

VOLUME 98 / ISSUE 1

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

February, 1998

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

OF THE ROYAL WESTMINSTER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS
THURSDAY MARCH 19, 1998

Place: Combined Officer's and Sergeant's Mess in the New Westminster Armoury

Time: 8:00 pm

Parking in the City Hall Parking Lot

IF YOU ARE EVEN REMOTELY INTERESTED IN YOUR
ASSOCIATION YOU WILL BE THERE. IF YOU ARE UNABLE
TO ATTEND MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT BY FORWARDING
YOUR PROXY.

**WE NEED YOUR ADVISE AND
SUPPORT AS NEVER BEFORE.**

Executive

President	Fred West	# 16 - 3397 Hastings Street, Port Coquitlam, BC	V3B 4M8	942-6275
Past President	Jerry Gangur	2015 Hyannis Drive, North Vancouver, BC	V7K 2H4	929-5785
Hon Treasurer	Vernon Ardagh	3689 Nico Wynd Drive, Surrey, BC	V4P 1J1	535-9093
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Editor	Jerry Gangur	2015 Hyannis Drive, North Vancouver, BC	V7H 2E5	929-5785

Editor's Corner

This last year has proved to be one great adventure. Our association unveiled a plaque honoring our regiment's two Victoria Cross recipient's, played host to a foreign ambassador and had a Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada speak at our commemorative dinner . Not bad for a years work.

Much has happened during the time span ending with the plague unveiling that has altered the way I will look at things, forever. Words such as admiration, respect, integrity and principle come to mind. One of the greatest privileges bestowed on me was to work with President **Fred West** , in my capacity as Chairman of the VC Plaque Committee. This is a man who exhibits the highest of principles, and demonstrates the greatest of tolerance and respect for his fellow man. Opportunities to demonstrate these noble attributes are occasionally presented in life and as the well known phrase made popular in the movie Dead Poets Society, Fred "seized the moment" and did what his heart felt was right. Fred is a man who leads by personal example and makes it so easy to follow. Our regiment was so fortunate to have him and men like him fighting for our country, in both wars.

For those who marched in the parade on November 11th, you will know that **Ron Hurley** took a pretty nasty tumble while marching to the cenotaph service. In addition to receiving an ugly bruise to his head, Ron was to experience days of pain in his arm, until the Doc. finally took an x-ray and confirmed that it was broken. Ron, always the gentleman came to me at my office today (27 Jan) and he seemed and says he is in great shape.

You will find an orange proxy stuffer included with this issue of the Groundsheet. We encourage you to select someone of your choosing to represent you at the Annual General Meeting. Mail your proxy to the person named or **P.O. Box 854**.

Some of our members move or become ill and we are unaware of the circumstances. Call or write us when you know something. We need to hear from you.

While we were unveiling our plaque in New Westminster on April 5th, **Joe Strawson** was at Vimy at ceremonies marking the 80th anniversary of that battle. His report is included in this issue..... To all thank you and best wishes for good health & fortune.

President's Report

This is my first opportunity of the year to address the membership, so Happy New Year to all. I would like to review some of our activities over the last several years.

When **Jerry Gangur** became President, he said he had a project that he wanted to get started. That project was the "**Future Fund.**" He said if we were to raise 100,000. dollars and deposit it with Vancouver Foundation, it would provide a perpetual income and that would ensure the ongoing livelihood of the Association. I was impressed and when he asked for volunteers to act on that committee, I broke an old promise I had made to myself when I left the Army in 1945, "**I WILL NEVER VOLUNTEER AGAIN.**" I do not regret breaking that promise, but I never expected to get as involved as it turned out to be; one cannot be too careful about volunteering. However, the fact remains, the **Future Fund** is an ongoing project and we have not reached our **GOAL** yet and when we do someone will probably move the Goal Posts. The encouraging factor is, "we are recruiting new members to help us reach our Goal, before the Goal Posts move too far", so we will discover new ways of achieving our purpose.

