



The GROUND SHEET

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'

Volume 2022/Issue 1
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The Armoury, 530 Queens Avenue
New Westminster, B.C., V3L 1K3

www.royal-westies-assn.ca



In Memoriam



Larry Beckett	Maple Ridge	January 2022	Royal Westminister Regiment
Wayne Confrey	Abbotsford	November 2021	Royal Westminister Regiment
Terry Oliver	Vancouver, BC	January 2022	Royal Westminister Regiment

Larry Beckett, Warrant Officer (Retired)



Laurence Robert Harley Beckett passed suddenly on 12 January 2022, while working as a technical advisor on a movie being filmed in Vancouver, BC. He is survived by: his two daughters, Jaki and Wendy; godson Sean Kelly; grandchildren Danielle and Ryan. He first joined HMCS Chippewa as a Sea Cadet and later as a Reservist. Larry continued his military service by joining the Royal Canadian Air Force as a Cook.

During this time, he rejoined the military as a Cook in the Army Reserve. With two career paths, Larry assumed roles of increasing responsibility in both civilian life and the military.

He worked as a contract supervisor for food service companies as well as being the Chief Cook for 39 Canadian Brigade Group in Vancouver. Larry retired from the military in 2003. He also took an opportunity to support our military efforts in Afghanistan by taking a position as a civilian contractor in Kandahar.

A very social, outgoing person, Larry had many friends and was involved with several organizations. In addition to the Royal Canadian Legion and the Royal Westminister Regiment Association, Larry was a Civil War reenactor in the USA and a historical reenactor in Canada. To this end, he founded Cobb's Battery (a Confederate artillery group) and the Seymour Artillery Company (portraying a Canadian Militia artillery unit, circa 1866). To equip these units, he built a full-size 12-pound Field Howitzer and 6-pound Cannon along with an ammunition limber. Cobb's Battery fought in re-enacted battles throughout Washington and Oregon and Seymour's provided annual Remembrance Day salutes in Port Moody as well as other ceremonial activities reaching as far as Quesnel and Cranbrook.

Larry always lived his life to the fullest and he passed away doing what he enjoyed. He was a loyal friend, a loving father and a patriotic Canadian. He was a force of nature, and he will be greatly missed. Rest in Peace Larry

Terry Oliver, Corporal (Retired)

On January 16, 2022, Corporal (Retired) Terrance (Terry) Oliver passed away, Terry is survived by his loving wife Loraine, son Dale, and two daughters.



Terry Oliver (left) with Mark Nanka

Terry served in the Royal Westminster Regiment from the late 1950's to his retirement in the 1990's. He was very proud of his service with the Regiment, and God help anyone who said different.

A few years after his retirement he was working with the Regimental Museum. The shadow boxes on the parade square are one of the many contributions Terry coordinated with other retired members to bring the traditions and history to life for the current serving members. He will be missed. RIP

Memorial Gathering Held

A memorial for Terry Oliver and Larry Becket was held at Tipperary Park on 29 January 2022, which was attended by current serving members, retired members and friends who knew him. There will be a large missing hole in the Regimental family as the last two years too many have fallen. Let's remember their memories and the good times we have all had with them. Pro Rege et Patra.

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

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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Brendan Suto

Hello fellow Association members:

I am pleased that this is Volume 1, 2022. It seems fitting that BC family day is coming up soon. Not only is family parents & kids, but also the family unit of the regiment. This was very evident at the gathering that Doug Setter and Pat Hyska organized for Larry and Terry. It was so great to see so many faces, maybe a few more grey hairs and members of the regiment attend. Did it bring back memories for you? Thanks to Mark and John for sharing many pictures. They will appear in following issues. Our Honorary Lt Col George Salamis shared some pictures from the exercise in the fall in Wainwright (boy a place I need to visit). We have included bios of some of our director's and more to come. Brendan Suto is being deployed to Latvia, so we wish him well. In Dennis Keeton's bio he wrote what the Regiment is to him and I think everyone will agree.

With COVID rules opening up we just MAYBE able to hold Melfa this year, more to come regarding Melfa this year.

Please stay tuned for the next Groundsheet with bio's, pictures and information on what the unit has been up too.

