

The Groundsheet



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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’

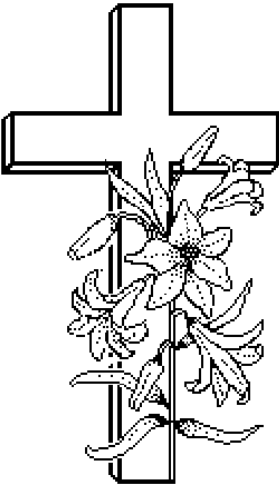
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In Memoriam



Bruce Eaton	DeJanuary 2014	Delta BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
Leslies German		Tsawassen BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
Russell Harrison	December 2012	Surrey BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
Frank Grace	July 2013	Revelstoke BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
Angus M. Wilson	August 2013	Surrey BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
John Seigo	April 2012	Coquitlam BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
Lewis J. Moi	December 2012	Ashcroft BC	Westminster Regiment WWII

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.

Editor's Report

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Hello all again. This is a bit light as we have not heard from many members. I hope all of you are doing well. I have included a couple of items from For King and Country Pro Rege et Patria 150 Years of The Royal Westminster Regiment. This is a significant piece of work from our 150th celebration.

As I prepare this issue I also am updating our nominal roll. From our last post you can see we are losing several of our older members. I also have been adding new members to our list and in the last year we have added about 30 new members. Two things have brought this about. First, the Regiment has been working hard to promote the Associations as Regimental members leave. Second, the success of the 150th celebration has brought many members back into our ranks.

Although we are gaining new memberships we have been losing contact with several members. On pages 6 you will see our MIA list. These are people we have recently had returns from. If anyone knows where one of these members are drop us a line.

You should note the significant changes to our Melfa Weekend. Terry will comment on these and the last page will give you some more information.

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

The New Westminster Volunteer Rifles 1863 - 1899



ABOVE Cap badge of the Royal Engineers

BELOW New Westminster Rifle Company officer's wallet



12 | IN THE BEGINNING

THE ROYAL ENGINEERS landed in 1858 and began building the community which would become New Westminster. They also surveyed roads to the Cariboo gold fields and provided police services throughout the Lower Mainland. When they were repatriated to England in 1863, the citizenry of New Westminster petitioned Governor Douglas to establish a volunteer military force to maintain order. The 'New Westminster Volunteer Rifle Company No. 1' was duly authorized on 20 November 1863 and confirmed in writing the next day. The initial contingent consisted of three Royal Engineers who had chosen not to return to England and 70 local citizens.

RIGHT His Excellency Governor James Douglas conveys his full authority for the formation of The New Westminster Rifle Company No.1, 1863

THE VOLUNTEER RIFLE COMPANY.
REPLY OF HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR TO THE APPLICATION.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
21st November, 1863.

GENTLEMEN,—I am directed by the Governor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 18th instant acquainting His Excellency that, at a public meeting held at New Westminster, it was resolved that a Company to be called "The New Westminster Rifle Company, No 1," should be established, and forwarding a list of the names of those who are desirous of joining the corps; and I am to acquaint you that His Excellency highly approves of the steps that have been taken by the inhabitants of New Westminster for forming without delay a Volunteer force for mutual protection and defence, and His Excellency considers he would be wanting in his duty did he fail to express the high gratification he has experienced at this display of loyalty and public spirit on the part of the inhabitants of New Westminster, and his sense of their wise determination, by such efficient measures, to preserve general peace and security.

2. His Excellency therefore directs me to convey to you his full authority for the formation at once of the corps, and for the election of the proper officers, whose names, when elected, are to be submitted for approval.

3. When the necessary preliminaries have been arranged the Government will be prepared to supply the requisite arms and ammunition.

I have the honor to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

WILLIAM A. G. YOUNG.

To Messrs. H. Hulbrook, J. Ramage, and others, signers of the communication as aforesaid.

Presidents Report

The Association has been preparing for the Melfa Dinner for 2014. It will be a busy day, as the AGM has been moved to the Afternoon in order to get more of the younger members involved. There is also the Change of Command on that same day along with the Hyack Parade. The Association will be in the Hyack Parade as in the past. We will be riding in the MSVS with our banners on the side.

Herb Hamm and I have attended a Xmas Dinner for the 1789 Royal Westminster Regiment Cadet Corps in Hope, B.C.

We also attended the annual Men's Xmas Dinner in the Armoury and presented the CO with our annual gift to the Regiment.

Remembrance Day was well attended and Stan Conway laid the Association Wreath along with Jack Loepky.

The Bren Gun Carrier project is coming along as we finally have the license in place for the pad. We could still use more donations for this project. Any donation will receive a tax Receipt. Cheques should be made out to The Royal Westminster Regiment Historical Society. I look forward to a good turnout to this year's Melfa Dinner and Golf Tournament.

Pro Rege et Patria

Terry Leith



Jack Loepky and Stan Conway



Christmas Party

Our Cadets

2822 Surrey- No Report

1789 Agassiz – No Report

2316 New Westminster – No Report

1838 Maple Ridge - No Report.

2822 Surrey – See next page.

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

Arthur Pranke	Rev. William Hubbard
Doreen Churchill	George Demetruk
Ken Moyes	Darren Crum
Richard Ruggles	Jordy Anderson
Brian Knipstrom	Bruce Marshall
Terri Orser	

These are people we have lost contact with and need updated addresses.

