

= VOLUME 95 / ISSUE 2

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

APRIL 1995

May 8th, 1945

V.E. EUROPE

WAR ENDS

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EDITOR'S CORNER

May 8, 1945 - May 8, 1995 - 50th Anniversary Victory in Europe

Victory. Ah Sweet Victory At Last. Not so sweet for some, but a giant relief to all Canadians who served - many for over 6 years. The famed D-Day Dodgers i.e. all those 1st Cdn Corps Vets who had managed to survive and been transferred from The Italian Area in time to play a major rol in The Liberation of Holland. This latter action brought Unconditional surrender for all German troops in Holland May 5, 1945. The Dutch folk are eternally grateful to all Canadians who served in the starving North East sector of Holland. The Westies & 5th Armoured Divplayed a major role in these last hectic battles. The famed 1st Cdn Infantry & 5th Armd Div were to at last experience the joy & euphoria of being Liberators - some-thing they had not known from Sicily July 1943 & departure from Italy in Feb 1945. The D-Day Dodgers were delighted, at last, to share in the fruits of Victory. Personally I was unable to share the Holland experience. On 14 Dec 1944 along the Naviglio Canal , my war ended abruptly. On 15 Dec 1944 I became comatose & came out of it, to the sound of bells, on Christmas Day, 1944, in Can Gen Hosp at Jesi..... On 8 May 1945 all the Bells in England were pealing the good new - Watford Hosp no exception. Everyone who could headed for London...We returned to Watford Townshipwhere we enjoyed hours of singing to the piano, now moved outdoors; we shared joy & laughter and sadness...All in all, it was not a bad day to mark the end of such vicious and mindless brutality that had permeated teh world for so many years. I had survied & it was not yet time for me to consider that this replication of 1914-18 had been as mythical a "The Great War -The War to end all Wars. Sad to relate that despite our collective sacrifices, we were unable to reduce Military Actions - over 100 plus ongoing to date in 1995. WE Gave It Our Best Effort. So to all D Dogers I say GRAZIE, SALUTI, BUONA FORTUNA - YOU WERE MAGNIFICENT.....

Ron Hurley, Editor

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - MARCH 95

If one word could be used to describe the status of year 1994-95 it would have to be achievement. In May of 94 your association paid tribute to the regiment and invited the general public to join us for an evening at the Royal Towers hotel. Over 300 citizens responded to this invitation. Speakers from the association included **Jimmy Oldfield** and **Vernon Ardagh**. The well known war correspondent **Peter Stursberg** joined us and was able to provide actual sound footage of the artillery barrage which preceded the offensive of which the Battle of Melfa was part. Our annual dinner, was well attended, especially by serving members of our regiment. The Royal Westminster Regiment Historical Society was a great supporter of ours during this weekend, both morally and financially.

Our Future Fund has deposited an additional \$25,000.00 with Vancouver Foundation, bringing our total up to \$35,000.00. Our goal remains to raise a total of \$110,000.00. We thank all who have donated and we want you to know that our efforts will continue in 1995.

Production of the Groundsheet continues to be a high priority. Along with the upgrading of the production process, we have also expanded the distribution of the newsletter. During the last two decades, we distributed the Groundsheet to members of the serving battalion by leaving copies in the respective messes, in the hope that soldiers would pick up a copy. This was a hit and miss proposition as we never could be sure that all serving members would receive

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a copy of the Groundsheet. The last three issues of the Groundsheet have been mailed directly to the serving members residence. Feed back from the regiment with regard to this move has been most positive. This move increases production costs and postage expenses, but your executive feels that benefits of this move justify the additional costs.

In May of 95, we will see some of our members make the trip to Holland to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Victory in Europe. We hope to receive reports from those who do go to Holland for this purpose. In Canada, during this same period, we will have ceremonies taking place in Vancouver and Matsqui and we have been asked to take part in ceremonies in Lynden, Wash.

We did receive some bad news to do with the serving battalion. As most of you know, the regimental band has been disbanded. This was a most unfortunate development and we hope that the decision is not final. The regiment also lost its role to provide an airborne platoon in support of the regular force.

Cannot end my report without thanking members of the executive, directors and members of the active battalion for their support in the last 12 months. Would like to thank **Chuck Smithers**, **Nelson Scott** and **Ron Hurley** for the extra effort given to the association. From the regiment, must thank the RSM CWO **Chuck McKinnon** for his enthusiasm and support given to me personally this past year. His cooperation and drive is what resulted in the regiment inviting **Len Bailey** to the annual Xmas dinner.

