

The GROUNDSHEET

The Publication of The Royal Westminster Regiment Association

*'Dedicated to the ideals and comradeship
we knew in wars and peace in our
service both home and abroad.'*

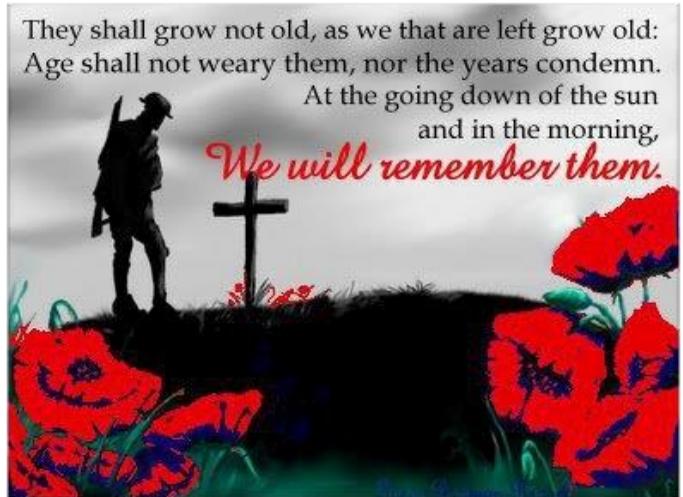
'Pro Rege et Patria'

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www.royal-westies-assn.ca



Volume 2021/Issue 2
October 2021



Remembrance Day - New Westminster
Virtual Ceremony starting at 1030 hours, 11 November 2021
Newwestcity.ca/remembranceday

In Memoriam



Herb Hamm
Bert Larsen
Doug Salmon

New Westminster BC
Quebec
Victoria, BC

28 August 2021
25 August 2021
09 August 2021

The Royal Westminster Regiment
The Royal Westminster Regiment
Regular Force posted to The Royal
Westminster Regiment



BGen Hamm, H.E., CD

30 November 1930 – 29 August 2021

Herb Hamm joined the Westminster Regiment and became the first Commanding Officer of the modern era without wartime service. He served twice as the Commanding Officer, from 1964-1968 and from 1971-1973

He served as the commander of Pacific Militia Area from 1975-1979 when he was promoted to Brigadier General. He was the CO when the Regiment received the title Royal and received the new Colours from Princess Alexandra in Victoria, and then Trooped the Colours in Queens Park

He was also tasked with choosing the new badges from 5 prototypes and decided that the Officers would retain a copper and silver badge while the Troops would keep an all-brass badge.

Herb also served as the Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel From 1982-1985. He was also the first post war Officer from The Royal Westminster Regiment to attain the rank of Brigadier-General.

General Hamm was the type of officer who epitomized the phrase -- Fair, Firm, and Friendly. There were a few occasions as CO when he was disciplining some individuals and he saw something in that person that determined the punishment that was meted out. He was very seldom proved wrong.

After his retirement, he gave much of his time to the Regimental Museum and the Historical Society. It was a passion that he enjoyed every day. And the Museum became stronger with the people that Herb had helping him. They were mostly retired members of the Regiment and shared Herb's passion. At times he was a hard taskmaster, but it was all in the interest of preserving the history of the Regiment.

Herb's father was a member of the Regimental Band and as the story goes, he always addressed Herb as Sir. On one occasion during an inspection, when he came up to his father and asked how he was doing, his father replied – Please phone your mother she misses you.

BGen Hamm never lost sight of the fact that he was a Westie.

May he rest in peace after a task well done.

The Regiment and the Royal Westminster Regimental Association salute you sir.

Victor Herbert (Bert) Larsen OMM, CD
1938 to 2021
Major (Retired)



Bert was born in New Westminster BC, May 30, 1938. Bert started his military career in 1958 by joining the Westminister Regiment as a Private. Bert went back to the Westminister Regiment. would advance up through the ranks of the Regiment and maintained an active part in the regimental band when he took his Commission in 1972 and his humour was infectious which the troops.

During Bert's life in the military, he was dedicated to his Regiment, to his career and country. Anytime he put that uniform on, Bert optimized everything it meant to wear it. He was truly honoured to be a part of the CAF.

Bert was also a family man, raising his young family in New Westminster while working as a draftsman in his civilian life. He helped to raise his two children who also became part of the Regimental family with son Doug joining the CAF and his daughter Denise becoming a debutante in 1985. Unfortunately, Bert would suffer through the stages of Parkinson's Disease and would pass away August 25, 2021 in Quebec. Bert was survived

by his wife Nicole St-Jean, his children Doug (Katie) and Denise (Norm) and their children and grandchildren.

