



Volume 2011/Issue 3  
November 2011



## 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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**Lest We Forget**

**November 11, 2011**

**Service at the Armoury at 10:00 AM**

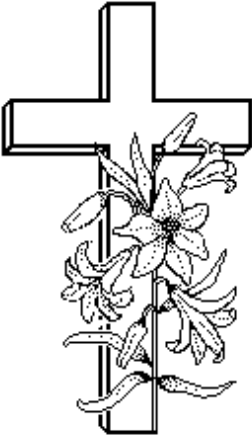
"They shall not grow old, as we who are left grow old.

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun, and in the morning.

....We will remember them."

**- Laurence Binyon - Act of Remembrance**



## *In Memoriam*

Sinclair Bill	Regina	September 2011	Royal Westminster Regiment Association
Walsh, Lidsay Clinton	New Westminster	June 25, 2011	Westminster Regiment (WWII)
Morgan, William George	New Westminster	April 21, 2011	Westminster Regiment (WWII)
Thomson, George Henry	Mission	January 29, 2011	Westminster Regiment (WWII)

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### **Health an Welfare**

I believe that it is the responsibility of all members of the regimental family to report both positive and negative aspects 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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### **Hockey Update**

After a bit of a slow start to the season the Royal Westminster Regiment hockey team finished with an exceptional 8-4 record and finished second in league standings. The team showed a work ethic and a drive to win that was virtually unmatched all summer long. With only 9 games played, the teams leading scorer young Pte Raymond Schouten finished tied for 5th in league points with 17 (10G-7A). Another relatively new Westie, Pte Nathan Sands, followed closely behind with 15 points (7G-8A) in 12 games and was tied for 8th in the league. 3 of Nathans goals were game winning goals proving how talented and important this young man was to the new Westies hockey team. Rookie goaltender, Cpl Andrew Trafananko, finished his first year ever as a net minder with a record of 8-4, 276 saves and a save percentage of 0.860.

The Westies entered into the playoffs facing the 7th seed Riddlers. The series was a 2 game winner moves on, with the Westies winning 2 straight. The first game saw the Westies not only battling the Riddlers but the penalty box as well. Dealing with questionable reffing at best, the Westies were left clawing to stay out of the penalty box. With 20 minutes spent short handed and a game ejection early in the 3rd period the Westies came from behind all game. The first period saw great goaltending by the Westies rookie keeper who kept the game tied with no goals. The second

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period was more of the same with the Westie goalie keeping it close but the Riddlers were able to sneak one past. The Westies work ethic then kicked in during the third period as the team started to battle for every inch of ice. Leading the way was Cpl Danny St Pierre, scoring 5 minutes into the 3rd. Cpl Mike Trafananko followed suit 4 minutes later with a power play goal to put the Westies in the lead for the first time in the game. The celebration was short however as the Riddlers scored not even one minute later to tie the game. With less then 4 minutes left the team rallied together for a final push that saw Civi member, Eric Martens, Score the Westies third goal. With some strong defence and unstoppable goaltending the team held on to win the first game 3-2.

The second game in the series was a complete turn around as the Riddlers were left battling the penalty box. The Westies took advantage, and with only two trips themselves to the box, were able to dictate the game and win 6-2. With 2 goals for the westies each period the team never fell behind. With 2 goals from Pte Nathan Sands and singles from Cpl Da Rosa, Cpl Danny StPierre, Civi Tim Davidson and Eric Martens the westies moved on to the semi finals.

The Semi finals saw the Westies take the ice missing 3 players facing the Flaming Homers, a team the westies beat twice during the season at 6-5 and 3-1. The team was confident following there previous series but the missing players really hurt the team who were never able to recover. The team was not able to recharge on the forward line and despite playing some of their hardest hockey went down 3 goals. It was not until Cpl Mike Trafananko was able to score late in the second period that the Westies were able to get onto the board. Their opponents were able to answer with a goal 30 seconds left in the second and another 18 seconds into the third.