The association will continue to evolve and do what it can to perpetuate the memory and contributions of those who served in War and Peace.

THE REGIMENT

The ongoing situation in the former Yugoslavia has resulted in Canada renewing its commitment to peacekeeping activities there. As part of this commitment, over thirty Westies have volunteered to augment the Regular Force units there. Starting with the selection training in late April, our soldiers will move on to receive further trades training, such as APC driver or anti-tank gunner, over the early Summer. July, August and September will see our troops working with their assigned battalions in collective training, before their scheduled deployment in October.

A very significant feature of this deployment is that the Regiment will be sending a formed platoon, as opposed to individual augmentees who would be scattered throughout another battalion. Our anti-armour Platoon (known as T.O.W. Platoon after the weapon system they use - the TOW missile) has a Regular Force Captain, Warrant Officer and Sgt., who joined us last Summer. The other platoon members are all Westies. TOW Platoon enjoys very high morale and aspires to be "the" platoon to belong to. This sense of dedication and esprit de corps is demonstrated by their volunteering en masse to undertake United Nations duty together. Our best wishes go out to all Westies as they prepare to go overseas to the war-ravaged lands of the former Yugoslavia.

I hope to meet more of you at the upcoming Melfa celebrations. Until we meet again, let me wish you good health and Godspeed.

Pro Rege Et Patria

R.A. Lee, Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer

Note: Due to space CO's report has been abbreviated.

WESTIES AT HOME

"D" Coy Recruiting Section

Contributed by: Sgt Salandini and Lt D. Dash

This year has been to date a successful year of recruiting for the Regiment. We have been recruiting actively in the high schools in Burnaby, Surrey, New Westminster, Maple Ridge and Abbotsford. We have been able to collect over 75 names of potential recruits and more should be coming in. We have at this time 14 young recruits in our holding platoon, nine in the Armoury in New West and five in Aldergrove. There are a further five recruits doing training in Jericho and two that have just graduated from there QL3 course. One of the latest recruits has already placed his name on the list to go to the former Yugoslavia.

We have been trying hard to recruit more candidates for the Regt. because of the heavy commitment our troops are making to support the United Nations in the former Yugoslavia.

We are making plans for next year where the recruits will be trained in our own building. This will enable the troops to form stronger ties to the Regiment and ensure our Regiment will stay strong while our trained members are overseas. If anyone knows a relative or family friend who would be interested in joining the Westie Family get them to call the Recruiting section at the armoury at 666-4282.

Tuesday 0900 - 1530 Thursday 1100-1530 and 1900-2200 hrs

We hope to see you all at the Melfa Dinner. Cheers!

Aldergrove Company

Contributed by: Captain Sandor Cselenyi

There have been a number of significant changes to the Aldergrove Company since the start of the 1994-95 training year. If you have not already heard, 3PPCLI 10-90 battalion has cast its shadow over BC District and as a consequence it designated the New Westminster company of the RWR it B Coy. The Aldergrove Company has henceforth, been named C-Coy and comprises 6 Platoon and the battalions Anti-Armour Platoon. Company HQ serves mainly in the supervisory role for them as 6 Coy, 3PPCLI, and the Anti-Armour Platoon has not integrated their training with the rifle platoons

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beyond the level of the individual skills training. Also, AAP training has been limited mainly to the Armoury in New Westmr.

With the arrival of 3PPCLI has also brought a number of experienced full time soldiers to the ORBAT of the Company. We now have personnel available to us qualified in such areas as Small Arms, Small Arms Coaching, Rappelmaster, Mountain Operations and TOW Section Commander. Starting with the Anti Armour Platoon. Capt Zilkens is a TOW trained platoon commander who arrived last fall after a six month UN peacekeeping tour of the former Yugoslavia with the PPCLI. The Anti-Armour Platoon Warrant is WO Estery A.S. and Sergeant is Sgt Thom L. Both are PPCLIs and possess a wealth of experience each. They certainly have a serious desire to accomplish great deeds and see the Total Force concept through to a successful reality. They are cooperative and most welcomed by all Westies. 6 Platoon has the benefit of a full time Platoon 2ic., Sgt McKenzie F., arrived last year too and his impact is most notable in the preparedness of the troops for each session of training.