Please advise the Secretary of deaths, births, and other significant updates regarding our members.



Lieutenant-Colonel Jerry Gangur (retired) - Sovereign's Volunteer Medal

We are pleased to advise that Lt Col Jerry Gangur has been awarded the Sovereign's Volunteer Medal for his volunteer service for the Association.

Jerry is a member of our Association and member of the Senate of the Regiment. He has contributed considerable volunteer time and effort to the Association and it particular to the recognition of actions taken by the Westminster Regiment in Italy during the Second World War and to recognise the actions of Cpl Filip Konowal, Victoria Cross. He was elected as a Director of the Association at the AGM in 2001. He was also appointed Editor of the Association Newsletter the "Groundsheet". He served as the editor for 5 years.

He served as a Director from 2001 to 2004 when he was elected as the Vice-President and served 3 years in that position. He then was re-elected as a Director and served until 2010.

During his time as Director and Vice-President he was involved in a number of initiatives, such as organising the "future fund" for the Association, publication of a booklet on Major Jack Mahony, Victoria Cross, the installation of a cairn outside the Armoury with plaques commemorating both of the unit's Victoria Cross recipients, Corporal Philip Konowal (World War I) and Major Jack Mahony (World War II) and co-ordinated the project to install a commemorative plaque on the old San Vito Church, in Italy to commemorate the Battle of the Melfa River.

Health & Welfare

It would be appreciated if all members of The Regimental family would report births, marriages and deaths within our membership and their families. I am sure with such a young Regiment there will be lots of babies born. So please drop us a line if you know anything.

Your Executive
2021-2022

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Hello fellow Association members:

I am pleased that this is Volume 2, 2021. It was so nice to get positive feedback on my first try and made me feel that maybe I could do this job.

In this issue we salute Col. Hamm, sorry old habits are hard to break and he was such a wonderful man. He will be missed and all of us have to try to live up to the example he set for all of us.

I had the privilege of attending the changeover for RSMs, boy what an honour. We say good bye to RSM Bergan and welcome RSM Henneberry.

Articles were kind out short coming in for this volume let hope my email gets floods with articles and photos of our proud regiment family. Sure would like to hear from the museum, historical society and all messes. Please.

Anyhow won't ramble on put please keep your emails and photos coming, hearing lots of stories i.e. winter exercises were it rained and no snow etc. But no one has sent any pictures or articles.

The Groundsheet is only as good as its members make it. Let's restore the Groundsheet to its former glory.

Pro Rege et Patria

Linda Pickell
Editor

President's Report

I am very honoured to have been nominated and elected as your President. I would like to thank our Past President, Doug Setter for keeping things going during a very difficult time.

Over the next few editions, you will see bios of the Directors on the Board. I would like to thank our Secretary, Linda Pickell for taking on the job of editor of the Groundsheet.

As we can perhaps see some light at the end of this “Covid” tunnel, I am hopeful that we can resume our social activities, which would include the Melfa Golf Tournament and Melfa Dinner in May 2022. But the Board is also considering resurrecting a social event in the fall as well. However, given current restrictions this has been postponed to fall of 2022.

At the moment the Board has been have some discussions about how we can strengthen the Association, support our members, both serving and former members and our Cadet Corps. We are very open to your input so please connect with any of the Directors. Please also visit our Web site for details about upcoming events

The Remembrance Day ceremony will be primarily a virtual service again this year. I hope that you will be able to participate as it is important for us to remember those former members of The Royal Westminster Regiment, Westminster Regiment and the 47th and 131st Battalions who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Bill White
President

1838 RCACC Royal Westminster Regiment

Adult staff will be meeting over the next three weeks to start to solidify the training plan for the year. There will be an emphasis this year on having fun to build up the corps after COVID. Adventure training will be a big part of this with looking at new things we haven't done in the past, along with continuing with the necessary performance objectives for the cadets.

There will be no fundraising again this year so we will be counting on donations. That being said, the corps is pretty strong with almost \$50,000.00 in our account. We still had to pay "rent" to the Legion even though we weren't able to use it. A large portion of these funds will be used to purchase a number of kayaks, as well as replace some mountain bikes and canoes. (We still can't use canoes right now due to COVID restrictions, but we want to prepare for the future).

The training mandate will remain the same for the time being. Once in-person training commences, cadets will be required to wear a mask and social distance. Any cadets not vaccinated will not be allowed to participate in in-person training.

