Machine' 5th Canadian Armored Division added more laurels to his illustrious name. His post war years were almost equally remarkable but this evening was devoted to memories of hectic days long past. This war, ostensibly, a Seaforth Show and they demonstrated their utmost respect and love for their long time comrade. They chose a noted anniversary for The Seaforths and 1 CanInf Division July 10. This was the anniversary of the Invasion of Sicily in 1943 marked the beginning of The Seaforths heroic and notable achievements in battle during World War 2. Graciously The Seaforths, realizing the considerable achievements of 'Hoffy' and his 5 Div. Maroon Machine, extended a warm invitation for surviving 5 Div. members to join them in their tribute to The General. Regrettably, due to short notice and distance, there were no Black Berets of the B.C.D.'s present but 5 Div. was represented by some 40 or more 'Westies'.

The Westminster Regiment (M) World War 2 Vintage and The Seaforths have always had a mutual and high regard for one another. It was stated (probably by Seaforths) that The 'Westies' were the Seaforths of The 5th Div. That is high regard indeed and a compliment most appreciated.

The evening was attended by almost 200 Seaforth Vets and unpretentious and devoid of excessive military pomp and circumstance. 'Hoffy' appreciated the format. Yes the pipes played but the march past was short and brief and the night was devoted mainly to The General. There were several speeches, all warmly received. Fittingly, in my opinion, Hoffy's reply was the best address of the evening. At 80 years of age, General Hoffmiester looks fit and fifty and appears able and ready to command again. He graciously shook hands with all and autographed many souvenir programs. He spent most of his post dinner time by talking to all who wished to meet him. This was extended to all, regardless of previous military rank or station and the esteem and affection for 'Hoffy' was obvious and is undiminished since the long protracted years of 1939 - 1945.

As a proud 'Westie', I was priviledged to attend, and the night was made more memorable by the courtesy extended me by old Seaforth Buddies like Bill 'Skull' Worton, Mel McCann and those two grand gentlemen who had shared the 1975 Italian Memorial Pilgrimage with us, Former Lt. Col. Dave Fairweather and Ros Thomas. Ian Douglas, I recall with fondness, the sharing of those memorable days. The organizers of 'Hoffy's' night are to be congratulated and all The 'Westies' and the entire Regimental Association extend their appreciation for the privilege and honor in sharing your special night.... Vern Ardagh, almost single handely, is to be credited for his telephone campaign in getting the 40 Westies on Parade. Lets exceed that number on November 11.

R.H.

NOTICE ALL WESTIES WHO ATTENDED TESTIMONIAL DINNER ON JULY 10, 1987 HONORING MAJOR GENERAL BERT HOFFMIESTER AND OTHER SO INTERESTED.

A video tape was made during evening - from the socializing, the preparation for the parade for the General, the parade, the dinner and the speeches and presentations. The resulting video tape, after editing, is about 90 minutes long and it has really captured the spirit of the evening. General Hoffmiester has already viewed this video and is delighted with the results. He will be presented with a copy.

The Association will accept orders - prepaid for copies of this video. The cost is \$20.00. If you wish a copy, please send your cheque or money order for \$20.00, payable to The Seaforth Association, to The Seaforth Armoury, 1650 Burrard Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6J 3G4. Please mark the front of the envelope "VIDEO". Please order by September 15th.

"D" COMPANY ANNUAL PICNIC

The 14th annual picnic and meeting of Branch #3 ("D" Company) of The Royal Westminster Regiment Association was held on Sunday, August 2nd, at Circle 6 Ranch, Columbia Valley.

The picnic proved to be one of the most successful so far with more than a hundred members and guests in attendance ranging from seniors to the very young. John McConnell, incoming Branch president, did yeoman service as cook-out chef, with his wife, Linda, and the steaks were good. The diners were entertained by Bernie Doughton, official piper for the occasion, and various folksongs on tape.

At 3:30 p.m., the Branch meeting was held under the Chairmanship of President Bruce Eaton and was well attended. An unusual addition to the program was an account by an Australian guest, Wally Walters, who had served with a British armoured unit at the crossing of the Melfa River in Italy in May, 1944. Mr. Walters had been wounded and blown out of his tank and had been unconscious when evacuated from the famous battle, at which Major Jack Mahony of "A" Company of the Westminsters had won the Victoria Cross for conspicuous gallantry. Mr. Walters was given a good hand for his interesting account.

Reference was made in the meeting to the D'Arcy Baldwin Memorial Plaque which had been unveiled by Elsie Baldwin at a social gathering in Surrey on November 25th, 1986, and which was now installed in the Regimental Museum, The Armouries, New Westminster. Branch officers for the new year were elected as follows: John McConnell, President, Ed Shannon, Vice President, Hugh Shannon, Secretary-Treasurer. T.L. Knight's name was reported as the latest addition to the Flask of Remembrance.