Pro Rege et Patria

Linda Pickell
Editor

President's Report

I am pleased to let you know that due to recently reduced COVID 19 restrictions, the Board has been allowed access to the Armoury and to the Association / Museum Office. So, after almost two years we were able to hold a Board meeting in the Armoury. This was a hybrid one with in-person and online participation.

This is indeed a positive development, and we are still hopeful that we can resume our social activities, which would include the Melfa Golf Tournament and Melfa Dinner in May. The Board has also agreed to plan for a social event in the fall.

A number of you were able to attend the gathering in the parking lot at Tipperary Park on Saturday 29 January to commemorate two fellow soldiers Larry Beckett and Terry Oliver. While a sad occasion, it was good to see and talk with you.

I look forward to seeing many more of you in May.

Regards

Bill White
President

1838 RCACC Royal Westminster Regiment

January 2022

We are planning a snow shoeing day exercise for the end of the month. However, given the frustrating speed that HQ gives approval for such activities, this may not take place.

Unfortunately, the cadets were disappointed in December as the planned awards night had to be canceled due to area HQ not giving approval to all corps in the region. The corps put on a fun game's night instead.

Cadet training was supposed to start back up last week however, due to a large number of area HQ personnel being on leave, start-up has been pushed back to this week.

There is a possibility that area HQ may look at going to remote learning again. If so, this will possibly effectively dissolve this cadet corps. Senior cadets have already said they probably won't take part as the past has shown that only 2 - 5 cadets participate. This is not enough for the amount of effort that goes into preparing for such a training night.

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 and entice them to stay etc.

2316 RCACC, Royal Westminster Regiment

I'm happy to report that the 2316 Cadet Corps is back parading in person in the Armory. Beginning this fall we started to welcome back our smiling, energetic and enthusiastic cadets back to training. Of course, during the long COVID absence almost no cadets fit their uniforms anymore. Therefore, our first order of business was outfitting all the cadets once again. Many new cadets have enrolled and have been welcomed into the Regimental family. Our Corps has jumped back into training with enthusiasm. So far this fall we have conducted marksmanship training, senior leader training, rock climbing drill and more.

Our highlight so far has been two-day hikes. Both were well attended and both under very challenging weather conditions. However, the cadets (and officers) approached each challenge with their best Westie spirit. This winter we will be focusing on fitness and team building. Marksmanship competition, band, and run and shoot competition, in addition to our plans for the virtual Nijmegen Challenge in May.

See you around the parade square

2Lt Ernie Bodrogi

604-220-4251 (call or text)



1789 RCACC, Royal Westminster Regiment Hope

We are not parading yet as we are all still stood down for this darn virus. It has taken a huge toll on our Corps. We went from 23 cadets prior, to 7 when we could parade, so once we are permitted to meet again it will be another rebuilding session. We have a Hope Cadets Facebook page that may be of some assistance to keeping you in the loop.

Meet our Honorary Lt Col.



Hon Lt Col Salamis, CWO Hennebery, RSM, Lt Col Chan, CO

GEORGE SALAMIS

Born in Nairobi, Kenya in 1966 and raised in Montreal, Quebec, George started his career as a junior engineer serving in the merchant marine in SE Asia in the 1980's. Hon Lt Col Salamis has over 30 years of experience in the mining and resource exploration industry and has since been involved in over \$2 billion of merger and acquisitions in the mining business. Currently President and CEO of Integra Resources, he was also most recently Executive Chairman of Integra Gold Corp. which was sold to Eldorado Gold Corporation for C\$600 million. George holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Geology from University of Montreal—École Polytechnique and has discovered, financed, built, managed or sold more than 5 mines around the world. George is father to four fabulous daughters and is also a director of the Canadian Forces Liaison Counsel (CFLC) and Canada Company, a military focused charitable organization.

MEET SOME OF OUR DIRECTORS

BRENDAN SUTO

I am 27 years old, from Surrey, British Columbia. I joined the CAF in February 2014 as an Infantry soldier. My First unit was with 2 PPCLI based out of Shilo, Manitoba where I operated and drove a LAV 6 fighting vehicle. After 3 years I joined The Royal Westminster Regiment in February of 2017. I have had a very successful career so far, being able to attend various training and partake in many memorial parades. My most cherished event was when I was able to represent The Royal Westminster Regiment in November of 2018 in Belgium for the 100th anniversary of World War 1. Since then, I have been the President of the Junior Ranks Mess, organizing and assisting with mess events. For the past 4 Years, I've spent my time in the rifle company as section commander or 2 i/c and taught BMQ. I've worked several civilian jobs over the years. I worked as a commercial fisherman and now currently work for the Justice Institute of BC as a fire technician.

