



Volume 2013/Issue 1
February 2013



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'

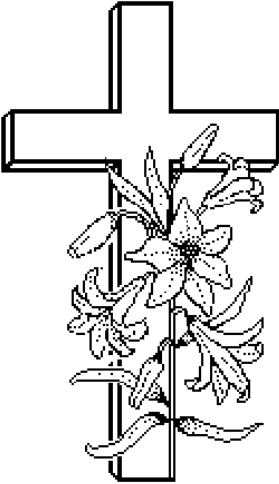
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www.royal-westies-assn.ca

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In Memoriam



Larry Wiebe	December 2012	Mission BC	Royal Canadian Army Cadets
William Douglas Adair	May 2012	Abbotsford BC	Westminster Regiment
Enid M. Carpenter	October 2012	Surrey BC	Royal Westminster Regiment
Charles Vernon (Joe) Bush	November 2012	Vancouver BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
Melvin Clerihue	August 2012	New Westminster BC	Royal Westminster Regiment
William Adair	May 2012	Abbotsford BC	Westminster Regiment
John McConnell	December 2010	Chilliwack BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
Gerald (Jerry) William Meehan	December 2011	Chilliwack BC	Royal Canadian Army Cadets
Larry Wiebe	December 2012	Mission BC	Royal Canadian Army Cadets
William Douglas Adair	May 2012	Abbotsford BC	Westminster Regiment

Health and 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.

Your Executive

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Editor's Report

Hello all again. Well things seem to be shaping up for the 150th celebration. Included in this are some notices of events that will be happening throughout the year.

Notice that there are multiple websites to gain information so please check with the 150th site (www.150.royal-westies-assn.ca/), the Association site (www.royal-westies-assn.ca), and our Facebook site.

It has been a pleasure to receive another letter from Doug McNaughton. As I mentioned in our last issue I could not fit it in so I present it in this issue. It is an interesting bit about Jack Mahony's medals.

Unfortunately I could not fit all the information in this issue. So please go to our website to see more images for the New Year's Levee, images for Remembrance Day, and images from the Langley Walk to Remember.

As we approach the Melfa Weekend and our annual General Meeting we will be losing our President. Terry will be taking over the museum and so will still be part of our executive. We will, however, be needing a new president and some additions to our executive. At our next meeting in March the executive will strike a nominating committee. I would ask that all of you Association members consider becoming a member of our executive.

Finally, we are trying to get information out faster to our members. To do this we would like to have every members email. Please forward this to my email at tedwohl@telus.net.

Len Wohlgemuth
Editor

To: The Editor

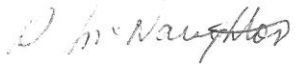
13 June 2010

This refers to an article in the Ottawa Citizen on June 9th by Randy Boswell entitled "War heroes' medals donated".

The article contained an error which, I thought, should be corrected. John Keefer Mahony, V.C., was a Major, the company commander of "A" company of the Westminster Regiment (M) on the 24th day of May 1944 when he led his company across the Melfa river in broad daylight. Although wounded three times he continued to give his platoons direction and support against a much larger defensive unit, beat back two counter attacks and remained with the remainder of his company until the rest of the Regiment was able to cross the river.

King George VI presented the Crimson ribbon to the Major on July 31, 1944, at an abandoned airfield near Raviscanina, Italy, in front of several thousand troops and later, on Sunday Dec. 31, 1944, received the Victoria Cross at a private informal ceremony with the King and Queen.

I am proud to say that I served as one of the signallers under Major Mahony during the Italian campaign and he was respected by all who served under him.


Douglas McNaughton,
2008 - 801 4th St., East,
Cornwall, Ont. K6H 7M8
Tel. 613-933-4258.

.../continued on p8

Presidents Report

Well I trust everyone had an enjoyable Xmas and New Year's.

Since the last Groundsheet, there has been the Remembrance Day Ceremony, which was well attended by members of the Association. I attended the Men's Xmas Dinner in the Armoury, and presented the Associations Gift to the Regiment. The Dinner was very enjoyable, and the OR's had a good time.

I also attended a Xmas Dinner for the Cadets of 2316 Westminster Regiment Cadet Corps. The food was supplied and prepared by the Corps parents committee. They did an excellent job once again.

The 150 Celebration was kicked off with New Years Levee with The Lt Governor attending. There will be many more events for the 150 Years of service by the Regiment and its antecedents.

