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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, BC V3L 4Z8

October 2001

9 — 11  
the Ninth Month the eleventh day

## America Wounded

# We will remember them

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## Editors Corner ..... Jerry Gangur email: jgan@telus.net

It is very likely that no other terrorist event in our life time has or will affect the future of our planet, as did the terrorist strike on the World Trade Center in New York and the simultaneous strike on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. September 11, 2001 is a day that will be with us as long as we live.

As most of the recipients of this newsletter are veterans, I offer the following observations without any malice or as the legal profession would say, "without prejudice." Contrast the response of two neighboring nations and a friendly third. Let me just focus in on one area. About the third or fourth day after the terrorist attack, memorial services were being held by three nations. On this day, having forgotten my briefcase, I returned home and turned on the TV to catch the latest on CNN. As it happened, CNN was televising memorial services held in **Washington, London and Ottawa**. The services were telecast one after the other. The Washington service was moving and ministers from various denominations made continual and repeated references to God. The British service in St. Paul's Cathedral opened with the singing of the American national anthem, something that had never been done before. I was choked and tears were impossible to suppress. Again references to God were numerous and made throughout the ceremony. The last service was the service from our National capital. Apparently over 100,000 people gathered in Ottawa to pay their respects. However, it was curious that, whether deliberately or unintentionally, God was left out of the program. I wonder if the many Canadians who died in the New York Trade Center would have applauded our failure to acknowledge God in the memorial service? In a country where over 74% of the people say they believe in a Higher power, the organizers of the memorial service did a disservice to the nation.

Finally, one of the freedoms that you fought for was the freedom of speech and for that the author, born at the close of the second war, is most grateful. So in conclusion may I say God bless Canada and God bless America!

## President's Report.... Len Wohlgermuth

The terrorist acts of September 11<sup>th</sup> has left us all in shock and skeptical about what will happen in the future. I cannot think of anything more infuriating to our American comrades, and Canadians, than this attack on their soil with the significant loss of so many civilian lives. I am sure that all Association members wish to express our sorrow and our unwavering support to our American allies.

This act has been perpetrated by a group of criminals who have perverted concept of the Islamic faith. These criminals represent no known rational beliefs but prey on anyone that does not follow them. With the resounding support of several countries, throughout the world, these criminals will be engulfed in a firestorm of world condemnation and will receive no support or any sanctuary. I believe that will probably do more to unite the world rather than divide it. The Regiment has always performed well when called to duty; I am confident that it will again perform well in whatever role it will be asked to participate in.

Terrorist acts are designed to force people to shrink from their daily lives. We will not allow this to happen and the Association, Regiment, and all of us as individuals will move forward.

The Melfa Weekend this year was well attended and a great success. There were approximately 100 Association and Regimental members at the dinner. Two highlights of the dinner were the presentation of the **Jack Mahony** booklet and the presentation of a Certificate of Merit, listing those who served as peacekeepers in Bosnia during the last year, to the museum. I think all of you will agree that the Jack Mahony booklet is a significant accomplishment and long over due. I would like to thank all those involved in making the happen. In particular **Jerry Gangur, Fred West, Herb Hamm, Basil Morgan, and Penny McDonald** (the researcher and writer), who all contributed their time and energy to make this project work. Presently, we are preparing to distribute the booklet to all association members that were unable to attend the dinner. The Certificate of Merit now resides in a prominent location of the museum. I was deeply moved when one of the peacekeepers thanked approached me and thanked the Association for providing a historical record that would reside in the museum of their efforts. Finally, I would like to thank **Al Morton, Graham Reimer, and Mike Kelly** for their efforts in the golf tournament, weekend preparation, and the brunch.

Your executive has met in September and we are preparing for several future activities. This will include the VC Memorial lighting, the return of the Smoker, and the Christmas light tour. We are financially sound and have several other projects in the works. I hope to be able to give more details on these projects in future issues. I hope to see as many of you as possible during Remembrance Day.

## The Regiment

The commanding officer **LCol. Glen Richmond** sends his best to all members. We can expect a detailed report on the regiment in the February issue.

### From Capt. Chuck MacKinnon

Hey boy's just some info on the "new" training system for reserve recruits. What's going to happen soon is recruits will take a 20 training day Basic called BQ "Basic", and then their next course is course called SQ "Support Weapons course" Also 20 training days. On SQ you learn all the support weapons except M-72, that's only done on over seas training now. All trades will take these two courses, after that you go on to your TQ "trades course" And again it is 20 training days. So it takes about 60 training days to get a new troop trained for your unit. It would take about 3 1/2 months for raw recruit to be trained in WATC (weekends off). They found that the 16-day. QL-2 course is just not cutting it for the units. We should see this format for next summer. The SQ course would be great to teach on as well.



