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The GROUND SHEET

The Official Publication of
The Royal Westminster Regiment Association

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

'Pro Rege et Patria'

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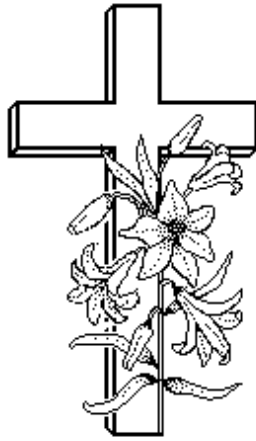
www.royal-westies-assn.ca

**More Westie troops
heading to Afghanistan!**

**What is the CCMMS? Read
more inside!**

Melfa Weekend Dates Are Set!

Much more to read!



In Memoriam

Samuel DICK, April 07, Westbank BC*

Ernest NERADA, March 07, Surrey BC*

Colin CAMERON, November 07, New Westminster BC

Norman TOPHAM, September 07, Kamloops BC

Cecil JEFFERIES, date unknown, Florida USA

Charles HEAD, June 07, Nanaimo BC

Robert CLARKSON, date unknown, Niagara Falls Ont

Gordon W. CURRIE, February 07, Owen Sound Ont*

Floyd R. HATLE, May 07, Kenora Ont*

P.J. OWEN, April 07, Lindsay Ont*

* Courtesy RC Legion Last Post

The Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society

The Chinese Canadian Military Museum Society (CCMMS) has been in existence since 1998 when it was formed by a group of Chinese veterans. One of our long serving Association members and former serving officer of the Regiment, LCol Howe Lee CD, MSC, BScA, MEd is the current President of the society. Many Chinese have long been loyal and dedicated to the Canadian Forces and to our Regiment. In WWI, Private Frederick Lee from Kamloops enlisted and joined our 47th Battalion to serve overseas. Some 300 Chinese served Canada in WWI.

The CCMMS' main focus is the museum they operate in Vancouver. The museum is located at 555 Columbia St. and has been open since November 1998. According to its newsletter, the museum has seen its share of some high profile VIP's as well.

If you would like to learn more about the CCMMS and the museum, go to their web site at www.ccmms.ca and have a look about what they have to offer. A trip to the museum, which is open Tuesday to Sunday from 11 am to 5pm. It is situated in the Chinese Cultural Centre on Pender at Columbia St. in Chinatown.

Association Web Site

When was the last time you had a look at the Association web site? The site is being update almost weekly with new images and information. Recently an Events Calendar page was added so that you can see at a quick glance some of the interesting things happening around the Armoury. You will also find events for the Association, Regiment, Museum and Cadets. If you have an event planned for your area of the Regimental Family please ensure you send an email to Ted Usher at webmaster@royal-westies-assn.ca. Got any photos? Send them in for uploading or email them to Ted and we will load them on to the web site.

The Editor is Over Here!

Can you believe that it is 2008? Actually for me it is still October 2007. You know by now I have to get started on each issue months in advance.

You may not be aware but the armoury is receiving a new roof at this time. A very spiffy green metal roof is in the process of being installed that will finally see a everlasting solution to our roofing problems. But, and this is a big BUT, this process has been without problems. On a Friday evening in early October (which is rainy season in this area) the highly skilled workers neglected to place tarps on the unfinished area before they left for the weekend. Guess what? It rained! And the area not properly covered was over the museum, the archives and the Officers' Mess. Damage galore! Good news is the company accepted full responsibility and restoration is underway at this time. Curator Herb **Hamm** along with his staff spent many days there in looking after the museum while it was open to allow for drying. At this time I am not aware the cost or extent of the damage.

Other things going on at this time is Remembrance Day is coming up and it is hoped the Association gets a good turnout this year. **Get your new Association beret and wear it November 11th.** I don't think I will be attending New Westminster for this year's service. After being the City's Remembrance Day chair for the past 5 years, I thought I should go somewhere else as to not place myself in a position to be critical of how the new chair person performs. So I will attend either Port Moody or Coquitlam to see how other communities run their event. I will let you know what I think later in this column.

I was finally able to locate Don **Haisell**. Many of you will remember Don as our RSS officer a number of years ago. There was also a write up on Don in a recent issue of the GS. Don is living back in Canada but has been busy. To update you, he left England in the summer of 2005 and was posted to Kingston to LFDTS. From June - December 2006, he deployed to Sierra Leone as Task Force Commander for the Canadian contribution to IMATT. Upon his return he was sent to the Staff College to teach AOC. He is now posted back to England in Dec this year to be the LO at their concepts centre and the Land Warfare Centre. As far as his family - they are growing up. Nick is 20 and a second year student at Dalhousie University. Jay is 17, finished Grade 12 and has applied to Ottawa U. Samantha is 12 and will go into year 8 in England. Nice to hear from you Don and good luck in England.