So keep an eye on the website for more information

A memorial for Joe bush was attended by Jerry Gangur, Stan Conway, Walter Tyler and Myself. WO Gardner and I also attended a memorial for Enid Carpenter, who was a former Sgt with The Regiment and carried on her Career with the Cadet Services.

Walter Tyler, Stan Conway and I paid a visit to Col Bruce Eaton who is 94. Stan, Walter and Bruce knew each other well during the war.

Jerry Gangur and I visited Charlie Birch in Lions gate Hospital. Charlie was a Captain with the Regiment and appreciated the visit. He did remember both of us. If anyone has the time and remembers Charlie, he would like a short visit.

The Association is busy planning the 2013 Melfa Reunion Dinner, and Golf weekend. We hope to have a vehicle again to carry Association members in the Hyack parade. We have acquired two Association banners for the vehicle. There is a plan to unveil a Bren Gun Carrier Monument outside the Armoury on the Day of the Dinner. It is important that if you are planning on attending the Melfa Weekend to please let us know as soon as possible. There is a limited number of tickets, and in order to let the caterer know, there will be no tickets sold after May 15. So fill out the form and send it in with your cheque as soon as you know you will be attending. I hope to see many familiar faces there.

Pro Rege et Patria

Terry Leith

The Regiment

It has been a busy Fall for The Regiment. We have spent the season working through our individual unit training to prepare us for the upcoming collective training that brings together units from BC and then the Western Area. Our training exercises this year began with Exercise Westie Endurance. This exercise focused on our soldier's individual battle task standards (IBTS). Required to be completed by soldiers in order to stay current and to apply for a rotation overseas, this exercise included judging distance and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense (CBRN). To further develop our soldiers, we conducted rappelling and bayonet fighting.

In September we received the Freedom of the City from Pitt Meadows. The Freedom of the City is the highest honour the community can bestow on the military and dates back hundreds of years. In October we conducted Exercise Westie Sharpshooter. This was our firing range exercise for this training year where soldiers are required to re-qualify annually and for any overseas deployment they'll be taking within the next training year. With the support we have received in recent years from numerous cities in the Fraser Valley, we felt it our duty to show our respect at nine different communities on Remembrance Day.

In December we were also honoured to award 10 Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medals to Westie soldiers. We stood down in December by celebrating Christmas with our Soldier's Christmas Dinner and our new and improved Family Day. It was a great opportunity to bring all of our soldiers and their families together to applaud the success of 2012 and thank our families for their constant support with our military obligations. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the Regimental Association for their donation to the Regiment at the Soldier's Christmas Dinner.

In January we conducted Exercise Westie Deliverance, which was a section level exercise that tested our soldier's ability to conduct reconnaissance patrols. We had a roving enemy force that was conducting CBRN activities in multiple locations in the OPSEE training area of Chilliwack. Our HQ Company conducted vehicle road moves and A Company tasked their platoons to conduct reconnaissance patrols. Their aim was to determine the strength, habits, location and movement of the enemy force in the area. On Sunday morning, A Company conducted a navigation competition to locate various pieces of intelligence hidden around the Columbia Valley training area. In the coming months there will be many activities, both within the unit and in the community. We are preparing three soldiers to deploy on Op Attention, which will take them to Kabul, for a six-month rotation to support the winding down of our presence in Afghanistan. In the coming months the unit will be conducting collective training with other infantry units in our area, culminating in a large exercise that will combine all arms in live fire attacks.

In the community, we are preparing to begin our move from Naval Radio Station Detachment – Aldergrove (previously CFB Aldergrove) to ASU Chilliwack in March. It will be the end of an era as we say goodbye to our old home in Aldergrove and step into a larger, more robust presence in Chilliwack. We're working our way further into the Fraser Valley and spreading Western pride in every community that we touch. We are working and looking forward to participating in Melfa Weekend, a key activity in our celebration of 150 years of service. WESTIES!!!

Submitted By,

Ricardo Manmohan
UIO

Our Cadets

2822 Surrey- No Report

1789 Agassiz – No Report

2316 New Westminster –

On January 31st to February 3rd, 5 Officers and Staff and 17 Cadets participated in Winter Field Training Exercise Hiberno at Briton Park .Activities included snowshoeing, igloo building and winter survival skills.