Westministers on way to the Melfa  
May 1944



Doug Eaton  
Matera, Italy 23 Dec 1943  
K.I.A. Corianno Ridge - Italy Sept 1944

# Memories & the Post

From: **Bruce & Alice Eaton**  
email: [eaton@direct.ca](mailto:eaton@direct.ca)

Dear Jerry:

I would like to add another story to the one in the last Groundsheet and the article reproduced from The Toronto Daily Star in March of 1944. This story culminated on a rainy afternoon in July of 1951 on the street in Edmonton. As I was walking along the street a hand reached out from the doorway of the Edmonton Bulletin, grabbed my arm and pulled me into the doorway out of the rain at the same time saying, you are Lieut. Eaton, don't you remember me? I shot at you in Italy. My name is **Williams**.

It happened the night of February 6th 1944. I and five other men from my platoon were out on patrol looking for trouble. We were to cover a fairly large area and engage any enemy we encountered. Our return into our Company position was to be through Lt. **Bigg's** platoon position. We were approaching it at about midnight when we heard shots being fired right in his area. We decided it would be foolish to come on in as we would likely be fired on by both sides so I decided I would back off and come into our area through my own platoon.

We were moving very carefully as we approached our platoon position and hoping to be able to get back in without trouble. We got to about 25 yards from our first outpost when we were fired upon. We quickly hit the ground and I called out the password. It was answered and we came on in with nobody being hurt. I reported in to **Ian Douglas** that we were safely back. He told me to come over to Company headquarters and report the results of our patrol and he would fill me in on the ongoing action.

The fight was pretty well over by morning and we assisted in the cleaning up operation which was pretty well finished by noon. I went back to my platoon and sent for Williams the man who had shot at us. I asked him how far away we were from him when he had opened fire. He said about 25 yards. I asked him what weapon he had used. He said a Bren machine gun. I then asked him how come he missed? I thought I had trained him better and at that range with a machine gun he should have mowed us down. He said well sir I thought it might be you so I fired high. I thanked him for his reasoning for both myself and the rest of the patrol.

Our chance meeting in Edmonton led to old stories being told and how thankful we were to have survived the war.

I might add that Lt. **Biggs** was subsequently awarded the Military Cross for his actions during the encounter. It was the first real action we had been in and all did a good job.

Jerry, if you publish this in the Groundsheet you might ask if any of my platoon who were there that night would like to get in touch with me. My address is: G.Bruce Eaton. 1223-52nd St. Delta B.C. V4M-2Z1

Bruce

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## War Brides /Sweethearts Did you keep those letters?

Ed: This authors request was passed on to me by **Ted McNabb**

Dear Col. Gangur:

**Ted McNabb** suggested I get in touch with you. We are preparing a book that will be a collection of letters written home by men and women in the armed forces of their countries during World War II.

Cont. next page

letter cont.

The book will be edited by the distinguished journalist **Walter Cronkite** and will be published by Knopf.

We are very interested in securing letters from servicemen that were written home during the war. If you could assist us in securing World War II letters from servicemen and women we would greatly appreciate it. Ted said that you might have access to letters from World War II.

The letters should be sent to our office. If you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch with me.

Again, I very much appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

Bill Adler  
Adler & Robin Books, Inc.  
3000 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
United States  
202-986-9275  
Fax: 202-986-9485

From: **Jimmy Oldfield**, 1325 N.W. 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Corvallis, OR USA 97330

Dear Jerry,

Received the booklet "Mahony: A Canadian Hero". I have read it through several times and am sure that I'll continue to do so. Penny McDonald has done a remarkable job, not only of assembling the facts of the situation, but also has captured the personality of the man in a very accurate manner.

As you know, Jack was my Company commander, and we became good friends, corresponding regularly, after the war. Jack was diffident, almost to the point of shyness: he never pushed himself forward and I expect none was more surprised than he, when he received his most well-earned recognition. But along with this, he had a strong determination to accomplish any job given him, and to do it well. More Canadians need to know about this great man, and I am so pleased that you have had this story made available.

In the picture on page 14, I noticed that Paul Triquet was sitting next to our first VC winner, Filip Knowal. When I was wounded and in the military hospital at Caseerta, I was in the next bed to Paul Triquet, who had just won his VC for action at Casa Berardi, on the east coast. I was struck by the similarity of the two men, who accomplished so much, with so little to do it with. ...

I enclose a cheque to help this effort.