CF familiarization training and other training with CF involvement cannot take place until further notice/guidance is given. This will mean that the CF training scheduled later this month for senior cadets will need to be postponed. No overnight exercises can be conducted at this time, just like last year. All training is to take place within a one hour radius of the cadet parading centre. Parents are to drop off and pick up each day at the location the training is taking place (ie: Golden Ears Park). Transportation will not be provided by the cadet organization. Food is to be supplied by the families unless the corps can guarantee individually wrapped food (ie: MRE's etc.) can be provided.

Depending on who will return, the corps may be a little thin in some of the senior cadet leadership roles. For this reason, some considerable effort will be put in place to find "fun" events for them to entice them to stay etc. This will include non-typical training. We are looking into getting the top ten senior cadets their scuba diving qualification to take place after Christmas. Possibly also an outward-bound course in the spring. These will emphasize teamwork/building aspects.

Due to a lack of in-person training over the last two years, a back to basics attitude will be taken for the coming year. For new and returning cadets drill, map & compass, shooting, physical fitness and basic field craft etc. will be what we concentrate on.

New indigenous knowledge training will be provided to all adult staff in the near future.

Training will continue to be on Thursday nights with Mondays being available for team training (Shooting team, pre-para, drill, orienteering etc.). Important dates are:

Oct. 7 Regular in-person training will begin. First three weeks will cover drill, uniform exchange and dress and deportment to prepare for Nov. 4.

Oct. 23 First field training exercise. This will consist of basic field craft and an introduction to improvised shelters.

Nov. 4 CO's parade and awards night. Due to there being no ACR last year, this parade night will be used to award cadets with medals, and possibly promotions etc. November's exercise will be mountain biking. For December we are looking into snowshoeing (weather dependant) or a shooting competition.

Dennis Keeton

2316 RCACC, Royal Westminster Regiment

We are very pleased to report that after 15 months of indoor virtual training, Westie cadets are now back in the field training. A section of cadets and a couple of dedicated officers conducted a day hike on the local trails, along with several lessons on wilderness survival and navigation. We have one more hike planned for June with a larger group. Again we will conduct lessons on survival, navigation and first aid. What a great feeling to get back at it. Our Corps has been virtually engaged since March 2020, parading each Thursday evening. We took this opportunity to invite various guest speakers to keep our cadets engaged, interested and learning. Coquitlam Search & Rescue, Canadian Junior Rangers, alumni, and plenty of support from the Regiment provided for some worthwhile instruction for the cadets. Happily, were able to keep our parading strength up and engaged in the program with creative instruction that included cooking, games, outdoor survival, virtual escape room game, instructional techniques, citizenship and leadership. Something for everyone.

During this period we were able to pull off two notably successful ACRs (Annual Ceremonial Reviews). Our first virtual ACR was very well attended and was such a hit, we were honoured this year with our Formation Commandant, Commodore Kurtz as our Reviewing Officer. There were numerous high-level officers and Sergeant Majors all watching with a very keen eye watching our cadets showcase their Westie pride. Needless to say the Westie effort of 110% was on full display.

This summer, our cadet region has virtual and in person day training scheduled, which a good number of our cadets and officers will take part in. It will be with great anticipation we will restart back at the Armouries in September 2021. See you around the parade square.

2Lt Ernie Bodrogi

Then & Now

Change of RSM Parade, Volkes Range Chilliwack, 26 September 2021



Hon Col Chuck Strahl, RSM Chris Hennebery, Hon Lt Col George Salmis



Soldiers on parade for the change of appointment of Regimental Sergeant Major



Please help us identify the names of these soldiers

Missing Groundsheets

We are in the process of converting all editions to searchable electronic versions. This initiative builds on the work started by Ted Usher and then Len Woghlemuth. I was recently contacted by Jim Dumont who luckily had kept all his copies of the Groundsheet. So we now we will be able to add some more to our list.

It would be appreciated for those who have old editions of the Groundsheets if you could let the President (president@royal-westies-assn.ca) know which specific editions you may have prior to 1996 (volume 45) and any from 1996 and from 1998 to 2002. Within that range we are not missing all the editions but we have a number of gaps.

Are Your Dues Up To Date?

The Royal Westminster Regiment Association depends on your dues and donations. Yearly dues are \$20 and a Life Membership is \$200. Send in your dues today. Thanks.

What became of Kelly?

(Help us reconnect with former members)

Dave Delisle	Gary Grigg
James Hansen	Bob Ferguson
James R Hudson	Shane Stearn
Bob Jacobs	John Sanborn



Mask Up!

Get a mask from the kit shop for \$12.50 each, with proceeds going to the Association. Link to kit shop is <http://westiekit.bigcartel.com/>