Since the Future Fund project was initiated there has been a number of other projects that had to be taken care of along the way. There was the 50th anniversary of the **Melfa Battle**, it was a good show, and then the 50th anniversary of the **end of WW2**. Then we discovered a couple of important things to do--that was to join our friends, the **GGFG Regiment** and a couple of **Royal Canadian Legion Branches** in Toronto and Montreal in recognizing our **WW1 and WW2 Victoria Cross recipients**. This happened to come along somewhat unexpectedly and events had to be coordinated with ceremonies in the East. Our Eastern neighbours were helpful in many ways, including financially. Despite all the problems that had to be dealt with, we managed to put on a damn good show. We did not get the best of cooperation from all the Regimental Family, and I will always be disappointed with that, but we reached our objective just like the good old Regiment did in those great Wars we participated in!!

I almost overlooked that last year (1997) when we also celebrated the **50th anniversary of this Association**. I want to express thanks and my greatest Regards to those older Comrades that persevered over the years and kept the Regimental Association alive and on the move. The Groundsheet has been a wonderful means of keeping contact with old comrades and friends over the years. Our members across the country look forward to receiving the Groundsheet and reading **Ron Hurley's** comments and letters from people that write in. The Museum is also a wonderful project that former executives had a great deal to do with, as well as providing bursaries to students, and assisting Cadet units. A special note of appreciation must be extended to the many Royal Canadian Legion branches in the Fraser Valley and New Westminster who were so generous in their support of the V.C. Plaque unveiling held in April. I have probably missed something, but I will hear about it, I am not perfect and I do not mind apologizing, in advance at that! Thanks, Thanks and more Thanks. I will look forward to a very successful 1998, so everybody get out and push! ... **Fred West.**

Regimental News

A decision was made a few years ago to allocate four pages of the Groundsheet to members of the serving battalion. Contributions can include, the commanding officer's report, events to come or events that have happened. Articles from all ranks, on any subject of relevance to the on goings of the regiment will be welcomed. Submission of photographs with any article is encouraged. Articles should be submitted to the Editor, P.O. Box 854, New Westminster, BC V3L 4Z8

Did You Know That? - submitted by Capt. C. Mackinnon, CD

Our Regimental cap badge was designed by **LCol F.J. Simpson VD**, when he was the Regimental Adjutant. **LCol Simpson** was the Commanding Officer of the Westminster Regiment from 1934-38. In 1936, the unit name was changed to Westminster Regiment MG (Machine Gun).

The **cap badge design** (and title) was approved in 1924. The detail of the cap badge is significant and explained as follows:

The **setting sun** of the West - indicates the unit's geographical location. The **maple leaf** - the unit's Canadian heritage and the unit's affiliation to the 47th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force. The **crown** - indicating the unit's recognition of its loyalty to the monarchy. The **beaver** - the industrious application of hard work which reflected the nature of the community in which the members had come from. The title '**Royal**' was approved and added in 1967.

It is believed that LCol Simpson's sister was in possession of the colonel's original sketches. However, no documents on the cap badge were found in LCol Simpson's papers.

The official design, of the cap badge, has 15 points on the setting sun (demi-sun) like our current brass cap badge. However, by design or error, the Regimental Colour has 17 points on the demi-sun. It is tradition, in the Regiment that all Regimental officers cap badges also have 17 points.

Our museum is in possession of two of the cap badge samples that the colonel had designed. Note that one cap badge actually has 19 points and the other cap badge 17 points, as well as, the image of the 4th Div. patch (WWI) in place of the beaver. A diligent search through archives might reveal some more information. Anyone having more formation on our cap badge please contact the museum.



Sketch Proposals for the Cap Badge for the Westminster Regiment, cir 1924. Designed by LCol F. J. Simpson, VD

Christmas - Westies Dig Deep

Presented by Lt. Randy McBryan

The Regiment finds time to serve the local community at Christmas. This years efforts were concentrated on two fronts: the **Santa Fox food** drive and the **New Westminster Christmas Bureau**.