# A Brief Trip Down Memory Lane



Sgt. Bob Reynolds



L-R top:  
Gutterre, Klus, Gracey, Leggett, Carlsen, Franklin,  
Cpl. Hoskin, Idesen, Strawson, Howard  
Second row: Peals, Mallery, Pastro, Clark  
Bottom row: Godwin, German, Hittel, Davies, Kyle,  
Ginter, Wetsch  
Pippingford Park Dec 1942



Cpl. Bert Wolverton  
Matera, Italy 23 Dec 1943



L-R: Pte. Shrieves, Cpl. Strawson, L/Cpl. Magill  
Matera, Italy 26 Jan 1945



L-R:  
Norm Emery, Ted Russell, Joe Kingsworth, Joe Strawson  
Lynnwood Inn, N. Van. Jan 1941 (Blair Range Bound)



L-R:  
Joe Strawson, Bill Pitcko, Jack Hogarth  
Matera, Italy 23 Dec 1943



L-R:  
George Gracey, Danny Pastro, Sid Howard  
"Our Cooks"



**From Antigonish, Nova Scotia, George Bayne Writes,**

Dear Jerry,

How are you today? Fine I hope. I am doing fairly well - all things considered.

I'm sending you a picture I came across awhile back. I had copies made so you can keep this one. I thought you might like to use it in The Groundsheet or just hang it in the office somewhere. It was taken in England. I also sent one to Ron Hurley.

Hope everyone is keeping well & the Association continues to do well. I look forward to the Groundsheet coming.

We had a hot, dry summer. The evenings are cooling off now. Say hello to all my comrades and best wishes to all.

Your comrade,

George Bayne, RR# Antigonish, Nova Scotia B2G 2L1



Editor: George did not give the names of the fellows in the photo, but maybe some member can help.

## From the Annual General Meeting

**Berets:** The association is following up a motion past at the 1981 annual general meeting. The motion was to adopt a beret, the color of which would be same as the 4<sup>th</sup> Division Patch worn by the 4<sup>th</sup> Bn in WWI. At the AGM 2001, a follow-up motion past, would see a rectangular maroon patch, the color of the 5<sup>th</sup> Division patch worn by the Westminster Regiment (M) in WW2, placed immediately behind the cap badge.

A special event will be held to when the berets are worn for the first time. This will become the official headdress of the association.

We will inform our members an give ample notice of the parade date.

## Christmas Light Tour

The Christmas Light Tour was such a success last year that the executive has decided to repeat the tour again this year. At press time the date is yet to be confirmed, but once details are finalized we will contact members by phone and confirm your attendance.

Santa visits the association during the Christmas Lights Tour. This is a great outing for your children or your grandchildren.



**Note:** Immediately following the tour, the buses return to the armoury where sandwiches and a hot refreshments are available. So if you are not up to braving the elements, do come down to the armoury and meet your buddies. And again remember, call a taxi and give us the bill.



Three who braved weather and took part in the Xmas lights tour Dec 2000. (L to R) Fred Wilks, Pres Len Wohlgemuth & Jerry Gangur

**Time has a way of changing the meaning of words. Sent in by an Old Timer**

OLD is when your sweetie says "Let's go upstairs and make love," and you say, "I can't do both"

OLD is when your friends compliments you on your alligator shoes and by are barefoot.

OLD is when a sexy babe catches your fancy and your pacemaker opens the garage door.

OLD is when going braless pulls all the wrinkles out of your face.

OLD is when you are cautioned to slow down by your doctor instead of the police.

OLD is when getting lucky means finding your car keys in the parking lot.

OLD is when an all-nighter means not getting up to pee.

OLD is when your doctor tells you that you should be thinking about the hereafter and you tell him, "I do it all the time. Yesterday, I went to the garage and thought, WHAT AM I HERE AFTER."

## In Memoriam

Ted Burnby (Vernon) .....	Westminster Regiment (M) WW2
Don Motzer (Schelt) .....	Westminster Regiment (M) WW2
Hector Roberge (New Westminster) .....	Westminster Regiment (M) WW2
Joe Tattersall (England).....	Westminster Regiment (M) WW2

# WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

## Remembrance Day Service

- 48<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - End of Korean War
- 56<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - End of World War 2
- 83<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary - End of World War 1

The ceremonies marking Remembrance Day will follow the pattern of previous years. A service held in the Armoury will be followed by a Cenotaph ceremony in front of City Hall.

All messes will be open after completion of official Ceremonies

..... Timings: 0945 Hrs - Indoor Service  
 1030 Hrs - Form up and march to cenotaph  
 1045 Hrs - Cenotaph Ceremony

Seats reserved for Veterans in front rows.

Dress: Blazers, Berets & Medals

Veterans: Remember, If you need a ride, call a taxi and we will reimburse you upon your arrival.