



**Volume 2012/Issue 2  
April 2012**



# The Groundsheet

**The 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’*

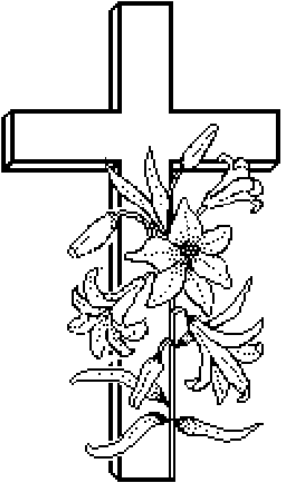
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# *In Memoriam*



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## **Health and Welfare**

Stan Conway has been release from the hospital after a bout with pneumonia.

For those who do not know, Gary Books suffered a cardiac arrest on March 17<sup>th</sup>. He was attended to with a defibrillator within 4 minutes so has no damage to the heart or elsewhere. He has a personal defibrillator installed and is now home.

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.

## Editor's Report

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Hello all again. Well things seem to be shaping up for the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration and our Melfa Weekend. So get your orders in quickly for the coin and respond as soon as possible for the Melfa Weekend.

It has been nice to hear from Russell Harrison. He has been asked to become a Honourary Member of the C.A.V. (Canadian Army Veterans Motorcycle). He gave me a bit of information on himself with the Regiment:

Hello Len

A little information about me and my service I enlisted on Sept.24TH 1941 in Toronto On. Sent to Borden for basic training. From there shipped overseas Nov. 11TH (good day) .Sent to Aldershot At that time Fifth DIV. was being organized and along with small units of R.C.E.M.E . R.C.C,S and R.C.O.C. we would taken under the WESTIEs command At that time a dispatch rider was required ( I was it) That was early 1942. I served with the regiment thru Italy and Holland. I hope this bio is sufficient I was informed by Jerry Gangur that I should be considered a WESTIE I was very glad to receive a reply. I would like to come out for the 150 TH if I can arrange it.

regards and best wishes

Russell Harrison service # B53186

Russ we should be sending the kit shop items out shortly.

You will find that we are now on Facebook. See the next page.

Finally, we are trying to get information out faster to our members. I have received a couple of emails from a few people I would still like some more responses. To do this we would like to have every members email. Please forward this to my email at [tedwohl@telus.net](mailto:tedwohl@telus.net).

Len Wohlgemuth  
Editor



Please **LIKE** Our New Facebook page -

**The Royal Westminster Regiment Association**

Let's see how many fans we can get!!!

**Come on, Westies!!!**

Spread the word.

...and Don't forget to join our group also called  
**The Royal Westminster Regiment Association**

**- Michael and Janet Kvammen**

## Presidents Report

Well the Melfa weekend is fast approaching, and preparations are under way. The golf on the Friday is the kickoff with the messes Competing for the challenge trophy. The Hyack parade is on Saturday, with the Association having an entry. We have the large Military vehicle that any Association Members and veterans can ride in. I would like to see a good turnout of members for this. Dinner is on the Saturday evening where we can get together talk old times and bid at the Silent Auction. The Silent Auction is raising funds for our 150<sup>th</sup> Celebration in 2013. Sunday morning is the AGM, and I would like to see more members come out and volunteer to serve on the executive.

The Melfa is not on the long weekend this year, and we would like to get some feedback as to whether it would be better to have it on the long weekend or not.

Next year when we celebrate 150 years of Military Service to our country, we are looking at a bigger reunion at Melfa. If you are planning on attending the information will be out as soon as possible.

Plans are under way to acquire a Bren Gun Carrier to mount in front of the Armoury, and we are looking for donations for this project. There has been several substantial donations already, so if you would like to donate to this, please send your donation to the secretary.

I have been busy supporting the Regimental Hockey team. They have had a rollercoaster ride and are now in the playoffs. The team plays hard and it is worth watching them. I attended the Vimy Parade at Victory Square on April 9<sup>th</sup> and Jack Loepky and I laid a wreath on behalf of the Association. The Parade was also attended by our 2316 Cadet corps, which had the largest contingent of all the Cadet Corps attending.

I look forward to seeing as many old soldiers at this year's Melfa.

Pro Rege et Patria  
Terry Leith



## The Regiment

Since the last issue of the Ground Sheet, the Regiment has been very busy along three main parallel lines of activity:

- a. preparations for the Brigade Training Event in Idaho - Exercise Cougar Salvo 12;
- b. running the DP2A Course (Infantry Support Weapons Qualification); and
- c. preparations for the Regiment's 150th Anniversary next year.