2nd Lt. **Ted McNabb** (2IC Adm Coy) delivered over 1000 pounds of food donated by unit members through **Sgt Izzard** RQMS) to the Coquitlam depot for the Santa Fox Christmas Food drive. **Capt. MacKinnon** (Trg O) started our participation in this cause, and for the second consecutive year the Westies have been the greatest individual sponsor contributing to this drive!

In the week ending December 19th the New Westminster Christmas Bureau had the armoury floor covered three feet deep with food, gifts and workers preparing hampers for some of the less fortunate families of New Westminster. The unit helped this community effort by providing, on short notice, the armoury and personnel throughout the week. Lt McBryan (Asst. Adj.) recognized the daunting task of delivering the small mountain of material forming on the parade square. He sought and received approval from Brigade HQ to offer unit transport "assistance" in delivering "some" of the hampers. **Sgt Kelly** (unit transport NCO) organized the volunteer effort of several drivers from the Regiment with almost no notice (Brigade approval took some time). **Patricia Anderson**, coordinator for the Christmas Bureau wrote in appreciation of our efforts, saying:

"The heroes of the day were the members of The Royal Westminster Regiment who stepped in at the eleventh hour and performed the overwhelming task of delivering, in pouring rain, over 400 hampers. I was astonished at their forthrightness in approaching the job, when the rest of us could not imagine the task completed, these trained professionals dove in and carried the job to its successful conclusion."



Four of Santa's helpers caught in the act! Lt to rt are: Cpl Nixon (rifleman - B Coy), Capt. Mills (Salvation Army) and Cpl Kerekianich (Tpt sect Adm Coy) loading hampers for delivery by the unit that day!

Christmas Dinner (Senior members of the regiment serve the troops)



Wo Connick (recently released from the PPCLI and joined the battalion) serves **Cpl Hindson** at the annual mens Christmas dinner. To their right is MCpl. (now Sgt.) **Stephenson**. To their left are: Mcpl (now Sgt. - 2IC 1Pl) **Hennebery**, Cpl **Baron** (Sect Comdr. - B Coy), Mcpl. **Beglaw** (Sect. Cmdr. - 1PL and ||Cpl. **Sandulak** (rifleman - 1 Pl)

Groundsheet Contributions from Serving Members Welcome. Any serving member of the unit is welcome to submit articles for publication in the Groundsheet. Keep your article to the 500 word limit and do include photographs. Current news about your Company/Platoon or Section is of value to us. Photographs of UN Duty and Aid to the Civil power activities will be of great interest. **Editor.**

Memories Personalities and Happenings

Melfa - 98 May 22, 23 and 24 - Advance Notice - Chairman: Pat Hyska

To The Westie Family: Well everybody, I have been elected by my peers to host your upcoming Melfa weekend and would like to introduce myself to you. You might have heard of my daring escapades in the Regiment, or recognized me as the gentleman who pinned roses on the ladies at a prior Melfa Dinner. Either way I am, and always have been involved in organizing one event or another for the Regiment. Activities for weekend are as follows:

Date	Activity
♣ May 22	Golfing at the Delta Golf Course. Cost around \$35.00 (will depend on the number of golfers attending & includes food & prizes) .
♣ May 23	(a) Breakfast at the Keg - for those who attended last year, you don't have to bring a pillow as there will be no trucks in the parade. (b) A tour of the Russian Foxtrot Class Sub U521 and maybe a tour on the Paddle Wheeler, depending on the amount of people interested. (c) Melfa Dinner will be held at the Royal Towers Hotel from 6 pm to midnight. There will also be music, so get your dancing shoes on.
♣ May 24	A brunch will be held at the armouries 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Will be held in either the Sgt's or Officer's Mess and will provide time for everyone to say goodbye till the next year.
◆ Accommodation - Earlybird gets shelter: There will be a block of rooms set aside at the Royal Towers hotel for those wishing to stay the two nights - May 22 and 23.. Please reserve soonest: Toll Free 1 800 663-0202 .	

