

= VOLUME 45 / ISSUE 6

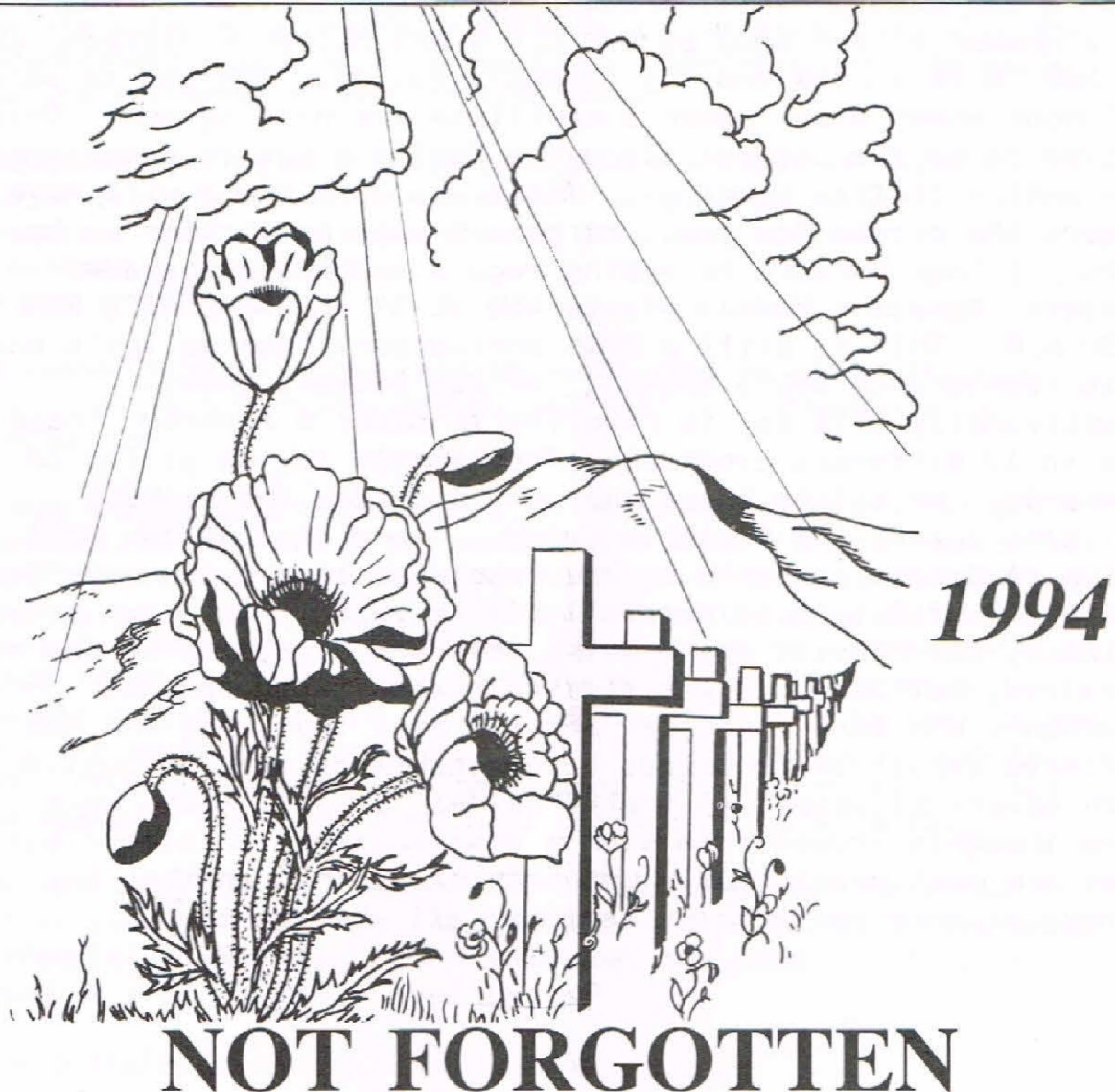
Dedicated to the Ideals and Comradeship
We knew in Wars and Peace and in
Our services both Home and Abroad