Each week 2316 participates in several optional training programs such as drill, marksmanship, recce and physical training. We are proud to announce the addition of a pipe band beginning on Thursday nights.

Other training for February includes a Zone Shoot on the 24th in which our marksmanship team will take part. Also, watch for 2316 Cadets tagging at Royal City Centre from 15 to 17 February to raise money for equipment and fresh rations for field training, Annual Ceremonial Review and our annual year-end Barbecue. Thank you for your support.

Capt Bob Chessell

1838 Maple Ridge - No Report.

2822 Surrey - See above

1922 Aldergrove – See page 10.

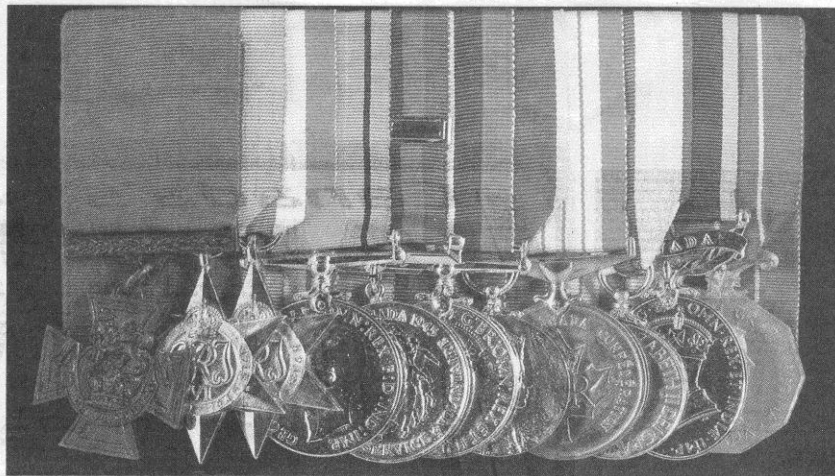
Are Your Dues Up To Date?

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

Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal Awards

Herb Hamm.....	January 26 th 2013
Terry Leith.....	January 26 th 2013
Ted Usher.....	January 26 th 2013
Gary Grigg.....	October 2013
Leo Braniff.....	January 26 th 2013
Andy Conradi.....	January 26 th 2013



HANDOUT PHOTO, CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM

Lt. John Mahony's VC from 1944 (left) was earned for leading his men in taking a key enemy position 'against overwhelming odds' along Italy's Melfa River and rescuing a trapped group of soldiers.

War heroes' medals donated

The families of two brave soldiers have donated Victoria Crosses to the Canadian War Museum, **RANDY BOSWELL** reports.

A year after a controversial auction in which the federal government spent almost \$300,000 to prevent a historic Victoria Cross from leaving the country, the Canadian War Museum has quietly — and frugally — acquired two more of the coveted medals.

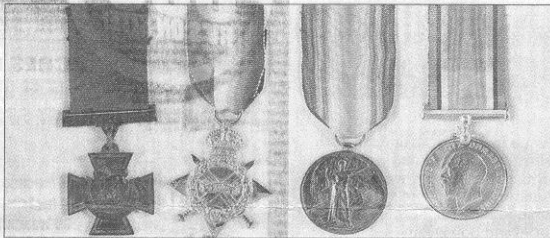
They include another of the storied "Valour Road" VCs awarded to three First World War soldiers from the same street in Winnipeg.

The museum's military heritage coup, to be announced today, not only preserves two significant pieces of Canadian war history, but also saves taxpayers a bundle.

Both medals — Cpl. Leo Clarke's VC from the 1916 Battle of the Somme and Lt. John Mahony's VC from the Italian campaign of 1944 — were secured as donations. Such artifacts are in hot demand and can sell at auction for hundreds of thousands of dollars.

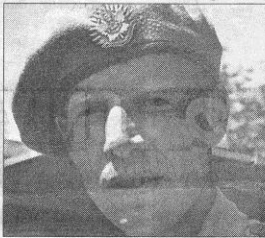
Clarke's Victoria Cross is a particularly poignant acquisition after the museum's \$288,000 purchase last year — with strong backing from the Conservative government — of the VC awarded to his fellow resident of Winnipeg's Pine Street, Lt. Robert Shankland.

The potential loss of that medal to a foreign buyer had prompted then-veterans affairs minister Greg



HANDOUT PHOTO, CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM

Cpl. Leo Clarke's VC from the 1916 Battle of the Somme, left, sits alongside his 1914-15 Star, British War Medal and Victory Medal.