This past September my wife and I drove to Alberta but stopped in at Scotch Creek on the Shuswap. There Brian **Knipstrom** (past Pres) and his wife Holly are residing. Brian retired from the New Westminster Police last

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spring and that's where they are settled. Good to see all is well!

Received my RC Legion magazine in the mail today (Nov 7) and found that our own Association member and retired RegF WO Terri **Orser** was featured on the front cover. Very interesting story Terri. I hope all goes well with what you are dealing with. For those that don't get the mag, go to our Association web site and you will find a link to the issue there.

I've mentioned this before but I thought I would again. With regards to the In Memoriam page, names will appear there with an astrick * at the end of their name. That is because their name was found in the RC Legion Last Post list and either they had a K47 number or are listed as serving in the Regiment. During the war, many men came and went from the ranks. Over 5000 in total. Some came to the unit, served for a short while and moved on. They were still in the Regiment. If their family lists them in the Last Post as a Westie, we will include them in the In Memoriam area.

Yesterday was Remembrance Day. For something different, my wife and I attend the service in Coquitlam. It started out in Como Lake School and then everyone moved to the small cenotaph in Blue Mtn Park after which a parade went to the Legion. I must say having ran the New Westminster service for the past 5 years, the Coquitlam service needs some help. It was an alright service but it could be much better. Okay where am I going with this? Well first, the speakers all talked about passing on the tradition to our youth so they carry on the message but there was no youth on the platform. That is something I incorporated in the City service. Youth - our kids and the cadets on stage and speaking. Secondly, the Coquitlam cenotaph needs to be upgraded to accomodate larger crowds. This little monument to our fallen sits amongst some majestic trees in Blue Mtn Park but that's it. When the large crowd gathered around, only about 10% could see what was going on. There are funds available from the feds for war memorial upgrades. I did send a short email to the Mayor but I haven't heard back. I gather when I corrected her about her twice reference to our soldiers in Afghanistan as "peacekeepers" in her speech, I guess I'm being ignored. The Coquitlam committee worked hard and they should be proud of what they did.

A note of thanks to Glen **Gates** and Barney **Jones** for their letters recently concerning a few of our members. Always great to hear from the membership. Barney's note was about the passing of Major Norm **Topham** who was a member of the Regiment back in the 1940s and he continued on with the PPCLI after the war and retired in 1968. I remember in 1972 at camp Vernon I was employed as a militia Corporal and got into a little trouble. I was hauled before the senior TrgO (Topham). When I marched in and was standing "on the carpet" before this obviously well decorated WWII and long time soldier, I couldn't help but notice he had the Westie hat badge tattooed on his forearm. After getting my ass reamed out for my indiscretion, I said "Sir, I couldn't help but notice your tattoo of the Westie hat badge. Were you a member of the Regiment?" His response was - "Corporal, I knew your grandfather, your father and a few other members of your family. I don't think they would be proud of you right now. You are CB'd (confined to barracks) for three days. Dismissed!" In 1974 when I went back as a junior officer, we spoke and got to know each other a little better.

I had a very pleasant surprise when I walked into the BOR this morning. There seated at the back of the room was Sgt Ruby **Carey**. Ruby is a long time member of the Regiment and served on the Association executive for a number of years recently. So what was the surprise? Well Ruby transferred to the Regular Force and her first posting was as the BOR Admin NCO. Welcome home Ruby. Very nice to see you.

Presidents Report

I would like to extend my best wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year to all members of the Regimental family. The executive will have our first meeting of 2008 on Monday February 4th.

Planning of this years Melfa weekend is under way. The Golf Tournament will most likely be on Friday May 16th with the dinner being in the Armoury on Saturday May 17th. The Brunch and Annual General Meeting will be on Sunday May 18th. Once again I invite all Westies to partake in the Melfa. I also would like to invite all family members of personnel serving in TF-08. All are most welcome. All the families of the TF-08 group will be receiving a copy of the April/May issue of the Groundsheet and the details will be in it.

On behalf of all the members of the association I would like to wish all the best to our fellow Westies serving in Afghanistan. We are proud of your decision to serve and look forward to hearing from you all in the future.