THE GROUNDSHEET

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF

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



NOT FORGOTTEN

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EDITOR'S CORNER

I picked a poor time to contact double pneumonia thus missing out on all the 50th Anniversary of Melfa-94. Most unfair, in my opinion as I already spent the month of Jan 1994 in hospital with a bad case of viral pneumonia. I was luckier 50 years ago as a member of Ian Douglas's C Coy & Art Miller's platoon, all we had to do on the 2nd day of Melfa May 25, 1994 was to survive a 7 hour enemy stonk under a merciless and blazing sun. This proved to be the longest siege the Regiment was to experience in the entire Italian campaign. Those who were there will have to record the events for you. Perhaps I will be luckier on Nov 11, 1994. I look forward to seeing record numbers on parade. Blazers, Berets & Medals please AND BE AT THE ARMOURIES EARLY 9:30 A.M. This is still a 50th anniversary year so let's make this remembrance day a special "D" Day Dodgers event. Traditionally this day is reserved to honor & remember those who lie in 17 different cemeteries from Sicily to the plains of Lombardy. We salute those who were accorded the highest military award, the Victoria Cross. There are but two left alive in Canada and both in the Vancouver area. (Ernest "Smoky" Smith and Lt Col Cecil Merritt). In a recent Vancouver press release, Col Merritt appreciated the many accolades he has received, but added it was time to remember the tens of thousands who went unnoticed and the many thousands who had suffered debilitating wounds & the thousands more struggling with severe illnesses in their "Golden Years." These were fine thoughts indeed from such a distinguished soldier - but they are most meaningful. Let each of us then in that two minute silence reflect and remember all who served.

Ron Hurley

Our 50th anniversary Tribute to Regiment, held in May was an outstanding success. Many telephone calls and notes complimenting the association for a job well done have been received by the president. What all of you should know is that without the hard work (many, many hours) put in by Vernon Ardagh, the Tribute to The Regiment would not have been a success. Nelson Scott is another soul who must be thanked. He did so much by putting together a quality program which was handed out to all who attended. The RSM, CWO Chuck MacKinnon and members of the serving battalion came through. We are fortunate to have such good men serving.

Our Fiftieth Melfa Dinner was attended by approximately 250 diners and again was a resounding success. Again I must thank The Honorary Lt. Col, Col Leslie Deane for his generous support relative to the purchase of souvenirs take-away gifts for the dinner.

We are entering a new phase relative to the distribution of the Groundsheet. This will be the first issue which will be mailed to the residence of each serving member.


Fundraising. We will continue with our efforts to reach our objective and we ask your continued support in this regard. Those who pledged ongoing donations will be reminded by special note.

November 11th is coming upon us again, and as our editor reminds us, this is a 50th anniversary year and your attendance is encouraged.

Final Note: In a discussion with those attending the Melfa weekend, a observation was made that I would like to pass on to all local members. A member in attendance and from central Canada, commented on how few members from the lower mainland were in attendance at Melfa-94. He asked me to pass the word on that if he can journey 2-3 thousand miles, surely members within driving distance could attend. After all, he came to see his old buddies. Attending a MELFA WEEKEND may be old hat to many of you, but remember, someone new shows up every year and he wants to meet you. Let's not disappoint at Melfa-95.

We will continue to request your financial support until our objectives are attained. Before year end 94 you will receive a financial statement. In the meantime, the future fund is in need of your support.

Yours truly,



Jerry N Gangur

REPORT OF - THE ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT

TO PRESIDENT JERRY GANGUR

FURTHER TO OUR DISCUSSION REGARDING REGIMENTAL NEWS FOR THE GOUNDSHEET, THE FOLLOWING IS OFFERED.

The Royal Westminster Regiment is well and continues to demonstrate that in performance, it is second to none. Our requirement to forward soldiers in support of United Nations peacekeeping operations is gradually increasing. For example, the regiment currently has 4 Westies serving with 1 PPCLI in Croatia (United Nations Protection Force - UNPROFOR) and 2 with the Lord Strathcona's in Bosnia. Within the unit organization these six soldiers are members of the TOW (Anti-Armour Defence) platoon. The six Westies and their area of operation is as follows:

1PPCLI (Croatia)

PTE ENSOR, SA
PTE KREZYMON, K
PTE THOMAS, RD
CPL JANEK, MP

LORD STRATHS (Bosnia)

PTE ANTOLINO, DF
CPL HELLEWELL, LD

These Westies will return home by the end of Oct 94. The Regiment hopes for them God Speed and Best Wishes. The Regiment awaits its next call of volunteers to go to UNPROFOR. To-date, the Regiment has sent 31 soldiers to UNPROFOR.