COLLEEN MELVILLE

I've been a BC person all my life and grew up in Victoria. I lived in an area called Vic West and graduated from Esquimalt High School. As a teenager I was in the St. John Ambulance and after graduation from Esquimalt High I enlisted in the 11 (Victoria) Medical Company as a medical assistant. In 1989 I moved to Burnaby to attend the Vancouver Community College to be a Pharmacy Technician and transferred to The Royal Westminster Regiment. In 1995 I was in an accident on my way to the Ashton Armouries, in Victoria, when I was in a hit and run that gave me a disability and was medically discharged. In 2018 I moved back to Vancouver and soon became a director on the board for the Association. I like doing family genealogy and walking. I live in Kits with my only child, an indoor cat named Misha that likes to be on a leash.

DENNIS KEETON

Dennis was born in England and moved to Canada with his parents at the age of 7. At the age of 13 he discovered army cadets when he joined The Royal Westminster Regiment's affiliated 2822 RCACC. He remained with this cadet corps for five years, conducting his last parade as the cadet RSM in 1986 at the Annual Ceremonial Review (ACR). In the summer of 1985, Dennis attended MILCON 85 with the Serving Battalion of the Regiment. This solidified his decision to join the militia unit the following year.

Having enrolled in The Royal Westminster Regiment, Dennis began his military career in the summer of 1986, at the age of 18, under the Summer Youth Employment Program. He completed his basic military training in Nanaimo BC. Taking advantage of some of the skills he was taught in cadets allowed him to have a successful career with the serving battalion. Over the years Dennis completed a number of courses that included; Machine Gunner, Infantry Communications, Basic Recce Patrolman, Basic Parachutist and the Infantry Section

Commander's Course. During the mid-1980's to early-1990's, The Royal Westminster Regiment's operational tasking was to provide a fully equipped and trained Airborne Platoon to augment the Airborne Regiment's 2 Commando of the regular force. While a member of the "Westies" Airborne Platoon, Dennis completed the Airborne Indoctrination Course and three annual exercises with the Airborne Regiment. Additionally, he obtained two highly sought-after courses by militia personnel. The first was the Advanced Recce Patrolman Course held in Dundurn Saskatchewan at the time and taught by regular force instructors. The second, was the Jump Master course conducted in CABC Edmonton. On his successful completion, only six other reservists in all of Canada were qualified on this course.

In 1992 Dennis took part in selection training with the 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI) in Victoria BC, along with over 100 other reservists. The selection training was to decide which personnel were to join the Battalion on their deployment to the former Yugoslavia as Peacekeeper's. On completion, Dennis was chosen to fill the role of Weapon's Detachment Commander of 12 Platoon. At the time he was a Master Corporal. He deployed with the advance party in the fall of 1992 as part of UNPROFOR on Operation Harmony. He returned in the spring of 1993 after being deployed for 6.5 months. He considers this as one of the highlights of his career, having seen a small amount of action while deployed. On his return, Dennis remained with the Serving Battalion until 1999 when he retired at the rank of Sergeant.

After leaving the battalion he became a member of The Royal Westminster Regiment Association. Ten years ago, he became an Executive member. In May 2016 he was nominated and elected as the President, a role he held for three years. Dennis stood down as President of the Association in May 2019 in order to have the time to take a role as a Civilian Instructor with the Regiment's affiliated 1838 RCACC in Maple Ridge. Dennis remains on the Association Executive. A highlight for Dennis was attending the Association's trip to Italy and the area of the Melfa Crossing with his two young sons in 2019.

Both sons are following in his footsteps. His oldest is currently enrolled with 1838 RCACC with the rank of Master Warrant Officer and holding the role of Company Sergeant Major. His youngest joined in February 2020 and currently holds the rank of Corporal. Dennis is a true believer in paying it back and that is why he is volunteering his time with the cadet program. It was important to him that this be done with a "Westie" Cadet Corps in order to pass along and keep alive, the proud history and traditions of The Royal Westminster Regiment. He also believes it to be important that this same Regimental pride be instilled early, in the potential recruits of future.