The Regiment

With the Holiday Season passed behind us and a New Year ahead the Royal Westminster Regiment has rolled into this second half of the training year in good spirits. Capping off a fantastic 150 year anniversary of the regiment the Westies held a fantastic formal Gala and great subsequent Christmas Celebrations. So far in January alone the Regiment has brought in a few more new troops to join the family, and seen more participating in their BMQ and BMQ-L courses. The regiment was also extremely proud and thankful for the service and safe return of our own Major Vernon and Captain Phillips who spent most of last year serving overseas with Operation Attention. And last, but certainly not least, the Royal Westminster Regiment is starting to gear up for the upcoming Change of Command of the Regiment bidding a heartfelt farewell to our own Lt. Colonel Poitras in May of this year.

This Holiday season went by as smoothly as is expected with another successful hosting of the Men's Christmas Dinner, and the related Children's Christmas party at the Armory in New Westminster. This past quarter has also seen the Change of Command for the 39 Canadian Brigade Group to see Colonel Mackenzie promoted to Brigadier General and deputy commander of the 3 Canadian Division The Westie's own former Commanding Officer Lt. Colonel Hausmann succeed to the command of the 39 Canadian Brigade Group, an honour to all Westies and a good omen for the continued successes of the Canadian Brigade Group.

As mentioned prior, the Westies are all extremely happy to welcome back our very own Major Vernon and Captain Phillips back from serving in Afghanistan on Operation Attention. Operation Attention was a major training push by NATO forces for the professional training, and mentoring of the Afghan National Army and related paramilitary forces; specifically in developing proper training courses and infrastructure which will serve to allow the Afghan leadership to produce quality and effective security forces in the post NATO years.

As we enter into a new year we must think forward about training and operations. As may be seen by the many posters around the Armory a great push this year is for full participation in the late August Chilcotin exercise Kootenay. Troops are encouraged to liaison with their chain of command and employers in order to make sure they can get the time off for the near week long exercise at the end of August. An Infantry centric operation, Kootenay Cougar will no doubt be a priceless opportunity and a lot of fun.

It is with fondness and no little degree of reluctance that we begin to work towards and realize that our good Commanding Officer of over four years Lt. Colonel Doug Poitras will be retiring as our Commanding Officer and from the Canadian Armed Forces in general. Lt. Colonel Poitras has seen the unit through a drastic period of revival over the past near five years, including but not limited to the Regiment's marked 150 year anniversary. Lt. Colonel Poitras is retiring from the Canadian Armed Forces and leaves behind a marked legacy both within the Regular Forces and the Reserve Units.

As such we find ourselves looking forward on a New Year, one of transformations, challenges and opportunities. In true Westie fashion we will not stop moving forward and developing. We look forward through this year and the challenges it will bring.

OCdt. D. Klassen
R Westmr R

2822 Surrey

Heading towards the end of 2013, 2822 participated in the Remembrance Day parade at our Whalley Legion Br 229, alongside the 3300 BCR corps. We had an exceptional turnout and a beautiful day to remember our fallen soldiers. Leading up to the parade, our corps participated in a number of poppy sales in Surrey, and Vancouver. On December 6th, 14 of our cadets braved the minus 6 degree weather and went out and participated in The National Day of Remembrance and Action Day to End Violence Against Women at Holland Park. This is an event our cadets have taken part in the past 4 years, and will continue in the years to come. The very next night we had our annual mess dinner! Many of our cadets were promoted to higher ranks, and received their service medals and bars. We also had two of our officers promoted to the rank of 2LT , and receive their scrolls. After a fun swim night for the cadets, we stood down for the holidays. This January, we aged out CWO Robert Stanhope and welcomed our new RSM CWO Jesse Fraga. Our corps is continuing on with range and sports on Sundays, and we are looking forward to our upcoming range ftx in the next couple of weeks!

OCdt. Onkar Dhillon
Training A/T
2822 Royal Westminster Regiment Army Cadet Corp
13525 Veterans Way
Surrey BC V3T 2C6



INSET One of the first cap badges worn by New Westminster Volunteer Rifles No.1

ABOVE Photo taken of the NWVR No.1 during a shooting match against an unknown naval vessel, circa 1865. New Westminster Volunteer Rifle members: standing (L-R) Ensign A.T. Bushby (seated), Capt C.J. Pritchard, Lt A.N. Birch, Ensigns R. Wolfeneden, J.C. Brown, C. Good, I. Fisher, J.T. Scott, G. Williams, W.A. Franklin, J. Butler and J. Burr

MELFA WEEKEND 2014

May 23, and 24

MELFA GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Melfa Golf Tournament will be held at The Delta Golf Course on May 23rd 2014. First Tee time is 9:00 am The Cost is \$60.00 per golfer which includes Golf and Beer and a Sandwich If you are planning on entering, Please contact Alan Morton @ amorton25@telus.net Or Terry Leith @ tmleith@gmail.com. Or send a cheque or money order to the Association at 530 Queens Avenue

New Westminster, B.C. V3L 1K3

Entries must be received by May 16th. In the past people have said they were coming and cancelled at the last minute. We have to pay for the number that we tell the Golf course that we will have, so it is important that if you say you are going to play please show up.

IMPORTANT NOTICE RE: AGM

A motion was passed at the January meeting to move the AGM from Sunday morning to Saturday afternoon at 1:00 PM in order to have more of the serving members attend the AGM and find out more about The Association. This would also allow for people that come from out of town, to be able to make arrangements to return home earlier the next day.

Melfa Dinner:

Location—The Armoury New Westminster

Date – Saturday May 24,2013

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

Mail to: The Royal Westminster Regiment Association
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