I will try to keep everyone informed as the Groundsheet permits. Keep looking in your mail box. It will be great to see you all at Melfa 98.

If anybody would like to help with any of the activities or knows of anyone who would like to donate any prizes, please feel free to call **Eileen Hyska** at (604) 585-9344.

Should you be planning on attending, drop us a line or fill in the enclose Melfa 98 return.

Pilgrimage to Vimy - 80th Anniversary

Submitted by: Joe Strawson

What a totally unexpected honor to be selected as the representative of The Royal Westminster Regiment to attend the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge and I wish to thank all of you, especially Col. **McKinney** and **Nelson Scott**.

On arrival at Vancouver airport met **Smokey Smith, V.C.** and he introduced me to the Seaforth representative, **Bill Worton** and to the Merchant Navy man, **Dick Wilson** who will be part of the delegation to Vimy. A 4 hr 50 minute flight by air Canada and we were met by the ladies who will be our guides etc. (from the Veterans Affairs Dept.). Our luggage was tagged in bright red and in French read "Ancient Combatents" which we got a kick out of. The girls looked after the luggage and bundled us into taxis to go to the Hotel Elgin.

Nice rooms my roommate was **Bud Tapley** from N.B., had been in first Div in Italy with Carlton & York Regiment.

Next day, April 5th had a get acquainted session also historical briefing on Vimy and other pilgrimage sites. The at 13:30 hr. a visit to Canada's War Museum, which we all enjoyed, then on to Rideau Hall for a reception by the Governor General **Romeo LeBlanc** and **Mrs. LeBlanc** with lots of drinks and food and a visit to certain areas of Rideau Hall where we were allowed to see. Enjoyed the green houses as they produce all the flowers for Rideau Hall & grounds.

Along with us on this trip was a youth from each province and the Yukon. BC's

representative was 16 year old **Nathan Leggat** from Langley and they were such a fine group, they looked so nice in suits & ties and the girls in their best dresses.

Along with us too were six first world war one veterans with relatives or caretakers to look after them in their wheelchairs. The young people also helped on many, many occasions during the 10 days.

On Sunday April 6, breakfast was at 6:00am - and by 9:30 we were in the air in the D.N.D. aircraft on our way to France. They really fed us a lot on the plane also all the drinks you could wan. The Gov General came around and shook hands will each of us, he make a complete tour of the plane and made every one so welcome. We arrived at Lille at 2200 hrs. then by bus to our nearby hotel only a mile or so from the airport.

Monday April 7, a briefing for all of us by the advance party. There are 3 coaches hired for our transportation, they are from England also English drivers as they are cheaper than the French ones. So we were off to see Lille for a few hours on our own and the French girls still wear **very** short skirts!!!

Tuesday, April 8th we had a lovely 3 course lunch at Hotel, then by bus to Vimy Ridge and memorial to put us in the picture for the ceremony next day. Had a vist to the Canadian tunnels that had been dug in preparation for the Vimy Offensive - with guides, otherwise we would have soon been lost..... Wed., April 9th was the most

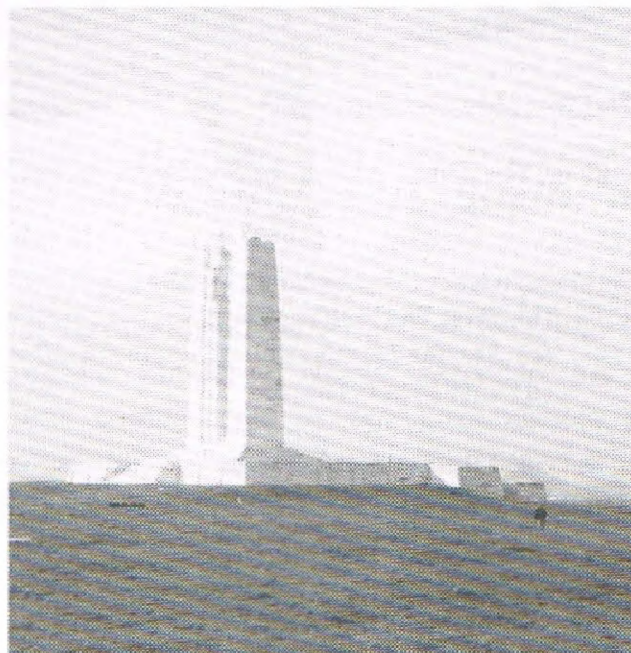
unforgettable. Eighty years ago today was the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Weather was real warm & sunny, ideal day...French honor guards lined up on the lawn and the crowd all over the embankment around the Vimy Memorial. Our G.G. gave his speech followed by the French, then our 104 yr. old Vet got up to the rostrum and recited the poem They shall not grow old. Then to the wreath laying, it was a real honor to represent **The Royal Westminster Regiment** at such a ceremony.