Then & Now



The 1984 Blair Shoot winning team with the General Waters Reserve Small Arms Trophy

OPERATION LENTUS 21-04

In the summer of 2021, British Columbia had over 1,600 fires burning almost 9,000 square kilometres. A request for assistance from BC was received by the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), and members were deployed on Operation Lentus, a domestic operation of the CAF which involves responding to natural disasters in Canada. A provincial state of emergency was declared on 20 Jul 21. The first wave of CAF response was from 1 Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (PPCLI), who were relieved by 1 Combat Engineer Regiment (CER) in August. 39 CBG (Canadian Brigade Group), along with 38 and 41 CBG, were part of the contingent under 1 CER.

For 3 weeks during that summer, 3 members of The Royal Westminster Regiment were deployed as part of the 39 CBG contingent to respond to the out-of-control fires in British Columbia. The 3 Westies met up with 65 other members of 3 Canadian Division to embark on Operation Lentus. On 10 Aug 21, 34 members of 39 CBG attended Col Roger Kenwood St John Armoury in Chilliwack to prepare for what became many Canadian Armed Forces reservist's first deployment on an operation.

The 39 CBG CAF members participated in two days of work-up training on (or by) fighting forest fires in Chilliwack. For many of the troops, not only was this their first operation, but was also their first interaction with fires. However, the troops actively engaged in the training, with the instructors preparing them to the best of their abilities, to face the third worst fire season in

the history of British Columbia.

On 12 Aug 21, the members of 39 CBG left Chilliwack base and made the 5-hour journey to Vernon, BC. Here, they met up with members of 38 and 41 CBG to form the Domestic Response Company (DRC) under the command of 1 CER. In total, 3 platoons made up of 68 members from Nanaimo BC to Regina SK, and many places in between. The company spent the next day at the Vernon Cadet Camp, before receiving their orders to move to 100 Mile House, BC to assist in the Flat Lake Fires.

On 14 Aug 21, 68 members of the DRC made the 4-hour journey to 100 Mile House, where camp was set up at the Horse Lake Cadet Camp. The next morning, the 1 CER DRC officially took over from 1 PPCLI.

For the next 14 days, the 3 platoons of the 1 CER DRC rotated shifts to support local BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) personnel. A typical day would have the troops up at 0530hrs, breakfast at 0600, and vehicles on the road by 0700hrs. The platoon commanders would meet with BCWS personnel for the daily briefings, and, with an escort from the BCWS supervisors, then head to the respective areas of work. Depending on the situation, the troops would either be patrolling an area looking for hotspots or mopping up areas with active fires. The platoons usually didn't get back to camp until 1800 or 1900hrs. The troops would shower, have their supper, and lights out at 2200. Then it starts all over again.

Despite being many members' first deployment, and on an operation, morale was high. The members hailing from various different regiments and trades all worked together as one team. Many young troops often commented on the difference between an operation setting and on course, not realizing the increase in responsibility while on an operation, while enjoying increased freedoms not experienced while on military courses.

On 28 Aug 21, the fires near 100 Mile House were deemed to be under control, and the DRC was ordered back to Vernon Cadet Camp, to await the next task. The DRC was then deployed to the White Rock Lake fires, one of the largest burning fires in the province. On 02 Sept 21, members of 39 CBG was relieved by 11 CER, and proceeded on their journey home back to Chilliwack. On 03 Sept 21, the DRC was ordered to stand-down, as the White Rock Lake fires were being contained.

The members of 39 CBG arrived back at the Chilliwack base and said our goodbyes. However, many of us have stayed in touch to this day and have built friendships. We all look forward to our next Operation.

Submitted by OCdt Shanti

Missing Groundsheets

We are still 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. We have been 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

James Hansen

James Hudson

Bob Jacobs

Don Sims

I wish to remind all Association members that hold an annual membership it is time to pay your yearly dues \$20 isn't that much of a life time membership is \$200. Then you don't have to remember to pay it yearly.

If you aren't a member of the Association, it is time to think of taking out a membership and support the Westie Association.

Linda