Facing a 4-1 loss on the scoreboard and the end to their playoff hopes the Westies dug in their blades and pushed back with 2 goals 42 seconds apart by WO Bryan Gardner and Pte Raymond Schouten. It was to no avail however as the Homers retaliated with another two goals and put the Westies away to a disappointing tune of 7-3.

The sour defeat is short lived however as the team will take to the ice for the new Winter season starting in September. The Westies will be missing a few key players but with some new blood will push through the longer 30 game season and try to improve on their record.

Special thanks goes out to everyone that was able to make it to a game and cheer the team on. It was much appreciated.

Cheers

Cpl. Trafananko  
Recruiting NCO  
Royal Westminster Regiment

## 1789 RWestmrR RCACC October 2011 Groundsheet Report

Lt. H. Mulder, TrgO

After ending their 2010-2011 training year with a fun and challenging military skills exercise at the Jones Creek Training Area, cadets of 1789 The Royal Westminster Regiment Royal Canadian Army Cadet Corps have returned from their summer training opportunities at Cadet Summer Training Centre across Western Canada. They have begun local training again in Hope and Agassiz and took part in the Hope Brigade Days and Agassiz Fall Fair festivities.



*Hope and Agassiz Westie cadets ham it up for a group photo on the year end military skill exercise, which included ammo can relays, litter carry, “grenade” toss, and more!*

Says Cadet Master Warrant Officer Abraham Mulder of his unique adventure at Rocky Mountain National Army Cadet Summer Training Centre (RMNASTC): “It was the best six weeks of my life!” While at RMNASTC, he had the opportunity to join other senior cadets from across Canada and around the world on a six week wilderness adventure, including rock climbing, mountain biking, glacier hiking, canoeing, and much more. Cadet Master Warrant Officer Mulder is the Company Sergeant Major for Bravo Company, the Corps’ Hope Company of cadets, and he hopes to share the knowledge he has learned with them.

*Smiles all around on winning the trophy for Best Decorated Float in the Hope Brigade Days Parade.*



*continued on page 12*

## Presidents Report

Welcome back after a somewhat funny summer weather wise. The Melfa Dinner was quite enjoyable with the entertainment and a presentation by Stan Conways Granddaughter of some Stones from the Melfa River. The golf was well attended and I'm sure everyone had an enjoyable time. Next years Melfa will be the weekend after the long weekend in order to accommodate more of the Regiment attending.

I attended the 2316 Cadet inspection representing the Royal Canadian Legion to present the Legion medal of Excellence to Cadet MWO Deaton.

In June, Jack Loepky presented the John Ford Bursary to Amanda Smith at New West Secondary School.

The C150 Committee has been working on a challenge coin to members of the Regiment and The Association. There are more details on this coin further on in the newsletter. The Association has raised money at the Melfa Dinner for this committee by having a Silent Auction.

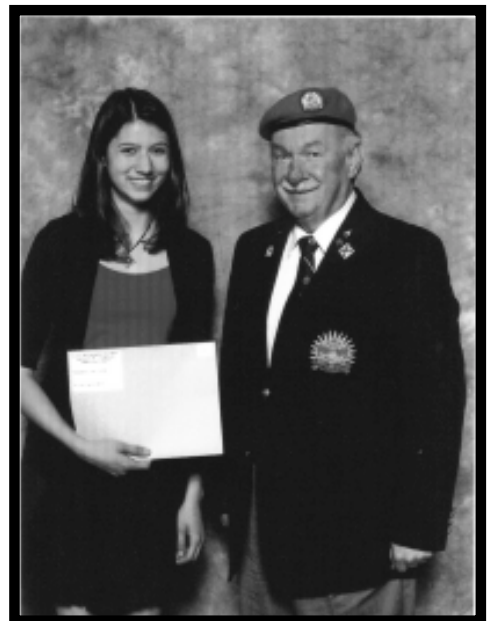
I am looking forward to another year as your President, and I would like to thank all the members of the executive, both past and present for their excellent support.