Perhaps the most significant change in the Company has been the retirement of Major Gerry Potter. A longtime dedicated Westie, his enthusiasm and energy belied his age. Fifty-five snuck up to us all in mid-December 94 when he accomplished his last duties with the Company. In honour of his service and dedication the Company held a party for him and gave him a large wall mirror with the names of past and present B Coy personnel under the badge of The Regiment, all nicely engraved in the glass. Judging by the emotion displayed, it was evident to me that Major Potter will miss his men as much as they will miss him. His replacement is Capt Sandor Cseleenyi, and ex-R22R with fifteen years of regular service. He now makes his home in the Vancouver area and plans to spend many years as a Westie.

More news next time.

V E CELEBRATIONS
VANCOUVER LOWER MAINLAND

1 MAPLE RIDGE MAY 6, 1995

WHERE? THE ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH 88
12101 - 224TH STREET, MAPLE RIDGE

TIMINGS: 1:30 PM - BAND CONCERT, VETERANS PARADE
2-4 PM - BIG BAND MUSIC, WREATH LAYING CEREMONY
4:30 PM - MEET DUTCH COMMUNITY AT CHRISTIAN
REFORM CHURCH
6:30 PM - WW II VET DINNER RCL BRANCH #88
8:30 PM - DANCING TO MUSIC BRANCH #88

INFORMATION: TEL - 463-5101

2. NEW WESTMINSTER MAY 7, 1995

WHERE? CENOTAPH FRONT OF CITY HALL

TIME: 2 PM

PROGRAM:

MEMORIAL SERVICE
SPEAKERS: LIBERATOR
LIBERATED
PEACEMAKER

ALL MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND AND TO WEAR RED BERETS
AND MEDALS.

INFORMAL RECEPTION TO FOLLOW IN OFFICER'S MESS

3. MAY 4, 5 & 6 LYNDON, WASH USA

4 MAY - SILENT MARCH & WREATH LAYING CEREMONY
- DUTCH BAND FROM HOLLAND
- LIBERATORS OF HOLLAND WELCOME.

5 MAY - CHOIRS IN THE EVENING

6 MAY - 1:30 PM PARADE (ALL VETS)
3:00 PLAY
EVENING - BAND CONCERT

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4. VANCOUVER - MAY 4, 5 & 6

The Dutch Canadians Remember 1945 Society has organized a number of events designed to express their gratitude and thanks to Canada and its' veterans for the liberation of Holland. The events planned are noted below and we encourage you to attend and bring some friends with you.

May 4 (Thursday) - 1200 Noon. Wreath laying by the Consul General of the Netherlands. Dutch WW II veterans and Dutch organizations at the Cenotaph in Vancouver (Hastings and Cambie).

May 5 (Friday) - 1200 Noon. Queen Elizabeth Park. In front of Bloedel Conservatory, dedication of monument "Joy of Freedom"

May 6 (Saturday) - 9:00 am - 4:30 pm Symposium on "Canada and the Liberation of the Netherlands" by the University of BC in the Robson Square Conference Center - Judge White Theatre - in Vancouver.

May 6 (Saturday) - 6:00 pm "Host a Liberator" Dinner. By invitation, Seaforth Armoury.

Members attending these events are requested to wear blazers and where applicable, red berets.

Grateful Scholar.....

Dear President JN Gangur

Thank you for the opportunity you have given to me to help advance my education through The Royal Westminster Regiment Association - John Ford Memorial Bursary.

I plan to pursue Science at U.B.C. and major in the area of computer sciences.

My grandfather, who served in World War II, would have been proud that I had received this Bursary. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Anthony Burgoyne
New Westminster

