



—Colonist photo by Ian McKain

Smith, Burrows, Drysdale and Greenhalgh with color

Chums to gather for last time

By DON GAIN

Colonist Church Editor

Victoria's Chums will get together officially for the last time when they lay up their color at the 10:30 a.m. Sunday service in St. Paul's Naval and Garrison Church.

Old friend and patron of the Old Contemptibles, Maj.-Gen. George Pearkes, will present

the color to Canon Harry Greenhalgh, rector of St. Paul's.

There were 31 members of the Victoria branch of the Old Contemptibles Association 11 years ago. Each year takes its toll and now only about 12 members are left, according

to William Jones, president of the branch.

Seven will be there Sunday to bid their color farewell. Victoria's is the last branch in Canada, Jones said.

The Chums received their color 11 years ago, a gift from Mrs. Harry Lindsay who will be present Sunday when the three-panel, red-white-and-blue flag is laid up at the church.

It was 11 years ago last April that the Victoria association received its official charter from then lieutenant-governor Pearkes. It was 50 years ago that the Old Contemptibles Association was formed and it was 61 years ago that the men were mired in the mud of France and Belgium.

Old Contemptibles, or Chums as they call one another, were at the Battle of Mons which started at dawn Aug. 23, 1914. They endured the retreat from Mons and the Battle of Ypres.

Their color bears the names of their four famous battles, Mons, Marne, Aisne and First Ypres.

The men belonged to the 65,000 British regulars referred to by the Kaiser as British commander-in-chief Field Marshal Sir John French's "contemptible little army."

The name stuck and became a badge of honor for the men who had served in France or Belgium between Aug. 5 and Nov. 22, 1914.

Some Victoria Chums went to London in 1964 for the 50th anniversary of their war service. The Queen held a reception for them at Buckingham Palace. The main ceremony was held at Royal Albert Hall and a church service honored them in St. Paul's Cathedral.

In the summer of 1974 four members of the Victoria association flew to London for their Diamond Jubilee in the church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields in Trafalgar Square.

A service was held in Esquimalt United Church to mark the anniversary locally.

At Sunday's ceremony Chum Sid Burrows will be standard-bearer. Patron bugler Bert Drysdale will sound the Last Post and Reveille and patron piper Frank Knight will play the Lament.

Three Vancouver members of the Victoria branch — Tom Cheverton, Tom Livingstone and Charles Keller — will attend. The seventh member, Bill Glover of Esquimalt, will also be there.