Once again I was honoured to attend the Men's Christmas Dinner. On behalf of the association I was proud to be able to present Ann and Gary Bason with Colin's Certificate of Service for TF1-07. They were also presented his Association Beret and Tie. I thought it was very special to see that Colin was present in spirit at the dinner along with his loved ones.

As previously mentioned, we have 28 members presently in Afghanistan or very close to deploying. As members of the regimental family, we would like to take part in the donation and preparation of care packages for our troops overseas. If any members have ideas or items to contribute, please contact us.

New Westminster Secondary School once again has been in touch reference the annual Bursary. This bursary will be awarded to a NWSS student with family ties to the Regiment.

Once again I encourage all members to try and locate some of our lost comrades and invite them to come aboard.

Pro Rege et Patria

Alan Morton, President

Continued from the Editor

With the space left here I guess I'd better '*carry on*'. If there is ever a time your association is looking for support, it is now. Look at the list of soldiers heading overseas. Those of us who served who never had that opportunity to risk what we have to go to war should do our part to support them. The care packages that will be prepared soon aren't going to appear on their own. Why not offer up some time, ideas, or money to help the cause. It will be rewarding in so many ways.

Well for me, it is back to work. Real work! After retiring in September 2004 from the police department I wanted three years to do 'my thing'. I did that and after taking this past summer off for 'me', I found I got bored pretty quick. After some careful research I applied for a job as a truck driver with the Liquor Distribution Branch and ended up getting hired after a three month selection process. I am really looking forward to this job and it being a Gov't role, that means good benefits and, what else - another pension! Who can argue! Stay tuned in the May issue and I'll let you know how I am doing. I bet you just can wait!!!! All the best, **Ted Usher**, Editor.

The Regiment

Greetings current and former Westies,

This past fall the Regiment was engaged running the individual battle task standard (IBTS) training for the rest of the brigade. This is the standard refresher training that all soldiers must complete annually. With that behind us, the Regiment is now running a machine gun course (now called the DP2A or Infantry Platoon Support Weapons Qualification) and the rifle company is gearing up for the live-fire platoon attacks that we will be conducting in April & May. At the Soldiers' Christmas Dinner, I had the pleasure of awarding the Regimental Marksman award to Pte **Morck**, and the Regimental PT Champion award to Pte **Brinson** (his second time winning this). We also created a new award, the 'Regimental Pugilist' which was won by Pte **Czakowski**. Part of his prize was to take on the CO, which was a bit unfair as he'd had to win about six bouts before jumping in the ring with me. Nonetheless, he managed to get the best of me, so his title is well deserved!

In November, we sent off LCol **Poitras** to Afghanistan, the first of the TF1-08 rotation. At the time of writing, Sgt **Bergan** and Cpls **Irvine** and **Buikema** have also arrived in theatre. In the next month or so, they'll be joined by twenty five more Westies, bringing the total to twenty nine. To all those of you in the Association who helped make up care packages for our TF1-07 soldiers (last time around), we need your help again! This deployment will be twice as large as the largest deployment the unit sent to Bosnia, and will be the largest we've sent into combat since the Second World War.

In January, 2008, in addition to our task as lead unit of the Territorial Battalion Group (TDBG), I have been made the commander of Task Force Lower Mainland. In this role, I will be responsible for coordinating the training of the lower mainland units. This honour was bestowed because of the outstanding achievements all members of the Regiment have made in the past few years. We are indisputably the best Militia unit in BC right now and that is due to the hard work put in by all ranks. Deserving of special mention are Capts **Mackinnon** and **Vernon**, 2Lt **Sandulak**, WOs **Boyd**, **Kelly**, and **MacKay**, Sgts **Bell**, **Harley**, and **McKenna**, MCpls **Hygaard**, **Iverson**, **McRobert**, and **Mann**, and Cpls **Kullar**, **Tustin**, **MacKay**. There are many others and no doubt I've left a few off the list who are deserving of special mention. My point is that your regiment is made up of many outstanding and dedicated people and it's a tremendous privilege to command it.

I'll close with my standard recruiting pitch: If any of you know of suitable young men and women, encourage them to call recruiting at 604-666-4282 to learn more about how to become a Westie.