Ed Note: The article below appeared in the Abbotsford/Matsqui News on August 24, 1994 and was reprinted with permission of the publisher and the author Karen Potter.

TOP GUN - WESTIE OUT SHOOTS THEM ALL!

ROB HARRINGTON is returning to the University College of the Fraser Valley in a couple of months, and it's too bad there won't be a 'what I did for my summer holiday' assignment for him.

When Harrington isn't cramming for a final exam at school, he's learning to be a soldier as a member of The Royal Westminster Regiment.

Last week the young part-time soldier proved he had the right stuff when he successfully guided a \$23,000 Tub Launched Optically Tracked Wired Guided Missile (TOW) onto its target at Yakima Training Centre in Washington State.

The field exercise concluded a 24-day course on anti-armor platoon combat.

Of the 15 candidates on the course, the Abbotsford man topped the class, which earned him the honor of firing Canada's only TOW missile allocated to the training program.

"I couldn't miss," said Harrington following the exercise. "I had to hit it. Not just for me, but for the rest of the guys on the course."

Harrington said there was a "tremendous" sense of relief that surged through his whole body when he saw the missile make contact with the target, some 2,500 metres away.

Fellow Westie and UCFV classmate Master Cpl Chris Stier watched from the sidelines as Harrington hit the target and he was thrilled.

Stier, who has already completed one tour of duty in Croatia, was impressed with the level of training provided by the PPCLI.

Stier hopes to return to Croatia with the PPCLI in the fall of 1995, as does Harrington.

The TOW has been used as a front-line defence weapon for some time in Europe.

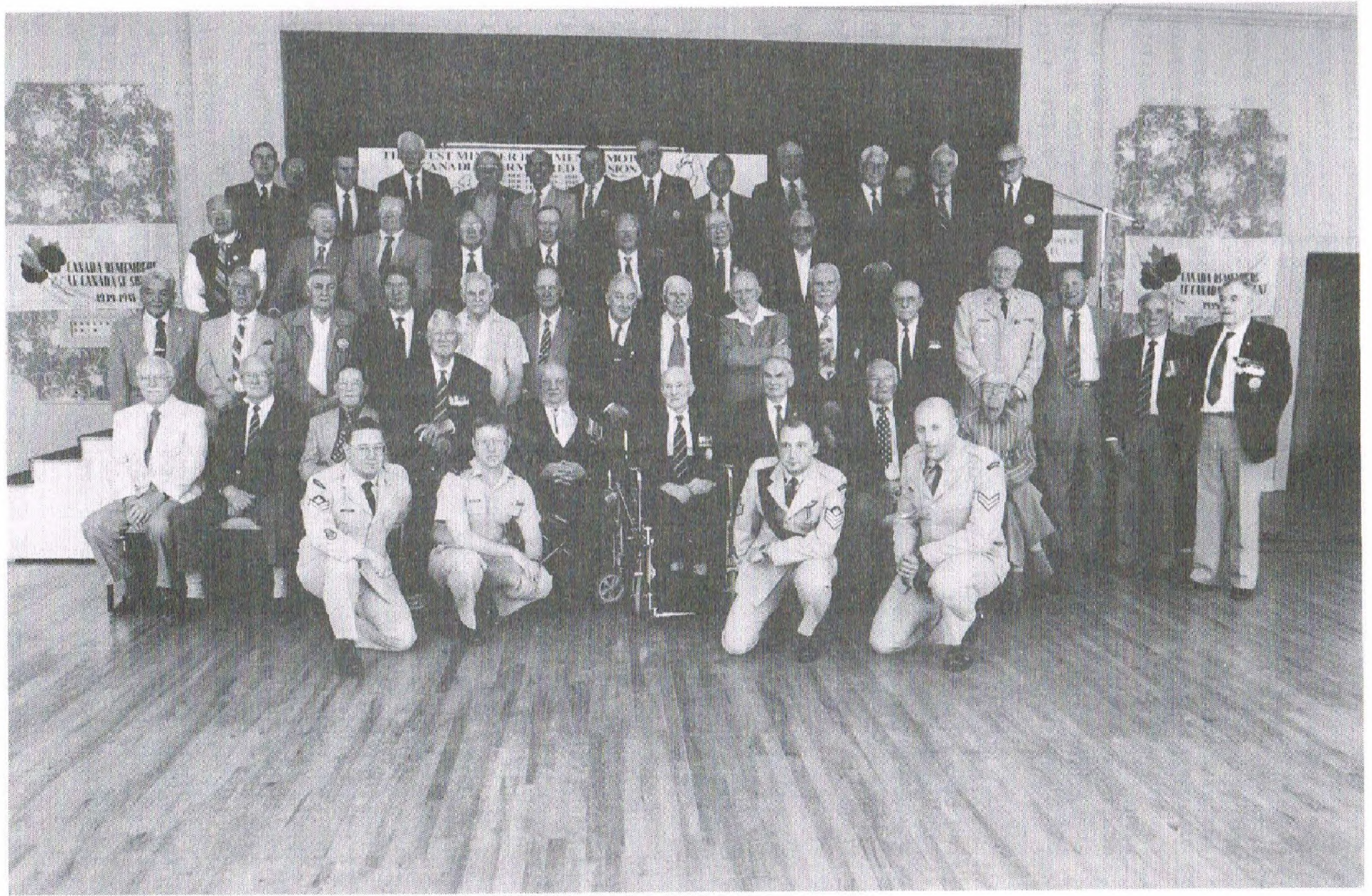
Flight time of the 64-pound missile is about 10 seconds. It's guided onto the target by the gunner who tracks it through a thermal sight. It makes a pin prick in the armorment, such as a tank, and the heat generated by the missile melts a hole through which the explosive can travel. This action is followed by an "implosion" rather than an explosion. Everything on the inside of that tank is roasted, says a regular force instructor.