Please make an effort to attend the Remembrance day Ceremonies in New Westminster and March with the Association

Pro Rege et Patria

Terry Leith

*Jack Loepky and Ammanda  
Smith with John Ford Bursary  
Presentation*



# The Regiment

## A Westie Major's Tour in Afghanistan

Since 2006, the Westies have rotated approximately 75 soldiers through the mission in Afghanistan. As in most wars, each personal experience varies (often widely) from the other. Some of our soldiers have been in intense combat situations. I am not one of those. That said, each Westie who has had the opportunity to serve in Afghanistan has contributed to the mission in their own way. As the expression goes, "individual experiences may vary."

This is what I kept telling myself while "chained to the oars" in the Operations Plans (Combined Joint 35) Branch of the Divisional HQ in Regional Command South (RCS). We were in the war. We carried weapons. We had helmets and body armour at the ready near our desks...but...our contribution consisted mainly of churning out plans and briefings.

Let's start at the beginning. I had the good fortune to fill a last-minute task and was only required to complete approximately one month of pre-deployment training run by the Peace Support Training Centre (oh, the irony) in Kingston. This training consisted mainly of completing the individual battle task standards (IBTS) that no one ever has time to do in a unit as well as some good, mission-specific training. More than a few times, while performing such valuable tasks as personal decontamination in the gas hut or identifying foreign armoured vehicles, we wondered if some of this was really necessary.

After a spot of leave and a chance to conduct a one-day handover of the Adjutant job to Capt Phillips, I deployed with the rest of my chalk. We flew from Trenton to Camp Mirage in a CF Airbus and from Mirage to Kandahar Airfield (KAF) in Afghanistan in a C17 transport. We were the last rotation to transit through Camp Mirage in the United Arab Emirates as an international disagreement resulted in this base being shut down. Until then, everyone was issued their personal weapons and ammo in Mirage so they could hit the ground ready to defend themselves. The standard operating procedure (SOP) for flying into KAF would involve suiting up in helmets and armour approximately 30 minutes out in case the aircraft was engaged by ground fire. This is usually the first (somewhat tense) reminder that you are entering a hostile environment.

This didn't happen with our group. Since Mirage was closing shortly after our transit, they didn't want to issue us weapons. No weapons meant no need for ammo. Ditto for ballistic plates in the flak vests. As a result, we were to land without weapons or ballistic plates and were told we needn't bother with vests and helmets. Oh, well I thought. I guess it's safe enough. Thirty minutes prior to landing, however, the aircrew and a few special operations guys on our flight, all donned helmets and body armour. I began to feel a little naked... We were warmly greeted at the airstrip in the dark by the senior Canadian in the Division HQ, BGen Andre Corbould. He was posted to the division as its Deputy Commander. This is noteworthy as BGen Corbould's grandfather and great grandfathers each commanded the Westies - his grandfather being the famous Gordon Corbould who fought the Regiment throughout the Italian Campaign in the Second World War.

Handshakes and smiles were happening all around until he got to me. "Dave, what the hell are you doing here? You weren't on the pre-training in the US." He turned to look at the Canadian Administrative CO who explained I was a late addition. "That's alright, sir. I didn't need the training. I'm just that good..." This appeared to produce a smile - or was that a grimace? It was dark and I was tired so it's hard to tell... We were bussed to our opulent quarters where, after dragging my rucksack, kitbag barrack box and small pack up stairs all at once ('cause that's the smart way to do it, duh!), I exploded in on my temporary new room mate - a Brit Staff Sergeant who seemed very pleased to meet me around 0200.

I say the quarters were opulent, because, compared to the way most of our guys were living in theatre, they were great - more like college dorms. One of the best parts was that they were dubbed "rocket proof." This meant if one was in his quarters at night during a rocket attack, he didn't have to go to a bunker outside. He just stayed in bed. Nice.