Pro Rege et Patria

M.P. Haussmann,
LCol
Commanding Officer

Our Cadets

The Association would like to congratulate Capt Matthew **Wright**, DCO of the 1789 Agassiz Westie cadet corps for serving on the Canadian War Memorial Cenotaph guard this past Remembrance Day. Wearing the red serge of the RCMP, Capt Wright is also a Constable serving in Chilliwack. Matt Wright had the distinction of being chosen to represent the RCMP at the national service in Ottawa. Well Done!

2822 Surrey - All 10 cadets who tested for Phase 1 of the National Star Certification Exam passed successfully and will head to Phase 2 in February. 2822 and cadets from 1789 held a joint range exercise in Chilliwack on the weekend of Jan. 19th. 2100 rounds of .22 were fired down range. Parents were on hand to organize and cook all the food for the weekend.

The staff, cadets and parents of 2822 want to send their thoughts and prayers to all soldiers being deployed at this time to Afghanistan and the Sudan. We look forward to a safe and happy return.

1789 Agassiz - as above.

2316 New Westminster - no report.

1838 Maple Ridge - no report.

1922 Aldergrove - no report.

Are Your Dues Up To Date?

The Royal Westminster Regiment Association depends on your dues and donations. Yearly dues are \$15 and a Life Membership is \$100. How about a tax deductible donation? You can identify where you want the donation to go. The Future Fund, Cadets, Health & Welfare, or whatever you feel is worthwhile. Whatever you support, it is appreciated. Send in your dues today. Thanks.

MIA/AWOL

Kevin HILLIARD, Abbotsford BC

Melfa Weekend 2008

The dates for Melfa 2008 are May 16, 17 and 18. Make sure you book these dates on your calendar and plan on attending this special weekend. More details of exactly what is happening will be announced in the May issue of the Groundsheet. Stay tuned!

Who Else is Headed to War?

The following email was sent from Steve **Cowan** to Thomas **Bucheneaur** in early November 2007 and has been reprinted here with permission of Steve. For those that don't know Steve, he is a former serving officer of the Regiment and later transferred to the CIC. Steve is also a member of the Association.

Subject: OFF TO AFGHANISTAN

G'day Tom, Just back from 2-weeks pre-deployment training and selection process and I am pleased to advise that I have been selected for deployment to Afghanistan with a departure date of 18DEC07. I have to leave my uniform at home to go to war as a civilian travel coordinator with the Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency (CFPSA) and I look forward to serving those who serve Canada.

I'll be based at Kandahar Airfield (KAF) and will be part of the CFPSA support team. There are some 70+ civilians and we look after home leave travel and claims (my speciality) as well as retail operations including Tim Hortons and the barber shop. We get to work 12-14 hours a day, seven days a week. Our palatial accommodations are a 6'x8' curtained space in a weather-haven tent with seven of our newest and closest friends, a block or so from the ablutions. Fine dining is in a mass cafeteria with plastic KFS. We get to wear the issued tan golf-shirt and trousers (shorts in the warm weather) with the attractive helmet and flak-jacket fashion accessories to be worn during rocket attacks and plane rides.

During the six-months contract I will get an 18-day leave period. Judy and I hope to get together in Jordan. I want to explore Wadi Rum, Petra and visit Aqaba, just like T.E. Lawrence.

I really think this is an idea opportunity to support our troops. I'm too old to go as a Reservist and the job compliments my 30-year airline career in arranging travel details and doing sums. And I am a qualified NPFAO so what's another claim? Have a look at the photos to see some recent CFPSA activities at KAF: http://www.cfpsa.com/en/psp/deployed/archerCurrent_e.asp

I felt it is an honour to be selected. There were some 2,400 applicants. 107 attended the selection process and 96 finished. I was one of the 70+ selected (there are about 15 travel jobs at various locations).

Tell any Westies going to KAF to come see their old paymaster. They will anyway as I'll be looking after their leave and they will want that! I like your offer to come and talk to your RUSI Group, maybe next autumn and I finish KAF and then the summer aboard HMNCS QUADRA.

Cheers, **Steve Cowan**, Comox BC

Update January 08.

In an email to Ted **Usher**, Steve has arrived in Kandahar and is settling in to his routine of assisting the Canadian soliders. Steve has arrived in the cold and rainy season and within a few short days attended the emotional 'ramp ceremony' where they load our fallen soldiers onto an aircraft for their final ride home. He witnessed the two soldiers killed in the LAV roll-over being given the traditional send off. Steve said it was extremely emotional.

Steve has promised to send another update for the May issue of the Groundsheet. Stay safe Steve. (Jan 27th - As promised Steve has sent a lengthy report from KAF and I know you will enjoy it.)