This is the kind of publicity that we are delight to see and we extend our thanks to the Abbotsfor/Matsqui News for the article and the accompanying photographs that appeared.

Finally may I express my thanks to you, the editor and the association for allowing me to say something to you and the membership about The Regiment.

Yours truly,

Chuck Mckinnon, CWO
Regimental Sergeant Major



MELFA 50TH ANNIVERSARY ITEMS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

Your executive is in a position to offer 50th anniversary souvenir items for sale on a limited basis. All items offered will be allocated on a first come first serve basis. We are able to offer Dinner Menus at no cost (gives you an opportunity to see what we ate and who said what). The following items are available and include the cost of postage.

Item	Cost
50th Anniversary Melfa Cup	\$12.00
Tribute to The Regiment Program Colored 12 page booklet	\$12.00
Melfa 94 - Group Photograph. Colored 8 x 10	\$15.00
We have two group photos. The one published in this issue includes more participants. An alternative, clearer and more preferred does not include the uniformed members.	
Association Crest	\$45.00

REPORT FROM BRANCH 3 CHILLIWACK

The Chilliwack group met at the Royal Hotel for lunch on August 14, 1994 and had a very pleasant couple of hours with old friends.

A short meeting took place following lunch. Next years gathering was discussed and it was decided to hold it on May 8th or the Sunday prior to that date. Next years event will be on Sunday May 7th, so mark your calendar now; time will be 1:00 PM at the Chilliwack Cenotaph, complete with Bugler and Pipes, then on to the ROYAL HOTEL for lunch.

Fred West

TRIBUTE TO THE REGIMENT
MAY 20, 1994
ROYAL TOWERS HOTEL

Summarized by Vernon Ardagh

As May 1994 approached, it became evident that much preparation was being made, on an international basis to commemorate D Day, 1994. It is generally accepted that, without the Russian front, there would have been no D-Day per se. But there was also the Italian front, and the contribution from this area was not insignificant. Indeed, if Gen. Alexanders's orders had been carried out, Rome had been ignored, and the bulk of the 5th Army had gone in behind Kesselring's army of 300,000, which was retreating before the 8th Army, after Cassino, then the contribution to the overall picture would have been of much greater significance and would have produced a more positive effect on the outcome of the invasion of Normandy and on subsequent events in Europe.

One had, however, to listen very carefully to detect any references made in regard to the breaching of the Hitler Line 50 years ago. It was, therefore, deemed right and proper that we make some effort along commemorative lines so that the efforts and sacrifices of our men should not be overlooked or forgotten by the Public. Accordingly, the concept of a "Tribute" was conceived and carried out on 20 May last.