Reception later in a huge tent attended by all Vets, guides etc., once again food and lots to drink. Our honor guard at the ceremony was very sharp and impressive commanded by a Major Haisal, It was a day to make us proud to be Canadians and one remembered for the rest of our lives.

On Thursday April 10th it was a ceremony at the Newfoundland memorial at their famous battleground at Beaumont Hamel. We walked all over the area of battle and its a wonder even 37 survived the day of July 1st, 1919. Later we toured the Somme area and to the huge British French brick memorial over 100 feet high that like Vimy, has thousands of names on it. Then on to another of Canada's war effort at Courcelette where they are still digging up unexploded shells after 80 years.

On Friday it was to Belgium and the Ypres salient, Ypres was the only part of Belgium not captured by the Germans in W.W. I Our first stop was at Vancouver Corner in St. Julian where the Canadians in W.W. 1 held the line against the German gas attacks. Then on to Passchendale memorial --what a cool day today. Then on to the largest British Empire 3 war graves cemetary at Tyne Cot where there are 37,000 names enscribed including British, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders and South African casualties....Left Lille at 1205

local time and flew back to Canada, stopping off at Quebec City to let the band off --then on to Ottawa --trying -- to snow..Hotel overnight then home to Vancouver by 10:20am. Good to be home but a most memorable journey



Vimy Memorial - 9 April 97



Room mates, left Bud Tapley, right our man at Vimy Joe Strawson.

Constitutional Amendments - Housekeeping items

Constitutions, being living documents, must be amended from time to time. Your board of directors is recommending the following changes to our constitution. In accordance with our constitution, notice of presentation of two motions to amend the constitution at the Annual General Meeting - 1998 is being served.

Current Wording



Proposed Amendment No. 1

Part two - Membership

Change Para. 6 (a), (b), (c) and (d) to read:

Para 6. The annual dues of the Society for its various categories shall be as follows:

Para. 6. The annual dues of the Society for its categories shall be as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| (a) General Membership | \$ 10.00 |
| (b) First World War Veterans | Free |
| (c) Serving Members of the Regiment | 10.00 |
| (d) Life Memberships | 50.00 |

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| (a) General Membership | \$15.00 |
| (b) First World War Veterans | Free |
| (c) Serving Members of the Regiment | 15.00 |
| (d) Life Memberships | 100.00 |

- (i) Life membership funds shall be vested in a fund, the income only from such fund may be transferred to general income.
- (ii) Such fund to be administered by the Trustees and such fund to be separate.

Note: Para. 6 (d) (i) and (ii) are to be deleted.

Current Wording



Proposed amendment No. 2

Part 10 - Trust Account

Delete para. 24 in its entirety and replace it with the following wording.

Para. 24.

- (1) The directors of the Society shall be empowered to set up and administer The Royal Westminster Regiment Association Trust Fund or its predecessor.
- (2) Three (3) trustees shall be appointed by the Directors with full signatory powers for this fund. These Trustees, commencing with 1953 be appointed for the following terms of office; one for five (5) years, one for three (3) years and one for two years. All subsequent appointments of Trustees to be for a period of five (5) years.
- (3) No expenditures shall be made from this fund without the full authorization by signature of all three (3) Trustees.
- (4) In case of retirement or death of any Trustee, the Directors are empowered to appoint a replacement for the unexpired portion of the term vacated.