Museum Receives Work of Art

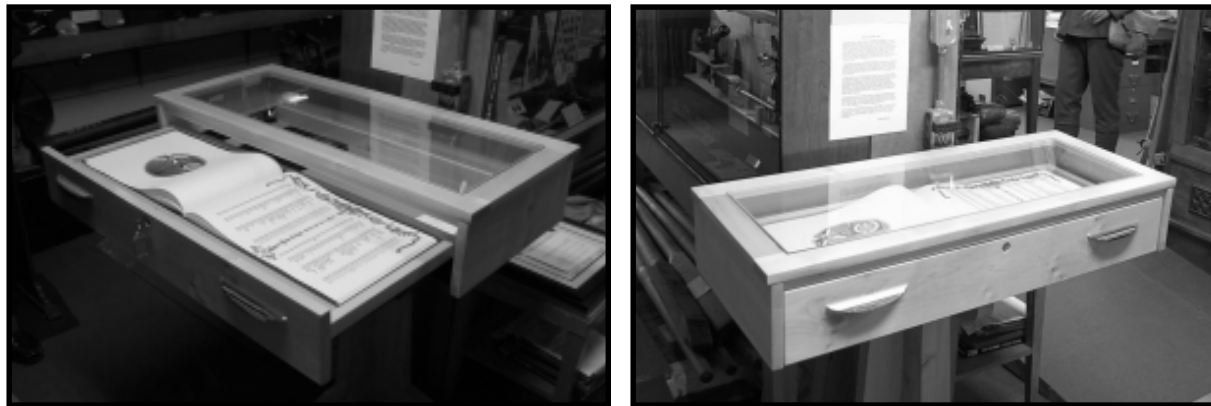
The Museum of The Royal Westminster Regiment has just taken delivery of a piece of hand crafted furniture to display a very important document. Wayne **McCallum** of Coquitlam served in the Regiment back in the late 1960s after being recruited during the ‘peace and love’ era. Wayne served for a few years and never came back into the Armoury until he decided to take a look at the museum in 2006. Upon meeting our curator Herb Hamm, Wayne never realized how much of an important and significant role he will play in the museum’s future.

As most of you know, the museum has produced a Memorial Book of our fallen soldiers from both world wars. Over 600 names adorn this treasured work of our history. The idea was that when the book was completed a case would have to be built in order to display the book and also protect it. That’s where Wayne **McCallum** enters the picture. Wayne describes himself as an “amateur woodworker” and decided to help the museum out by producing the display stand for the Memorial Book. Until you see what Wayne produced the word “amateur” should not be used.

Wayne was helping a friend rebuild a log cabin on Vancouver Island and this required some trees to be taken down. From these trees, Wayne milled the lumber and dried it out and started building the display case from some Maple he and his friend had saved. As a result of Wayne’s fine craftsmen skills, a wonderful piece of furniture has been produced.

As you can see from the two images on this page, Wayne has done a great job. More photographs and Wayne’s story is available on the Associations web site. Please have a look when you have a chance as it shows how the display case went from a tree to the finished product.

The Regimental Family would like to thank Wayne **McCallum** for his wonderful gift to the museum. It is truly a ‘work of art’ and it will certainly enhance the museum and especially the Memorial Book that is now safely displayed inside. Thank you!



The new Memorial Display Case and Memorial Book

Our Soldiers Overseas

The 28 soldiers listed below have deployed or are about to deploy to Afghanistan. The larger group should be gone in February. This is the largest contingent of soldiers from this Regiment to deploy overseas since WWII. We wish them a safe journey and look forward to hear of their ventures.

Sergeant Curtis Beglaw

Private Dustin Bercht

Sergeant Mike Bergan

Private Dax Bourke

Corporal Andrew Buikema

Corporal Neal Carmen

Private Brad Chanlder

Private Jonathan Cumming

Corporal John Dorenberg

Corporal Ryan Doria

Warrant Officer Perry Fiedler

Private Dana Flick

Corporal Julia Gerbrandt

Corporal Jordan Irvine

Corporal David Jordan

Corporal Joe Maitland

Corporal Andrew Marcellus

Corporal Dan McKay

Private Darren Moens

Captain Todd Phillips

Major Douglas Poitras

Corporal Philip Post

Master Corporal Dave Scrivens

Sergeant Todd Singer

Private Danny St. Pierre

Corporal Andrew Tan

Corporal Colby Walsh

Master Corporal Sam Westherly

Master Warrant Officer Plante is heading to the Sudan.