Exercise Cougar Salvo 12 will be conducted during the last week in April and the first week in May and will culminate in a company level combined arms live fire range - something most soldiers in the unit have never had the opportunity to participate in. This is not the activity that one drops into cold. Preparations have been mounting since January so as to ensure our soldiers hit the ground well-prepared, confident and cohesive.

A major step on the road to Cougar Salvo was Exercise Cougar Ducimus conducted in the Chilliwack Training Area in February. This was the first opportunity for all four BC infantry units to get together and "shake out" in the organizations they will be using for the exercise. The results were positive with over 200 participants and two companies practicing attacks.

The Infantry Support Weapons Course culminated in a Gun Camp in Yakima. With plenty of ammunition to spare, it was an excellent learning opportunity.

Also in February, the Regiment hosted the traditional Annual Dinner. This is the Regiment's most important community relations event of the year although it is often mistakenly referred to as the "Officers' Dinner", it requires, in fact, a whole-Regiment effort to make it a success. Everyone puts on a good show to help strengthen the ties between the Regiment and the community leaders, politicians and other special guests. My thanks go out to all who helped - particularly members of the Westie Volunteer Band, Sgt Buikema as Chief Steward, Sgt Walsh as Quarter Guard Commander and Cpl Kingston as the "Wine Czar". As can be expected the soldiers were excellent both in their turn out and performance.

In addition to the Gun Camp in Yakima, the unit also ran Exercise Corbould Force (named in honour of the famous Second World War CO). This exercise, and the practice sessions leading up to it, focused mainly on urban warfare.

Although not necessarily related to pre-Cougar Salvo training, it was a chance to switch gears and do something a little more interesting for the soldiers. A good time was had by all.

In April, Col Gagne presented the first ever 39 CBG Commanders' Unit Commendation to the Regiment for its professionalism in conducting the funeral for Cpl Tyler Berg. The CO, LCol Doug Poitras, humbly accepted the commendation "on behalf of Tyler's friends in the Regiment." During the same parade, Sgt Todd Singer was commissioned as a Lt. This is the first time an NCO has been commissioned in four years and we all know Lt Singer will do an excellent job.

Maj. DJ Vernon for the Commanding Officer

# Our Cadets

**2822 Surrey**

Over spring break we had 6 cadets attended spring training at the Vernon army cadet camp. C/CWO Chris Evans, C/MWO Robert Stanhope, and C/ Wo Sherman Ho all attended Pre Par. C/CWO Evans, and Wo Sherman Ho being chosen to attend the Canadian Forces parachute school in Trenton Ont. this summer. C/Wo Matthew Sullivan, and C/Sgt Jessie Fraga both attended the back country avalanche course. C/Sgt Amanda Robinson attended leadership. Well done cadets

Rick Blyth  
 Captain | Capitaine  
 Commanding Officer | Commandant  
 2822 Royal Westminister Regiment Army Cadet Corp

**1789 Agassiz** – No Report

**2316 New Westminster** – See Page 8

**1838 Maple Ridge** - No Report.

**2822 Surrey** - See above

**1922 Aldergrove** - No Report.

## Are Your Dues Up To Date?

The Royal Westminister 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

Doug Setter

### Hockey Schedule


## 2316 Cadet Corps for the Groundsheet

On April 9th cadets from BCR, Field, Seaforth and Royal Westminister Regiment attended the Vimy Commemoration ceremonies at Victory Square in Vancouver. All four of these regiments fought at Vimy Ridge. Each regiment had a representative on the Honour Guard..

The parade was organized by the Royal Canadian Legion. After the ceremony the cadets went back to the BCR armoury for presentations and a light lunch. The Brigade commander Col Gagne addressed the cadets and handed out Vimy commemorative medals to selected cadets.

Representing the Royal Westminister Regiment were the cadets from 2316 New Westminister BC. It must be mentioned that 2316 had the largest contingent of cadets participating - 33 cadets on parade/ They all used their own money to sky train down and back. That is a sign of their commitment and dedication to the cadet movement and to our veterans.





# Vimy Images





## **Career revamped: A Soldier's transition into school after the Afghan War**

March 28, 2012

How hard it to find a job in this day and age? What are employers looking for? How do you tailor your resume what potential employers are looking for? Has it become easier to find a job now than just a few years ago? What about a person returning home from war? These are just some of the questions that are facing many Canadian Forces soldiers and that is just the situation that Sergeant Joseph Cullen faced upon his return home. I sat down with this soldier to get a fresh perspective on the economy from a veteran of the Afghanistan War and find out how he plans to deal with this situation as he integrates back into civilian life.