COURTESY OF ARCHIVES CANADA

John Mahony won the Victoria Cross for heroism in leadership.

Thompson to vow to do "whatever it takes" to make sure the "powerful and enduring symbol" of Canadian courage remained in the country.

A third resident of Pine Street — later renamed Valour Road to recognize the remarkable coincidence — also won the Victoria Cross during the 1914-18 war. Sgt.-Major Frederick Hall's medal is still in private hands.

With the addition of the medals



COURTESY OF GOVERNOR GENERAL'S FOOT GUARDS

Leo Clarke earned the Victoria Cross for a single-handed assault.

awarded to Clarke and Mahony — a native of New Westminster, B.C., who died in London, Ont., in 1990 — the museum now holds 32 of the 94 VCs granted to Canadians.

"These medal sets will ... keep alive the remarkable legacy of Canada's veterans," said Mark O'Neill, the museum's director general.

CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

Celebration 150 Committee Report

Westies kick off 150th in style with Lieutenant Governor of BC at the special New Year's Day Levée



Welcoming Lieutenant Governor of BC



Lighting of the Armoury to celebrate the 150th!

Hundreds of community members, civic and military dignitaries were thrilled to have the opportunity to meet The Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia at the special New Year's Day Levée hosted by The Royal Westminster Regiment. It was a momentous day for The Royal Westminster Regiment as everyone came together to welcome the New Year and celebrate the start of the Westies 150 in grand style. What an incredible way to commemorate this special occasion by linking the past to the present!

The Honourable Judith Guichon, Lieutenant Governor of BC was joined by her husband, Vice Regal Consort, His Honour, Mr. Bruno Mailloux for the late afternoon Levée. It was a long day for Their Honours, after hosting a New Year's Day Levée at Government House in Victoria, traveling by ferry and arriving at the Armoury by 4 pm for a memorable two hour visit.

Upon arrival, the Vice Regal Standard was raised on the Armoury flagpole at 6th St. and Queens Ave. As guests inside the Armoury waited in anticipation, Their Honours were greeted at curb side by the Vice-Regal Party consisting of the Honorary Colonel Karen Baker-MacGrotty and Mr. David MacGrotty along with Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Douglas Poitras and Mrs. Lois Poitras. The formal entrance of Their Honours and Vice Regal Party was announced with a fanfare by four heralding trumpets. Her Honour took the dais, accepted the Vice Regal Salute and inspected the Honour Guard. Following the inspection, Their Honours were invited to the Officers' Mess to meet the senior officers of the regiment and special guest, Colonel Rob Roy MacKenzie, Commander 39 Canadian Brigade Group. Photographs were taken and the Commander presented Her Honour with a commemorative shell casing from Her Honour's Installation Day last November.

After receiving guests for over one hour, Their Honours and the Vice Regal party rejoined visitors on the parade square where Her Honour delivered New Year's Day greetings and congratulatory remarks. Col. Baker-MacGrotty thanked Her Honour and presented a copy of the recently published pictorial history book, *For King and Country: 150 Years of The Royal Westminster Regiment*. The formal agenda concluded with LCol Poitras leading the audience in a Toast to the Queen and a Toast to the Regiment. Complimenting the toasts, the regimental band played "God Save the Queen" and "The Maple Leaf Forever". The late afternoon visit concluded with Her Honour performing a special ceremony to "Light the Armoury" for the 150th year. Watch the countdown ceremony at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jXiEe-2QzIs> The excitement built as drums rolled and everyone joined the countdown leading to Her Honour pressing the special switch. As the Armoury was lit with an outline of white lights, the crowd clapped and cheered with delight. As the evening fog had just rolled, the white perimeter lights it created a wonderful glow surrounding the Armoury. It was a spectacular and dramatic effect! The Armoury will remain lit during the evenings for the duration of the 150th year celebrations.

