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April 2010



The GOUNDSHEET

The Official Publication of
The Royal Westminster Regiment Association

*‘Dedicated to the ideals and comradship
we knew in wars and peace in our
services both home and abroad.’*

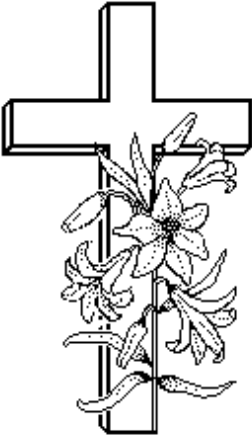
‘Pro Rege et Patria’

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In Memoriam

Wight, Daniel	Mar. 2010	Maple Ridge BC	Korea-1838 Army Cadets
Nalley, Gerald RM	Feb. 2010	Ottawa ON	Westminster Regiment WWII
Bethell, Frank R	Aug. 2009	Port Alberni BC	Westminster Regiment WWII

Health an Welfare

Peter Kosh (WW2 & Melfa Vet) phoned me yesterday (8th April). He was discharged from Richmond hospital 2 days prior to call, apparently after spending Easter hoilday period under care. He had broken ribs on two close, but separate occasions. He went on to relate a number of health problems (kidney & heart). During our discussion he repeated several times that things are not very good. He is at home now.

Maitland has had a bone graft, in rehabilitation and working one day a week, Eckland OK now and MCpl Pennock has been diagnosed with Lymphoma and is undergoing treatment. Frank Whitford was in the Royal Columbian Hospital but has since returned to Hawthorn Care Home.

I believe that it is the resonsibility of all members of the regimental family to report both positive and negative apsects on our membership and their families. I am sure with such a young Regiment there will be births to report. So please drop me a line if you know anything.

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Editors Report

As I sit down to write this short note, I am impressed by the submissions for this issue. We have an article from the museum, more poetry from Peter Kosh, an article from the cadets, a medal presentation from the Netherlands, and of course our information about our Melfa Weekend.

This year the Melfa Weekend is shaping up to be something special. The hard work from the various Messes is going to pay off with an outstanding dinner. The JRC has organized a raffle to go towards their charity work they have been involved in. The JRC has also organized some music for the dinner. Alan Morton has been hard at work on the Golf Tournament. There will be prizes as well as a new challenge trophy.

Below is an advertisement for an evening hosted by the New Westminster Salmonbellies. This was done last year with great success. So I would recommend as many as possible show up for the game and support for our soldiers.

The New Westminster Senior Salmonbellies proudly presents

SEATS FOR SOLDIERS

Wear Uniforms, Regimental Blazers, or RED to support our Troops

Partial proceeds go towards The Military Family Resources Centre

Military Displays, Military Bands, Bagpipers
Beverage Garden, New Bellies Camo Jersey

June 3, 2010, Queens Park @ 1945 hrs

New Westminster Salmonbellies vs Victoria Shamrocks

All Armed Forces, Legion Members, Veterans, Cadets and their families get in **FREE**.

This is the second of three poems Peter Kosh, in conversation with Jerry Gangur, has allowed to be published in the Groundsheet.

Among his many doings, **PETER KOSH** was a paving contactor and on one occasion he was awarded a contract to pave all the streets in Grande Prairie, Alberta. Members of the Italian Campaign will recall the name of sniper **BOB BROWN**. He was a life long friend of **LEN BAILEY**. Both were well known and respected by our WW2 veterans. Sniper Brown died of cancer and he was looked after for the three weeks prior to this death by **PETER KOSH**. This is a story, recorded in prose, of an unexpected encounter between two wartime comrades, **PETER KOSH AND BOB BROWN**.

A Strange Encounter

This is many moons ago, on Grand Prairie streets you know.
I am grading mud on city street, digging ditches four feet deep.

My wheels were spinning, I had to stop,
A man came storming out of a shop,
Shouting and swearing, he was raving mad
He' s heading straight for me I must add.

Still, shouting and swearing is all I heard,
I must admit I was getting scared.
By looking at him I could tell,
I was sure he' s planning to give me hell.