Sgt. Cullen plans to head back to school this September in order to obtain a Geomatics Diploma of Technology from the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). He will do some on the job training in June and continue his classroom portion this fall. The concentration that he chose to pursue is the field survey option. This diploma is essential for him to start his career in Geomatics. He said that he is "sincerely excited and that heading back to school has been a goal (dare I say dream) of mine for a few years now". Moving forward Sgt. Cullen has outlined his personal and professional goals some of which are to start his career with a reputable company, move from his condo to a house and marrying his finance and start a family. This opportunity was provided by Tyler Charkie; HR Advisor, and the McElhanney Land Surveys Ltd. This company is known for projects like the Capilano Suspension Bridge's Treetop

Adventure Design and the Sea to Sky Highway design build. Both projects are award winning projects.

Sgt. Cullen was 17 when he joined the Army and when he was asked what motivated him to join he replied: "I would have given an answer involving patriotism and love of the infantry, but in reality it was probably because I wanted to be different and look cool. Only after a couple years in, and especially after my first tour, did I understand the depth of real patriotism and unit pride." His grandfather was an officer in the Portuguese Army Reserves and is whom he is named after. Joseph currently serves with the Royal Westminster Regiment and has been on 2 tours of duty; Yugoslavia in 2002 and Afghanistan in 2011. The most memorable experience he had overseas was at Christmas in a small Croat village in Bosnia where his platoon brought the villagers vegetables and meat, and they were invited into an elderly lady's house for coffee and cookies. His military career has allowed him to be an instructor of many military courses including Basic Infantry Qualification (BIQ), Basic Military Qualification (BMQ), Basic Military Qualification – Land (BMQ-L) and Infantry Platoon Support Weapons Qualification.

He has served with the Canadian Forces for several years now and faces new challenges coming home among fellow soldiers. He feels that the hardest challenge entering the workforce was getting that initial interview and being surprised by how many company's didn't call back. Sgt. Cullen went on to say "I completely underestimated the amount of competition out there." He feels that even though the vast majority of society accepts soldiers upon returning home, even if they don't support the mission, getting a job and finding employment is not any easier. "The biggest challenge for a reserve soldier is what to do next... civilian jobs are difficult to attain, and rarely have comparable income. Many soldiers simply sign-up for another tour or join the regular force."

His perspective on life and society has been changed by the Canadian Forces. On his first tour in Bosnia, "It was the first time I saw true poverty and also the first time I saw true generosity. This was reinforced in Afghanistan. I am truly appreciative of how great life is in Canada." The advice that he gives new recruits coming into the Canadian Forces is to "make sure that you are willing and able to put the time in to go on courses, contribute on exercises, and be keen and stand out so that you will be picked to go on course." He went on to explain that the military produces quality individuals with unique leadership qualities and proven abilities. They are able to absorb information and the ability to apply that information efficiently. This is something that both employers and schools need to recognize and help integrate soldiers back into the workforce. Cullen feels that BCIT has done a great job when it comes to identifying this and other post-secondary institutions would benefit from similar programs. The Sergeant is grateful of his situation and goes on to say that "I should have listened to my mother and completed Math 12 when I was actually in Gr. 12, instead of when I was 30 and wanting to get into BCIT!" He is ambitious to take on his educational endeavor and jumpstart his new career later this year.

Eason Parasad

**Melfa Weekend 2012**  
**May 25, 26, and 27th**

**Melfa Golf:**

Location – Maple Ridge Golf Course  
208818 Golf Lane,  
Maple Ridge, BC.

Date – May 25, 2012

Tee-Off – 0900 Hrs

Cost - \$50.00 per Golfer (Includes Golf, Sandwich, and a Beer)

Registration - May 18, 2012

Contact – Alan Morton 604-315-2114

**Melfa Dinner:**

Location – Armoury New Westminster

Date – May 26, 2012

Cocktails 1800 to 1900 Hrs.

Dinner at 1900 Hrs.

Dress – Casual Dress (No Jeans) or Uniform

Cost - \$45.00 per person by May 19<sup>th</sup>. No tickets after the 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Brunch/AGM:**

Location – Armoury New Westminster

Date – May 27, 2012

Brunch – 0900Hrs,

AGM – 1100 Hrs.

**Golf (\$50.00 per person)** \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Dinner (\$45.00 per person)** \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Brunch/AGM (No Cost)** \_\_\_\_\_ = NA

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_