Your Association, along with Cadets will soon be putting together care packages to send to our troops. Why not get involved and help out. Contact a member of the Executive to find out how you can help out in this worthy and needed cause.

LCol Doug Poitras in Afghanistan

I am the J5, Afghan Regional Integration Command - South, the organization responsible for the training of the Afghan National Army and Police. Although my staff of five and I are the headquarters planners, we are primarily tasked with police training. Our coalition soldiers and police mentor and train the Afghan National Police and help turn them into a more professional force: policemen that are trusted and respected by the Afghan people. Our Region is 1 of 5 in Afghanistan: Central, East, South, West, and North. Our Regions correspond to Afghan National Army Corps Commands and to Afghan Regional Police Commands. As the media correctly reports, the Southern Region is the most dangerous region of the country, accounting for approximately 60% of the national significant incidents (SIGINTs) such as troops in contact (TIC) or improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The Southern Region is comprised of 6 provinces - Nimroz, Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, Uruzgan, and Dai Kundi. We have forces in 4 (Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, and Uruzgan). We have 15 twelve-sixteen man US Police Mentor Teams, 6 Canadian Police Teams, and 6 UK Police Teams. We have US Teams in the 4 Provinces and work with the Canadians in Kandahar and the Brits in Helmand. Our Teams run 3 or 4 Up armoured HMMWVs that are like "little tanks" and provide us very good protection from enemy bombs, rockets, mortars, and gunfire.

As I said before, we work with, mentor, and train the Afghan National Police in our area. This is a challenge in a Country that has had 40 years of peace in the last 300 years that suffered from the Russian occupation and suffered even more at the hands of the Taliban. Government structure and infrastructure is not robust and there is a certain amount of dysfunction in the culture and people because of what they have endured in the past. On the positive side, Afghans are great fighters, truly courageous and many are willing to happily work with us to make their Country more stable, more peaceful, more prosperous, and generally a better place for their children and grandchildren to live and prosper. We work with the Afghan Police and the Afghan Government to bring the Afghan people hope. The insurgency perverts Islam and preys on the fears and ignorance of the people through lies and inflicting pain.

How are we doing? We are making progress through (a) reforming the leadership, (b) reforming pay, (c) getting rid of bad, corrupt police, (d) recruiting better, more honest police, (e) providing better training, (f) providing better tactics and police procedures, and (g) providing better equipment. The Afghan Police bear the brunt of the insurgency because the police, unlike the Afghan Army and even our Coalition forces, are always out in small groups in all communities across the Country. The police make more attractive targets for the insurgents because they are more spread out than the Army, less well armed and equipped, and the police operate in smaller groups. We have had hundreds of police killed by insurgents in our region. In comparison, we have killed thousands of insurgents. We are getting better though. With better training and equipment, the police are better able to defend themselves. By eliminating some of the smaller check-points, consolidating police at larger police substations, reinforcing the police with coalition forces, and having the police actively patrol along with coalition forces, we are increasing the survivability of the police and increasing the security that we help them provide to the citizens of Afghanistan.

The Afghan Ministry of Interior has been improving the leadership of the police through objective testing, evaluations, and assignments. Most of the senior police we work with in our area are honest, upright citizens, who are loyal to their central government and dedicated to making their country a freer and

safer place for all Afghans. Pay has been equalized with the Army and soon most police will be making \$100 per month which is not much in Western terms but is an adequate living here in Afghanistan and much better than many have it here.

We have recently begun a new strategic training initiative: Focused District Development. Under this Plan, FDD for short, we are training police from selected districts by assigning replacement policemen into the selected districts for 2 months, and then pulling the regular policemen and sending them all as a group to one of several police academies for 2 months of intensive training. We have just started this initiative and our initial indications and feedback from our communities is that this program is improving the quality and professionalism of our police. We also work with other coalition forces, government and non-government aid organizations to help the local citizens in our area by conducting medical assistance visits in local villages, helping them get school supplies, helping them get wells for better water, and build needed schools and roads.

In short, we are making slow, steady progress towards building a country, where an Afghan society of children can play and go to school in peace, and parents can work, attend mosque, and practice their faith; all without interference and fear of death by ignorant, power-hungry, misguided criminals.

LCol (CAN) Doug Poitras

J5 ARSIC-S Police Operations and Plans



LCol Poitras (Right Front) with his American Security Force (SECFOR) “The Rhinos” and Up-Armored “Hummer” (UAH)”.