Who is this man that swears and shouts,
Some street bum I guess, or a crazy clout.
Then when he came closer, there was no doubt,
He had paint and grease around his mouth.

I hollered, Hey, I am doing drainage, I am cutting a ditch.
He looked at me and well Hello Koshelanyk, you son-of-a-bitch.
Well, well, well Bob Brown I said you sniping fool,
Come sit down and take it cool.

So he sat down, we had a chat, about whoars in Italy and things like that.
That' s how we met that faithful day,
Bob Brown and I after years astray.

From that day on Bob Brown and I
Can tell you stories that will make you cry.
One night at the Legion corn roast, crazy Bob,
Ate fourteen corn on the cob.
Next day we were trying to sell,
Compressed popcorn that had a smell. (went broke)

I have yet to meet a man like Bob,
Who can eat fourteen corn on the cob.
But for myself, I lost all count,
I must have ate the same amount.

Bob has been my faithful friend, always
there when I need a hand,
Always there when I am dry, moonshine
so potent makes you cry.
We get together and still have fun
At eighty plus you son of a gun.

Friends like Bob are very rare
The shirt on his back he will share.
The friends he knows he gives his best
My memories of Bob will forever last.

Presidents Report

Greetings to all Association Members and Friends

We are preparing for our annual Melfa dinner and golf tournament. The response from the Regiment has been excellent, with all Messes helping with the various tasks. I am very pleased at the interest shown as it will ensure the continuity of your Association. I encourage all Association members to participate in any association event that occurs.

The executive have made it easier for you to reply to the Golf and Dinner by including e-mail addresses for you to reply to.

I had the privilege to attend a Vimy Ridge celebration, at Victory Square on April the 9th, representing the Association and the 47th Bn. Jack Loeppky, an Association member also attended in remembrance of a relative that participated at Vimy Ridge. It was a short ceremony and the weather was on our side, nice and sunny.

I would like to welcome back our troops who were on employed on Op Podium for the Olympics, and some are now taking courses.

In a few weeks our rotation in Afghanistan will be arriving home and this years Melfa Dinner will be an excellent time to welcome our troops home.

Our next event will be the Seats for Soldiers Appreciation Night on June 3rd 2010. Last years inaugural event was quite successful, and this year should be even better. There will be more information in this edition of the Groundsheet.

Pro Rege et Patria

Terry Leith

Battalion SITREP – Groundsheet

By the time you read this, the Battalion will have completed another series of milestones in its cycle this year. Those that served at the Winter Olympics, and very much out of the spotlight up on Cypress Mountain, have returned to a warm welcome at the Armoury and completed some much deserved leave and training in the form of various courses. The final training exercise of the year should be complete at the Chilcotin with everyone participating in firing support weapons and collectively up to the section level in attack scenarios. And finally, with great sighs of relief, our troops serving in Afghanistan with Task Force 3-09 will have started arriving home. What's next?

Lots: the senior staff is already planning next year's training from September to May. Before then, many of the troops will be completing their final physical fitness evaluations prior to going on courses, and continuing the Westie tradition of excelling, during the summer. We wish to cap this training year by celebrating as all ranks and with guests at the Melfa golf tournament and party. Through the summer we will participate in a couple of events to help connect with our communities and they include the Seats for Soldiers hosted by the New Westminster Salmonbellies on June 3rd, and the Abbotsford Airshow: I hope to see all of you there. There will also be a couple of new activities that will be conducted this summer in support of re-integrating our soldiers back from operations; they include a weekend mountain expedition and being hosted by Ann and Gary Bason out at their farm.

All of this could not happen if it were not for the cooperation and hard efforts of so many: young and old, part-time and full-time, junior rank and senior rank. All of these fine men and women continue to be motivated in providing service, working as part of a team, achieving new goals, striving for excellence, and having fun along the way: all in the wonderful Westie way. I look forward to experiencing all of the same by bending an elbow with as many of you as possible after beating all of you on the golf course May 21st.