In addition to the opportunity to meet the Lieutenant Governor, visitors were delighted to share New Year's greetings with Col. Rob Roy MacKenzie, Commander, 39 Canadian Brigade Group and many other visiting senior military officers. Guests enjoyed complimentary apple cider and sweets, visiting the Regimental Museum and the various displays of the Royal Engineer re-enactors and the Seymour Artillery Battery Re-enactors, while being entertained by the Band of The Royal Westminster Regiment who were donned in ceremonial uniforms. In addition, six members of the unit's Cadet Corp wore historic WW II uniforms and handed out C150 stickers. The Regiment's recently published pictorial history book, *For King and Country: 150 Years of The Royal Westminster Regiment*, was also launched for public sale at the Levée. During the event, visitors signed the commemorative guest book pages which will be bound at the end of 2013 and placed into the Regimental Museum as a record of visitors for the 150th year.

With so many community, government and military visitors joining the Regiment for the special New Year's Day Levée, the regal atmosphere was filled with good wishes and camaraderie. It was truly a festive day enjoyed by all, one which shall be remembered for many years to come!

If you have photos from the Levée event, please submit them to kamacg@shaw.ca

Respectfully submitted: Col. KE Baker-MacGrotty, HCol

1922 Report

As we move into our 70th year 1922 has had a great start in 2012-2013 training year. With sixteen new cadets since September we are 53 cadets strong and growing.

The NCO's and Officers participated in a Professional Development weekend where RSM Kelly spoke to all of the NCO's for a few hours on the importance of Leadership.

1922 has been working with the City of Abbotsford to build a Youth Hall with the cadet corps as the owners of the building. After receiving a plot of land at Grant Park to build, the next step is to receive the communities' approval. The sponsoring committee held a public information meeting at the City Hall in Abbotsford was the response was more then positive. Moving forward we will be working on acquiring blue prints for the building. It is our hopes to break ground September of 2013 before the Commanding Officer Captain Coulter finishes her term as CO of 1922.





SAVE THE DATE

UPCOMING EVENTS

39 CBG Garrison Military Ball Saturday, April 6, 2013	Baptism of Children at Holy Trinity Cathedral Sunday, May 19, 2013 (TBC)
Hyack Anvil Battery Salute Monday, May 20, 2013	Melfa 2013 Reunion Weekend May 23 - 26, 2013
Hyack International Parade Saturday, May 25, 2013	Cadet Corps Combined ACR Saturday, June 1, 2013

JOIN THE FUN!
HELP CELEBRATE 150!
NEW C150 WEBSITE LAUNCHED!
Stay Informed!

Our new Westies 150 Website was launched in mid-December. Visit: www.150.royal-westies-assn.ca/
 Check the website periodically for updates and new events/projects.
 Please sign up for our e-Newsletter through the website link to receive updates monthly.

New C150 Pin, C150 Commemorative Medallions, C150 Window Decals

Just released! C150 Items are selling very fast and we have placed another order for more inventory. Please visit the website to view the items for sale!
 Contact a C150 Committee member to purchase!

Melfa Weekend:

HOTEL ACCOMODATION: Special arrangements have been made at the Inn at the Quay for The Royal Westminster Regiment at only \$129 plus tax per night. To reserve phone 604-520-1776 or toll free: 1-800-663-2001 and quote Group Code: WESTIES. This special rate is not available online. Limited number of rooms available. Book ASAP! (Please note: this is the same weekend as the Hyack Festival and all hotels in town will be sold out early. Act now to avoid disappointment.)

MELFA WEEKEND 2013

May 24, 25, and 26

Melfa Golf:

Location--- Delta Golf Course
11550 #10 HWY
Delta, B.C.
Date—Friday May 24, 2013
First Tee-Off – 0900 Hrs.
Cost -- \$60.00 per Golfer (Includes Golf, Sandwich and a Beer)
Registration by May 17, 2013
Contact—Alan Morton 604 315 2114 amorton25@telus.net

Melfa Dinner:

Location—The Armoury New Westminster
Date – Saturday May 25,2013
Cocktails 1800 to 1900 Hrs.
Dinner at 1900 Hrs.
Dress—Casual Dress (No Jeans) or Uniform
Cost--\$50.00 per person by May 11, 2013—No Tickets after that date
RSVP by mail or e-mail to tmleith@gmail.com or hehamm@telus.net

Brunch/AGM:

Location—The Armoury New Westminster
Date—Sunday May 26,2013
Brunch—0930 Hrs.
AGM—1100 Hrs.

Golf --(\$60.00 per person) _____ = \$ _____

Dinner—(\$50.00 per Person) _____ = \$ _____

Brunch—(No Cost) _____ = N/A

TOTAL _____ \$ _____

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