Following an account of recent activities by the Regiment's retiring and incoming Commanding Officers, and the election, the members and guests were paraded shortly before 5:00 p.m. on the lower grounds along Frost Creek to the strains of martial music. The Roll of Honour was called, followed by the Last Post and playing of the 23rd Psalm, during which the colours were lowered and presented by the colour party consisting of Sam Soutar, Dick and Ed Shannon. The skirl of the pipes was then heard as the moving lament, "The Flowers of the Forest" was played, followed by the regimental march, "The Maple Leaf Forever."

At this point, Lyn Edmonds, who had previously served as Branch Secretary-Treasurer, was summoned and presented with a plaque in recognition of her many years of devoted service. President Bruce then called up Marion and Sam Soutar and presented them with a plaque on behalf of the Regimental Association paying tribute to a record of gracious hospitality by the family since the first hosting of the picnic gatherings by Elsie Baldwin and the late Lt. Col. D'Arcy Baldwin in 1974. The picnic then concluded around 7:30 p.m. with further socializing and folk music.

Due to the outstanding generosity of all donors, next year's program will again include a steak dinner. Next picnic date will be Sunday, July 31, 1988.

H. Shannon

ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT

KIT	SHOP
LTU	SIVE

Ceramic Wall Plaque	35.00
Pencil sketch of Armoury (by Rivard)	3.00
T-Shirts with Crest (including childrens sizes)	8.00
l" web belt with crested buckle	10.00
Embroidered blazer crests Sew-on Pin-on	26.00 32.00
Ties — Regimental — Royal Regiment of Fusilier	18.00 18.00
Blazer buttons (set of 6)	5.00
Glass beer stein - crested	5.00
Pewter stein - engraved crest	39.00
Zippo cigarette lighter	7.50
- Items may be purchased any Thursda or,	y evening at the Armoury

- Telephone inquiries to the Orderly Room 666-4373, contact Captain Gerry Pickell or Major Glen Holling.

By mail through the Armoury, Kit Shop, 630 Queens Avenue, New Westminster, V3L 1K3 Attn: Captain G.B. Pickell

1987 MELFA GOLF TOURNAMENT

HELD AT TSAWWASSEN GOLF CLUB ON MAY 16, 1987

39 golfers teed off, 5 of which being ladies.

WINNERS AND AWARDS:

Low Gross: Low Net: Ladie's Low Net: Longest Drive: Chuck Smithers Scotty Low Isa Low Terry Letih

All participants received a prize and the event was enjoyed by all. Thanks to all who participated and special appreciation to all those who helped in organizing to make this day a grand success.

> Stan Conway Dick Armstrong

1.1

C.O.'S REPORT

Another highly successful Summer for the Battalion saw improved numbers attending Milcon 87, the Brigade Exercise in Wainwright, and similar representation at the various Summer training courses held in Nanaimo and Vernon.

The Brigade exercise this year centered upon a Battle School concept with each of the infantry battalions in 11 Brigade (Pacific Militia Area) responsible for organizing and running a different training activity. Thus the Seaforths set up a defensive position laid out on the principles used by the Warsaw Pact armies which provided an interesting challenge for potential attackers, the Canadian Scottish ran a mechanized infantry training exercise allowing the other units to familiarize themselves with the "Grizzly" armoured personnel carrier, and the Rocky Mountain Rangers organized some detailed NBCW (Nuclear and Chemical Warfare) training.

It fell to the "Westies" ro run the patrolling stand and this turned into a full fighting patrol exercise for each of the infantry units. A platoon sized sub-unit from each battalion went through a complete fighting patrol sequence from receiving orders, preparation, battle drills, night navigation and movement, culminating in a live fire exercise in an ambush scenario.

The patrolling stand proved very popular with all the units that participated and a sense of competitiveness was introduced by having each patrol's performance judged by independent observers from the PPCLI Battle School at Wainwright. The winners were judged to be the Seaforths, with the Westies coming in a very close second. This was something of a disappointment as the winners were the recipients of the new 11 Brigade Battle School Trophy awarded for the first time in 1987 and in future on an annual basis for the Infantry Unit in 11 Brigade showing the highest degree of infantry skills. The trophy was presented to 11 Brigade by the members of our Battalion, and we were sorry that ours was not to be the first name on it!

What we may have lacked in the field however, we more than made up for elsewhere being certainly the best organized unit in terms of logistics and support (thanks to the tireless efforts of our OC Support Company - Gerry Pickell - and his hard working crew) and ran the best all ranks mess in the Brigade. The "Sandbag Inn" as it became known, was the favourite watering spot of a number of prominent and frequent visitors, amongst them the Brigade Commander and members of his staff.