Pro Rege et Patria

D.M. (Doug) Poitras
Lieutenant-Colonel
Commanding Officer

Our Cadets

1789 Agassiz - See page 8.

2316 New Westminster - No Report

1838 Maple Ridge - No Report.

2822 Surrey - 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

George MacDougall, Oliver, BC
Bob Jacobs, 108 Mile Ranch, BC
George Cook, Burnaby, BC
Ken Clarkson Abbotsford, BC
Bruce Butler, Powel River, BC

Kit Shop

Association Tie.....	\$35.00
Association Blazer Badge.....	\$35.00
Association Lapel Pin.....	\$ 4.00
Association Beret with Cap Badge.....	Free

Contact the Regimental Museum during open hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

From November 6 to 10, 2009 1789 The Royal Westminster Regiment Royal Canadian Army Cadets Corps (Agassiz) was proud to host the 55 Monty DFC Royal Canadian Air Cadet Squadron of Slemon Park, Prince Edward Island. Our guests, two Cadet Instructor Cadre officers and 30 air cadets were housed in the famous Harrison Hot Springs Resort (where else could we put up the airforce?) and treated to the best attractions of the Fraser Valley.

One of the first activities was a visit to the Canadian Military Education Centre at the former CFB Chilliwack. Major (ret.) Rollie Keith of CMEC gave a very informative talk on Canada's military history, which was followed with a self-led tour of military vehicles, uniforms, and other equipment on display.



The highlight of the Military Education Centre was certainly the functional military vehicles. Here cadets give a thumbs-up before a ride around the base in a WW2 ambulance.

The cadets also visited the 1920s at the Kilby Museum, and took a walk in Hope along the Kettle Valley Railway track bed through the Othello Tunnels. For the cadets from Prince Edward Island, this stunning canyon was an incredible change of scenery from the Maritimes they were used to. That evening, back at the hotel, army and air cadets took to the mineral water pools for some relaxation.

On their last day to visit, a full day of fun was scheduled, starting with a visit to Fort Langley. Cadets had the opportunity to try their hand at blacksmithing, making barrels, and packing furs. This interactive discussion of BC history was followed up by a traditional west coast luncheon of buffalo baked beans, bannock, and cranberry cookies.



1789's C/MCpl Louis poses in costume before a painting of the scene of incorporation of British Columbia in the "Big House" at Fort Langley National Historic Site.

That afternoon, the corps and squadron visited the Canadian Museum of Flight housed at the Langley Airport. This was a smash hit with our guests and it must be told that the army cadets did get in a few inter-service jabs, while disguising their own interest in the great exhibits. From fabric and cloth bi-planes to the aluminum Sea King, cadets received a guided tour on the history of flight in Canada and the RCAF.

Among the interesting exhibits at the Canadian Museum of Flight was a retired Tutor from the famous Snowbird team, shown here with ostensibly disinterested 1789 cadets.



To wrap up the day, cadets and officers donned mess kit for an evening of camaraderie at Sunyam Thai Restaurant in Harrison. We received a handsome squadron plaque from our visitors and in return presented 53 Monty DFC Squadron with a local artist's print of Mount Cheam and the sharp looking Westie plaque pictured below.



Capt. Linda Desroches CD, Commanding Officer of 53 Monty DFC RCACS presents Maj. Lorne Pleasants CD, Commanding Officer of 1789 Royal Westminster Regiment RCACC with a plaque to commemorate their visit in the 2009 Inter-Provincial Cadet Exchange.

This year will be 1789's turn to travel across Canada in the 2010 Inter-Provincial Cadet Exchange to visit with another Army, Sea, or Air Cadet unit.