Part 10 - Endowment Fund

Para. 24.

- (1) The Directors of the Society shall be empowered to set up an endowment fund and appoint a trustee to administer such a fund. The fund is to be known as The Royal Westminster Regiment Association Endowment Fund.
- (2) Donations to the fund can be made to the Royal Westminster Regiment Association or directly to the Trustee.
- (3) The annual income received from this fund may be deposited in the association's general account.

Assistant Editor

Ron Hurley

Correspondence: Very limited but appreciated to **Jack Terpenning** of Victoria B for his enclosure of the obituary of late **Ken Kienan**....Many Westies will recall Ken's 20 yr. term in the BC Legislature. They will also recall his many years as a Westie overseas. Jack your suggestion of printing the town they resided is good. Will do Jack as long as it is provided. Many "D" Coy members will remember Ken as Tpt. Sgt for that Coy.

Thanks to **Joe Strawson** for your excellent report of your pilgrimage to the 80th Vimy Memorial Trip. My late father was wounded at that battle while serving with the 13th Bn Black Watch of Montreal. Congratulations Joe you made an excellent representative for the Regiment and Association alike...

Thanks to **Harold Searle** of Burnaby BC for your dues re your wife's donation. The Groundsheet is a production of The Royal Westminster Regiment Association, a civilian adjunct of The Royal Westminster Regiment. Regards to us from long ttime stalwart **Clarence (Silent) Smith** of Saskatoon, Sask. Thanks also for your dues. Glad to learn your health is reasonably sound... Surprise letter from **Frank Richard** of Lake Superior Regimental Assn. We are pleased to exchange papers as you were the only other unit that was a Motor Bn. No dues required Frank, but donations always welcome. Noticed in your obituaries the name of **Gordon Armstrong**. Gordon was a close personal friend of mine as he was an original Westie along with his brother **Dick**.... I realize Gordon was a POW from Bruges. Sorry to learn of your vandalism..... Just had my garage robbed for the second... Cops say that they are underage punks. Somehow that doesn't seem to be an acceptable answer. Better luck in the

in the future for you...a nice note from a friend from the RMR who I had the pleasure of serving with, he and some Rangers helped our detachment of B.C. Dragoons in the guarding the C.N.R. Rail and road bridge in Pr George BC from Aug 1939 to Dec 1939. We must have done a good job Wally as the old bridge is still intact albeit they have a few more modern road bridges. It's still the only rail bridge however. Wally Mulholland was the Editor Emeritus of The Rocky Mtn Rangers for many long years -- only his health forced him to retire. When I left the B.C.D. Detachment enroute to the Westies in late Dec 1939, I was issued a new number K42 097 at Kamloops RMR Armoury. Not bad for an old saddle jumper. Wally extended his most gracious compliments re our Groundsheet and I quote "**Ron I must say I was impressed with the quality and format of the latest Groundsheet. It smacked of 'class ' in its' make up,**" unquote. Very nice to hear Wally, but being involved for over 50 years, we now have two editors. I am looking after the WW2 overseas Westies and much more current material for post WW2 Royal Westminsters. A former post WW2 Colonel of the regiment has volunteered to do much of the more related duties of The Regiment today. **Jerry Gangur** is doing a first class job and this arrangement was mutually agree with. It is working well. I will continue to respond to all the old sweats from 1939-45 and they are getting fewer every day. I recall much of our Wartime Family. My health fluctuates from fair to bad. I will keep on as long as I can or am wanted. I sincerely hope you are feeling much better. ...to our good friend **Dave Adlem** of Abbotsford, was most delighted to see that you will be able to look after Mabel at home. Much admiration for your taking all that extra training to make this possible. You were a great hit with staff at the ICU. Signing off now...**Ron**

Remember to forward the enclosed
Proxy..