Shortly after arriving, command of RC(S) officially changed from the British 6th Division to the US 10th

## Our Cadets

2822 Royal Westminster Regiment Army Cadets started out with a bang this year with the new training under way. The Cadets participated in their first FTX of the 2011-2012 training year, with full attendance.

WO Stanhope, Sgt Fraga, Sgt Jundi, and Sgt Mitchell began their Bronze level Duke of Edinburgh Award in September 2010. Since then, they have not only received their Bronze level award, but have been approved for their Silver award. They have been invited to the Silver Ceremony at Government House to be presented by the Lt. Governor on November 12, 2011. Congratulations to those Cadets on their achievements.

It is the hope that with the achievement of these four individuals, it will inspire more of 2822 Cadets to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh program.

2822 would like to welcome 2Lt Martin Hilmer. He will be assuming the Supply Officer position effective immediately. He will also be leading the Cadets with the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

We would also like to welcome CI Rachel Blyth to 2822. She will be assuming the Administration Officer position effective immediately.

Captain Rick Blyth  
CO

**1789 Agassiz** -Pages 4 and 12.

**2316 New Westminster** - No Report

**1838 Maple Ridge** - No Report.

**2822 Surrey** - See above

**1922 Aldergrove** - No Report.

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### 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

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### **Request for Volunteers**

Your Association is looking for a dedicated retired member to help out with our Accoutments and the Regiments Kit Shop. Please contact our President.

Mountain Division (along with all their quirks - "Climb to glory! Huahh!). This was during the height of the so called "surge" and 10th Mountain had nearly 30,000 soldiers under command spread over six manoeuvre brigades (including the Canadian one dubbed "Task Force Kandahar"). There were approximately 70 Canadians serving in the Division HQ. Worth noting, the former Chief Clerk of the Westies, Annette Dombrowski, was working as a Logistics Major in the CJ 4 Branch.

CJ 35 was responsible for planning of operations within a six week to 96 hour window. Longer term planning was done by CJ 5 and execution of operations was performed by CJ 33. Our branch was headed by an Australian Col (great bloke) and the deputy was an American LCol (or LTC as they write it. Also a great bloke... in American-speak he'd be a great "dude", perhaps?). Both were younger than I (get over it, Dave...). In all seriousness, I hit the jackpot in terms of great people to work with - smart, personable, great work ethic... There were three other Canadians in the branch - an air defence artillery LCol and a Maj and Lt (N) from intelligence. Technically there was another Canadian, but, he was there as an Australian engineer officer so he doesn't really count. In addition to the predominant Americans and, along with the Canadians and Australians, there was a sprinkling of Brits and two Netherlanders in the branch.

The branch had planners who could focus on various specialties: intelligence, engineering, civil development, logistics, medical, rotary wing aviation, fixed wing air etc. My job was to be the ANSF (Afghan National Security Forces) Planner. I met regularly with Afghan National Army and Police planners and tried to represent the ANSF point of view during planning sessions. Many people have stories about the frustrations of working with Afghans; however, it just takes a little understanding. I found it remarkable how many of their issues were similar to those of the Canadian Militia (not knowing who you've got until the vehicles are unloaded, the difficulty of chasing reports and returns...). I enjoyed working with those Afghan senior officers in joint planning sessions and admired their fortitude.

These meetings afforded me the opportunity to get out of KAF anywhere from two to five times a week. The army and police HQs were literally just outside the base, however, the rules said we had to travel suited up and in armoured vehicles. I got to feel like a soldier while only travelling a kilometre away. I also had the opportunity to attend some conferences in the capital, Kabul. Shuttling between areas in the capital by vehicle, even short, five-minute trips, required strict security measures. I initially felt this was a bit too much. However I had to remember that the insurgents were well ensconced in the cities, biding their time and waiting for the right moment to strike. This has been evident in the news as recent as last month with attacks and bombings. I also had the distinction to be one of the few RC(S) soldiers to initially set foot in remote Daykundi - the most northern province of RC(S). I flew in on a Blackhawk helicopter to escort the Governor and his entourage to a conference in Kandahar. Eventually, with time, many more people made the trip. However, for a few weeks, I was known as "Daykundi Dave."