We are now back to work with a vengence at the start of a new training cycle and held our first muster parade of the new training year on September 17 with the best turn out in numbers for a first parade for many years. The CO took the opportunity of making a number of presentations, amongst them the CD to Major Lund (OC A Coy). In addition to a number of promotions, the CO also congratulated a record number of unit personnel who received A gradings on their summer courses and those who had acted as instructors and received exceptional course reports.

The Battalion looks forward to an exciting 125th Anniversary Year and the many events which will bring the members of the active unit and Association together. Best wishes from us all.

> Lt. Col. Chris Bradford O.C. The Royal Westminster Regiment

45308 Bernard Avenue, Chilliwack, B.C. September 3, 1987

PRIORITY NO. 1

Dear Ron:

How is it going these days? Hope you made a good recovery from the picnic. It was a very good day, we though --- a great turnout and the donations most generous.

Last year's special invitation (February/'87 Groundsheet) should be amended for next year's to show the following:

- 1. Date: Sunday, July 31, 1988
- 2. Time: 1:00 p.m. --?
- 3. "A steak meal will again be provided by the Branch and tea and coffee by our hosts, Marion and Sam. Otherwise please bring your own picnic baskets and your personally desired liquid refreshments. Picnic type folding tables and chairs would be an asset to all who can bring them.
- 4. Directions: Please substitute "1715 Columbia Valley Highway" for "Lindell Beach."

I'm enclosing a copy of the picnic report. Use of this is entirely at your discretion, as always. It does contain information that would be of interest to our scattered membership: the D'Arcy Baldwin Memorial plaque and unveiling by Elsie; the plaque awarded Lyn, also Marion and Sam's by the Association; the addition of a piper and lament to the ceremonial parade; the current Branch officers. We realize that the Groundsheet has been full to the brim of recent issues.

Glad you enjoyed the Irish songs -- more of the same next year. We should get Ian to record some Gaelic songs for us.

Good luck and good editing, kind regards to Ruth and your family.

Adios,

Hugh Shannon

SAPPERS FINALLY GET THEIR DUE

Canucks, Canadians, and Lions. Bland names. Weak on local character. But Vancouver Sappers? Ah, now that would be a name local history buffs could get excited about.

As author Beth Hill states in her introduction to Sappers, The Royal Engineers in British Columbia (Horsdal & Schubart, \$9.95). "Those who know the story of the sappers also understand British Columbia."

In 1858, when 30,000 gold-seekers rushed into the new colony, Queen Victoria sent 200 Royal Engineers or "sappers" to secure boundaries.

(The word sapper stems from medieval times. Soldierengineers who dug tunnels under fortresses were called sappers, after a form of spade or mattock. British sappers carved the tunnels of Gibraltar, fought at Waterloo and in the Crimea, and even had a role as spies in the establishment of the 49th parallel.)

"As a military force," writes Hill, "they were to be used only to repress foreign aggression or in the occasional support of the civil authority, and not as police.

"They were to act as surveyors, roadmakers and pioneers. The cost of maintaining them was to be borne by the colony from the sale of lands the engineers would survey... The men had been promised grants of land after six years' continuous and faithful service."

The sappers had an enormous impact on B.C. They established the Stanley Park preserve, the University Endowment Lands reserve, the Cariboo Road, and the townsites of New Westminster, Yale and Hope.

In Vancouver, a brass plaque at New Brighton Park now proclaims "Here Vancouver Began," crediting the sappers with the survey of the new Hastings Townsite. As well, the sappers are responsible for South Marine Drive, Canada Way, North Road, and Kingsway. After five years of service, the colonial office charged the engineers, under Colonel Richard Moody, were an "extravagant failure" and were disbanded. More than half remained in B.C.

Hill's book documents the innumerable remaining traces of sappers throughout B.C. (i.e. Port Moody, Sapperton and Duffy Lake).

Some hardy, loyal and brave ghosts in our midst are starting to get the treatment they deserve.

Please credit writer Alan Twigg. This would be of particular interest as our Forbears stem from the Royal Engineers 1858, 1863.

Dear Ron:

In conversation last night with Glen Holling he brought up the matter of the regimental tie. He questioned me as to my understanding for adoption of the tie, its colors and their history, etc. etc. I told him what we all understood -- that it was the regimental tie of The Warwicks, who gave us permission to use it after affiliation, and the colors were the colors of The House of Orange, to which William (of William and Mary) belongs. Since the Warwicks were descended from The 6th Foot, formed in William's time, and then quite reasonably used his colors.

I think Glen knew all that history, but he told me what he was up to.

Last year he was entertaining a visiting ex-CO of The Warwick's and his wife. After their initial meeting he touched his tie -- the one we call the Regimental tie, and said, "Oh, the 6th Foot tie!" Glen said, "It is our regimental tie, which we have worn since affiliation with The Warwicks".

The dialogue went on, and Glen learned that The Warwicks (if there are such serving!) use the Fusiliers tie, and the old one, ours, is called The 6th Foot.