Lt. Col. Gangur kicked off the evening, welcoming all land sundry and was followed by Vern Ardagh, who gave an account of The Regiment's activities and travels (very briefly) from mobilization in 1939 to Dismiss in 1946.

The RSM, CWO C MacKinnon, then gave an account of the Regimental involvement in the current international peace keeping efforts in Croatia. He then introduced Cpl Mike Scott, a veteran of the Croatian "experience" who was most interesting. It was very satisfying to sit there and note the obviously high quality of that man; his expertise in his field, the training he has had and his intelligence and general bearing. We couldn't ask for a better soldier to represent Canada in a cosmopolitan force overseas.

Our Hon. Col., Colonel WE Mckinney, then gave a general account of factors and events involving the Regiment. He acted as a lead-in to the two main speakers of the evening, e.g. Major Jimmy Oldfield and Peter Strusberg. The former will need no introduction to most of you as he was one of our most popular officers. He was tasked to cover two main themes. Firstly, "What is a V.C.?" and secondly to recount the history and exploits of one of the Regiment's 2 V.C.'s, Cpl P Konowal of W.W. I fame.

Then Peter Strusberg, who was the CBC anchor man overseas in W.W. II (mainly Italy) and who broadcast to Canada most evenings. He brought with him 2 tapes on one of which he had had recorded the opening artillery barrage on the night of 21/22 May, 1944, prior to the initial assault on the Hitler Line, anchored on Monte Cassino by the 1st Canadian Infantry Division. An impressive roar that was, with Peter crouched in an Italian farm house, giving a voice-over account of the spectacle he was listening to and watching. He then gave an account the action which resulted in Maj. Jack Mahony being awarded the V.C. His second tape was of his interview with Jack, a few days after the Melfa, but unfortunately the quality of reproduction was not playable - due to it being 50 years later.

The only V.C. present on this occasion was Lt. Col. Cecil Merritt. He graciously consented to come up to the podium and gave us a brief talk. It was good to have him among us.

Re the Company Commanders at the Melfa. There were 3. Jack Mahony has passed on, leaving Ian Douglas and George Johnson and it was hoped in the planning for the evening to have each come up to the mike. Ian was there, but was unable to talk to us. George was abed at his home in Langley and, as you probably all know by now, died recently.

Jerry Gangur closed out the evening.

Turn out was less than expected, slightly more than 300, but we hope we left those members of the public who did attend with a better knowledge and understanding of the Regiment and - "What is a V.C.?"

President's comment: While in the planning stages for the Melfa 50th, and the Tribute was just an idea, I asked Vernon if he would Chair the Tribute evening. Vern's response was, send me a letter and outline what I have to do. Without Vern's hard work and dedication to the cause, the Tribute to Our Regiment would not have been the outstanding success that it was. Vernon we thank you.

50TH ANNIVERSARY of the LIBERATION of THE NETHERLANDS

The Dutch are planning to welcome all veterans of the liberation and members of their families to the last commemoration of this momentous event in which the Westies played a part.

The Dutch have not forgotten that Canadians brought them food, medicine and relief from oppression. Their way of showing their appreciation is to host veterans and their families in their own homes. A two week programme has been planned and the only cost to Canadian veterans is their air fare, which from Vancouver to Amsterdam is \$1,340 return. Spending money not included, of course.

Departure date is 28 Apr and return date is 11 May, 1995.

The programme includes:

- 1 or 2 May Special host community activities
- 4 May Commemoration Day - Official Services organized by local communities.
- 5 May Liberation Day - Local host community celebrations
- 7 May National Celebration Parade in Apeldorn. A member of the Royal Family will take the Salute.
- 8 May Canadian Service of Remembrance at Groesbeek near Nijmegen organized by DVA and DND

All other days are free days for you and your host community to sightsee, shop, relax and enjoy your hosts hospitality.

NOTE: IF INTERESTED. ACT NOW. CONTACT THE ASSOCIATION AND YOU WILL IMMEDIATELY RECEIVE A BOOKING/REGISTRATION FORM. Bookings should be made as soon as possible since first come first served is the operational principle. You will be asked for a \$200 deposit to accompany the completed registration form and the balance will be due 1 Feb 95.

Some co-ordination is required so that Westies can go together if they wish and be billeted in the same area.

For more information on the programme, write to:

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601 Milner Ave
Scarborough, Ontario M1B 1M8 or
Tele 416-754-6003 or Fax 416-754-6049