These trips served as breaks in the daily and weekly routine which consisted of reporting for work at approximately 0800 and heading back to quarters around 2300. There were many times when we worked beyond midnight and pulled a few all-nighters. This was done as needed with no grumbling. Normally the Australian boss would wander the floor after 2230 asking what we were working on. If it didn't seem important to him, he'd send you back to your quarters. Friday mornings were our weekends - we got to report in at noon instead of 0800 - luxury!. During the day we'd eat meals at the mess hall (DFAC - American for dining facility ) and in the afternoon, if things were slow, we'd manage to get to the gym for a workout. So an average day at work was about 15 hours and we worked seven days a week. As long as we got sufficient sleep, we didn't care as there wasn't anything else to do. Not that there weren't plenty of diversions and amenities in KAF, it just seemed that CJ 35 was always the busiest branch...

Seven months flew by quickly (with the help of a family holiday in France). The Americans were all deployed for a year at a time. Some were in location when I arrived and were still going to be there for another five months after I left. Many of them still hadn't had their holidays by the time I redeployed. One had spent an aggregate of four years on deployment between Iraq and Afghanistan. Another American I became close friends with quipped, "I've been married for six years and seen my wife for three." They are great allies who work extremely hard.

I am glad to have had the opportunity to get to Afghanistan before the combat mission ended - even if I didn't do any shooting. I mentioned this once to a Canadian LCol and he reminded me that we were part of a select few



Canadians who got to serve in a real Division HQ, during war, commanding nearly 30,000 soldiers in six brigades. That in itself is a good experience. I don't think I can get a book deal out of it, but, I am proud of the part I played.



*Christmas in CJ 35. The branch took the time to celebrate Christmas by pooling our care packages. Chief of CJ 35, Col Rowan Martin (Australia), gets into the spirit with a Santa hat.*



*CJ 35 on steps. The bulk of the branch gathered on the steps of our building for a group photo. I'm the handsome guy in the front.*



*Dave and Noor. Lieutenant Colonel Noor Mohamed (on the right) is the G5 of 205 Corps of the Afghan National Army. He was one of the senior Afghans that I conducted joint planning with. The other Afghan officer commanded the*



*. Group at ANZAC day. The Australians and New Zealanders always celebrate ANZAC (Australian New Zealand Army Corps) Day in a sombre, sunrise ceremony. We were invited to attend with our Australian friends. Of particular interest is Maj Jonny Laws of the Royal Fusiliers (our allied regiment in the UK). The event kicked off at 0500.*



*. Mitch in office. A good shot of the office where we worked. In the foreground is one of our Australian co workers.*



*Dave in MRAP. Traveling in an armoured vehicle to a meeting.*



*. Dave in Blackhawk. Escorting the Governor of Daykundi province to a conference. Sitting next to me are members of his entourage.*

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Currently we have two Junior Ranks members overseas in Afghanistan. First Cpl Davis is in KAF. He is in good spirits and is expected to arrive back in Canada at the end of October. Our other Westie deployed is MCpl Tustin in Kabul and at the time of writing was preparing to go on his HLTA in Australia and New Zealand. He will not be back in Canada till March. Cpl Czakowski was fortunate enough to be selected to go on his basic para course, currently being conducted in Edmonton. As for the rest of the JR's we participated in a range shoot at Volkes in September, qualifying up to level 3 of the PWT on the C7. We are currently getting ready to conduct an Offensive exercise at the end of the month.