FROM THE POST

A word of thanks to Ethel Grinsted for her wish to be kept on the Groundsheet Roll & a kind donation on behalf of her late husband Ron Grinsted. Thanks Ethel & get out of that hospital soon. A thank you to William Tyo of Cornwall Ont for dues & kind words... Donations & kind word re The GS from Joe Strawson. Much appreciated.....Appreciation to Bas Morgan re Cec Grinsted's word of Ethel Grinsted's illness. G. Sheet matter taken care of Bas. Sincere condolences & thanks to Irene Dayton notifying us of Ernie Dayton's death. Ernie was an early past president & Exec Office of the Assoc & we shall miss him also... A poignant & interesting letter from Jack & Isabel Smith reminding us of our early days & the death of one James Pudney - I believe I was in the Bugle Band at Jim's Funeral - Also an appended note from G Smith telling us that John A Smith & his dear friend Jim Pudney lie buried in close proximity to one another at Van Veterans Memorial Cemetery. John Smith's Regt No was K47 081...Generous donation from Bert Wolverton of sunny Bakersville Cal. to Future Fund. Many thank Bert...Donald Drummond of North Van nice to hear from you and thanks for donation to Future Fund...Donation and wonderful words from the irascible Ian Douglas. Ian's body may be letting him down, but his mind & memory are as sharp as ever. Ian explains his considered dues tardiness as follows - "LATE AGAIN DOUGLAS! BUT NOT QUITE THE LATE DOUGLAS". Pleasing to note you are in fettle Ian..... A sincere thank you to Gordon Higginson for your thoughtful donation...Thanks to Ed Wilse for your dues..Repeat thanks to Ethel S Johnson for dues Donation..Sincere appreciation to long time & loyal member Stan Drummond for dues & donation. Your annual contributions to the Assoc since its very early inception has been and is sincerely appreciated. Regret to learn of you & Mrs Drummond's ill health. I believe I can emphasise personally re that matter.....From George Griffiths K47 649 for dues & flattering remarks re the G>S> ..A word of thanks to Gordon Corman for 95 dues... More dues & much more flattery re ongoing Groundsheet production from Geo Shaw of Edmonton. Trying my best George, but the sands in the hourglass are falling faster..... Thanks to Dave Crossfield of Duncan BC. Glad to hear you are going to Holland Dave...Nelson Scott duly notified. I know that Len Bailey of Nanaimo plans to go...Thanks to Aubrey Coutts for your donation & kind compliments re G.S. Best to all and keep the mail coming...

Ron Hurley

Annual General Meeting Notes. It was our intention to publish the highlights of AGM 95. Our secretary, Nelson Scott was ill and not present at the meeting. A member volunteered to take minutes. We have yet to prepare the final copy of the minutes taken. Our Fall issue will have the AGM information. We can tell you your Officers and elected Board of Directors is as follows:

President: Jerry N Gangur
Vice - Pres: Tony Dodd
Hon Treasurer: Vernon Ardagh
Secretary: Nelson Scott
Editor: Ron Hurley
Legal Con: G.T. McNabb
Past Pres: Chuck Smithers

Directors

Robert Cyr	Bruce Eaton
William Lenaghan	C.W.O. Chuck McKinnon
Norm Palmer	Cpl Mike Scott
Rick Spier	Fred West

This is your executive and as always they ask for your support and feedback on the activities of the Association.

THE ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION
MELFA 95 RESERVATIONS -- Cut out and return

Melfa 1995 - May 19, 20 and 21

Reply before 10 May. That means do it today!

DINNER: \$30.00 per person

Sunday Brunch - No Charge

DINNER: 1, 2, 3 or 4 x \$30.00

GOLF: \$35.00 per golfer

Sunday Brunch: 1, 2, 3 or 4

NAME: (Please Print)

SEND RETURN AND CHEQUE TO: Melfa Chairman
P.O. Box 854
New Westminster, BC
V3L 4Z8

Thank You

IN MEMORIAM

Sgt Ernie Dayton M.M M.I.D	Westminster Regiment (M) W.W. II
Alton Anderson	Westminster Regiment (M) W.W. II
Roger Hassard	Westminster Regiment (M) W.W. II
Joe La Croix	Westminster Regiment (M) W.W. II
Ben Greenhough	Westminster Regiment (M) W.W. II

ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH MELFA 95 WILL BE HELD IN THE
ARMOURY. SATURDAY 20 MAY- 6 PM COCKTAIL
7 PM DINNER

SUNDAY - BRUNCH - 10 AM TO 1 PM

WE WILL INVITE CANADIANS OF DUTCH HERITAGE WHO LIVED IN HOLLAND IN THE AREAS WHERE THE WESTMR REGT PASSED THROUGH AND WHO ARE NOW LIVING IN B.C. YOU MIGHT MEET SOMEONE FROM YOUR PAST...TO LOCAL MEMBERS, YOUR BUDDIES ARE COMING FROM ACROSS CANADA AND ONE OF THE REASONS IS THAT THEY WANT TO SEE YOU. GET IN THAT CAR AND DRIVE THE FEW MILES TO THE ARMOURY.

NOTE: GROUP PHOTO TO BE TAKEN IN ARMOURY DURING COCKTAIL HOUR.

MELFA 95 RESERVATIONS

Cut out this portion and return PROMPTLY with particulars to

MELFA 95 CHAIRMAN

P.O. BOX 854

NEW WESTMINSTER, B.C.
V3L 4Z8

Plan to attend and bring as many Westies you can persuade.

Family and Friends welcomed for this VE Dinner
Cheques Payable to The Royal Westminster Regiment Association