65th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands

On February the 12th 2010, a ceremony was held to recognize the veterans that participated in the liberation of the Netherlands. It was held at the Billy Bishop Legion. The Regimental Association had three veterans registered to attend. They were Stan Conway, Doug Morgan who was accompanied by his wife Eileen, and Frank Whitford. Unfortunately Frank could not attend due to a medical situation. The veterans were honoured by the Prime Minister of the Netherlands Mr Jan Peter Balkenende. He gave a heartwarming thanks for all that the Canadian troops did for the Netherlands. He then presented all the vets that attended with a medallion celebrating the 65th Anniversary, and a lapel pin. I accepted the Medallion on behalf of Frank Whitford. Later Stan Conway and I went to visit Frank and presented it to him. Needless to say, Frank was really overwhelmed that he received it.

The Commanding Officer arranged that we had transport to take us from the Armouries to the Ceremony, for which the Association is grateful.

As a former Quartermaster I would have been remiss if I did not acquire a medallion for the Regimental Museum, which is now on display.

Pro Rege et Patria
Terry Leith
President



Eileen and Frank
Whitford with Stan
Conway

THE MUSEUM

All things in the Museum are still going well. We are receiving new articles and items regularly and our collection is growing steadily. Each year we try to redo a cabinet to update our collection. We have finished over half of our labels in the total area to make for easier reading.

Currently we are choosing items for another cabinet. It takes about a year to choose appropriate items, prepare label wording, take the older cabinets apart and refurbish lighting and backgrounds. We have much to do yet in this area.

As any of you who have visited the Museum recently, I'm sure you realize space is of a premium. We have arranged to have pictures displayed on the mezzanine level which gives the Armouries a friendlier look and adds more to our history display.

We are also planning, with the concurrence of the Commanding Officer, to build new cases on the wall of the parade square facing Queens Avenue where the original windows were removed and add new items and displays – eight in all – to bring our history up to date depicting events of The Regiment in their continuing contributions to our country during post WW II/Korea era. The Regiment is seeking permission from the Engineers who look after the Armouries to proceed with the venture. They have indicated they will react favourably to the scheme.

The City of New Westminster has purchased property in the downtown Quay area and in it's development they are planning to include areas for all the present Museums in the City. Only in the development stage at this time, we are following it with great interest and all things being suitable we would consider having a display there as well as continuing with our present and main Museum. Time will tell.

The Archives and Storage areas are being kept up to good standard. We have even found some room in the storage area to keep Association accoutrements making them safe and more easily available at the Armouries.

We have had some losses of Volunteer Staff recently as many of you know including Basil Morgan, Fred Deighton and Jack Fournier who were faithful regulars. However, the present Volunteers – Tom Lam, Terry Leith, Terry Oliver and Wayne McCallum – all former serving members of the Regiment and Lila Wood – our extremely efficient and pleasant secretary and acquisitions person – all doing an excellent job and keeping us running efficiently. We also have great support from Regimental personnel and part time Volunteers.

We are still open Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30 to 3:00 as well as many special occasions. Please drop in and visit us when you can – we would appreciate visiting with you.

Herb Hamm

Melfa Weekend 2010

May 21, 22, and 23

Melfa Golf:

Location - Maple Ridge Golf Course
208818 Golf Lane
Maple Ridge, B.C.
Date - May 21, 2010
Tee-Off - 9:00 AM
Cost - \$45.00 per Golfer (Includes Golf, Sandwich, and a Beer)
Registration - By May 12, 2010
Contact - Alan Morton
(604) 315-2114

Melfa Dinner:

Location - Armoury
New Westminster, B.C.
Date - May 22, 2010
Time - Cocktails 1800 Hrs. Dinner 1900 Hrs.
Cost - \$47.00 per Person
Registration - May 12, 2010
Contact - Terry Leith at 604-521-0042 or email - tmleith@gmail.com
or Herb Hamm 604-515-7933 or email - hehamm@telus.net

Brunch/ AGM:

Location - Armoury
New Westminster, B.C.
Date - MMay 23, 2010
Time - 0900 Hrs Brunch/ 1100 Hrs AGM

Melfa Weekend RSVP Tear off and mail to Association by May 12th.

Golf (\$45.00/Person) _____ = \$ _____

Dinner (\$47.00/Person) _____ = \$ _____

Brunch/AGM (No Cost) _____ = NA

Total _____ \$ _____

Print Name _____ Phone # _____