MCpl SKREBSKY EP

## Balance Sheet 2010

<b>Assets</b>		<b>Liabilities</b>	
Bank Statement	\$12,161.78	150 <sup>th</sup> Committee	\$ 2,056.00
Prepaid Expenses		Honour House Donations	\$ 240.00
Melfa Caterer	\$500.00	Assn. Equity	\$ 26,323.76
Wine	\$382.50	Assets Payable	<u>\$ 598.08</u>
Accoutrements	<u>\$16,173.56</u>		
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 29,217.84</b>	<b>Total :</b>	<b>\$ 29,217.84</b>

### Statement of Income 2010

Vancouver Foundation	\$ 3,355.30
Accoutrements	\$ 282.00
Dues	\$ 4,525.00
Melfa Weekend	\$ 5,596.00
Donations for Honour House	\$ 240.00
150 <sup>th</sup> Silent Auction	\$ 2,056.00
<u>Bank Interest</u>	<u>\$ 0.68</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 17,154.98</b>

### Statement of Expenditures 2010

Sundry: Website/PO Box	\$ 231.00
Remembrance Day	\$ 100.00
Website	\$ 286.34
R. Westmr. R	\$ 500.00
Afghanistan Certificates	\$ 268.00
Health and Welfare	\$ 81.95
Seaforth Dinner	\$ 80.00
<u>Groundsheet</u>	<u>\$ 2,800.92</u>
<b>Melfa Weekend</b>	<b>\$ 6,344.50</b>

### Budget 2011 Expenditures

Regimental Grant	\$ 500.00
Afghanistan Packages	\$ 500.00
Health and Welfare	\$ 200.00
Cadet Corps	\$ 1,000.00
Certificates	\$ 200.00
Accoutrements – Purchase	\$ 1,000.00
Memorial Preservation	\$ 300.00
Change Over	\$ 400.00
Poppy Fund	\$ 100.00
Future Fund	\$ 600.00
Groundsheet	\$ 3,400.00
Melfa Weekend	\$ 3,000.00
Sundry	\$ 225.00
<u>John Ford Bursary</u>	<u>\$ 250.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,675.00</b>

### Budget 2011 Income

Donations	\$ 600.00
Dues	\$ 2,000.00
Interest	\$ 5.00
Vancouver Foundation	\$ 2,500.00
Melfa Weekend	\$ 3,000.00
Life Memberships	\$ 200.00
Accoutrements – Sales	\$ 1,000.00
<u>John Ford Bursary</u>	<u>\$ 250.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,555.00</b>



*Our flag party and guard for the Agassiz Fall Fair and Corn Festival, sharply turned out despite the rain.*

Other cadets from Agassiz and Hope travelled to Vernon Army Cadet Summer Training Centre (VACSTC) for other types of training, including Basic Leadership, Drill and Ceremonial Instructor, Basic Military Band, Basic Marksmanship, and Basic Expedition and Expedition Instructor. Junior cadets attend a 2 week session of general training, and advance to the 3 week Basic courses and 6 week Instructor courses over their cadet career. Cadets are paid a training bonus to attend camp at the rate of \$60 per week.

Regimental Sergeant Major, Cadet Master Warrant Officer Taylor Rae Zantovsky, and Alpha (Agassiz) Company Sergeant Major, Cadet Master Warrant Officer Arlyn Wyatt had the opportunity to be employed at VACSTC as staff cadets for the duration of the summer. This form of advanced training allows senior cadets to further develop their leadership skills (and have a summer job) by assisting the Regular and Reserve Force personnel in the day-to-day operations of the camp.

*The 1789RWestmrR RCACC float, First Prize in the Junior Float category in the Agassiz Fall Fair Parade*



Immediately upon standing to for the 2011-2012 training year, 1789 was busy. The first weekend in September is Hope Brigade Days, and our presence in the parade and our volunteers at the gates had a very positive impact on the community and recruiting, with the fledging Bravo Company in Hope now outnumbering Alpha Company in Agassiz, 21 to 19. Five cadets and two officers competed in the Hope Hustle up Mt. Hope, and took one trophy for best in age group.

The cadets also turned out for a wet parade the following weekend at the Agassiz Fall Fair and Corn Festival. Our float showcasing a bivouac site, a shooting range, and an abseiling teddy bear in a cadet field uniform on a simulated rock face, all pulled by a 1941 Universal Carrier, took 1st prize again! We hope to have more successes to report throughout the year!