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May 2016



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’

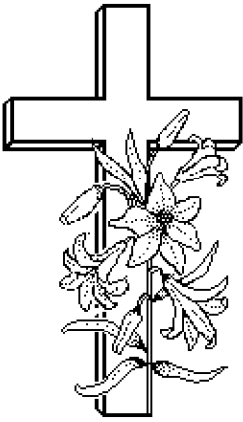
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In Memoriam



James Edmund Oldfield

Aug. 30, 1921 — April 3, 2016

James Edmund Oldfield, 94, of Salem, formerly of Corvallis, died April 3.

Jim was born and raised near Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, the third son of Clarence and Doris Oldfield. He attended grade schools and high school in Saanich municipality, and went on to the Victoria College and the University of British Columbia. During World War II, he served in the Westminster Regiment, Fifth Canadian Armoured Division, in Italy and Northwest Europe. On return to Canada he resumed graduate studies at U.B.C., proceeding to Oregon State University, where he earned the doctoral degree and joined the faculty of the Department of Animal Sciences, which he headed from 1967 to 1983. He became one of the world's leading authorities on selenium research including his work in animal nutrition which led to the cure of white muscle disease in cattle. He was awarded the Distinguished Professor at OSU in 1969 and received the prestigious Klaus Swartz award for trace mineral work in 1998. Jim thoroughly enjoyed his life's work, and after retirement continued his association with the department, colleagues and staff.

Jim married the love of his life, Mildred Atkinson in 1942. She passed away in 2007.

He is survived by their five children, Nancy (Brian) McLaren, Kathy (Steve) Sansone, David (Merilee) Oldfield, Jane (Pat) Oldfield and Richard (Karen) Oldfield; 10 wonderful grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

A celebration of his life will be at 1 p.m. Sunday, May 22, at the James E. Oldfield Animal

Teaching Facility, 3521 S.W. Campus Way, Corvallis. Anyone wishing to make a donation in his memory may direct it to either the Old Mill Center for Children and Families, 1650 SW 45th St., Corvallis, OR 97333 (oldmillcenter.org) or the Animal Sciences Facilities Fund in care of OSU Foundation, 850 S.W. 35th St., Corvallis, OR 97333 (osufevents@oregonstate.edu).

“The most important gift a father can give his children is to love their mother”

Editor's Report

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Greeting members of the Regimental Family.

I have officially taken over the role of editor of the *Groundsheet* from Len Wolhgemuth. As some of you know I am current serving member of the Regiment and I look forward to the challenge that comes with being the editor.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Len for his tireless work in this role. Len's work has allowed members and former members of our regimental family to stay current and updated with news about the Regiment, Association, Cadets, and general points of interest.

Thank you Len, for all your hard work and enjoy your retirement from journalism.

As the new editor, I plan to carry on where Len left off. In doing that I would like to see this publication grow in terms of content. To that end I have started enlisting current serving members to write articles on unit business and exercises.

I would also like to reinforce our link to the past with museum articles that highlight some of the truly amazing regimental pieces we currently have on display.

Other changes involve articles on army news and an editor's report that will likely evolve into an opinion piece.

As a reader you can expect a longer and more story driven *Groundsheet*. With that in mind, if you have been on exercise, deployment, and course or just have an interesting story to tell, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Paul Guilmain
Editor

Presidents Report

Good Day Westies

I just got back from Quesnel yesterday, and noticed that there was a get together of a couple “old” westies going on . So the next thing you know I’m at the rivers reach with Kerry Malish, Rich Badgeley, Al Kerekanich, Mike Fredericks and reminiscing. When you’re in the military still, you get to bump into people all the time and you don’t have to apply effort to catch up. But when you are out of the uniform, you start missing it instantly, yet it takes a bit of effort to stay in touch. We need to continue to make those efforts. Speaking of which.....

Melia weekend is coming up. We are finalizing all the details now for the dinner, the golf and the AGM but suffice it to say, no surprises. It will be a fun weekend like always. I’d like to take an opportunity now to further outline some of the fundraising goals you may see in the near future. We will have a small silent auction at the Melfa dinner, and that has two goals. To fund the bursary and to generate some funds for the Melfa trip to Italy that we are planning for 2019. In regards to the bursary, we’ve made a significant investment. This year the bursary will be \$2500 and will most likely be around that figure for the next few years. It’s a prudent amount of money that we believe we can afford, and it’s a large enough amount of money to be a game changer for a deserving soldier who may need the funds. Of course, we want to make sure that we are providing the necessary financial backing for this bursary so some of the money fundraised in the future will be going there. In regards to the Melfa our intent is to largely, if not entirely, self-fund. So participants will be paying their own way. However, if we can bring along someone to aid the trip and bring it a higher level of authenticity (such as a proper historian) we will want to look at doing that. We also will have some graves to visit and some folks on the Italian side that we will want to meet to maintain ties and we anticipate needing some dollars for that. So that is the nature of the fundraising we intend on doing.

I’d like to ask you all to go visit the new association website www.royal-westies-assn.ca. On there, you’ll see the new layout that we are using. It’s going to keep getting updated and have more information as we go forward. On that note, we all owe thanks to director Ms. Karyn Dyer for her work on the website. The calendar is up and running and we intend to get the pertinent info from the previous site transferred over along new calendar updates. Again, we ask that any photos or info that the serving battalion or other association members have get forwarded to the directors so we can include them in the site.

Thanks again to the membership for your support over the last year, and we certainly will appreciate that support continuing for the new committee that comes from the AGM.

Pro Rege et Patria

Museum

The Museum has undergone a few renovations over the Christmas stand down. The carpeting has been removed and the original floor has received a protective coating on it. A few items have been put on display outside of the Museum. We will be putting more outside as time goes on. One of our most recent acquisitions is the Medals and badges that belonged to LT Dennis Peter Hepburn. Lt Hepburn joined the 131st Bn and was commissioned after three years and served with the 47th Bn.

Lt Hepburn was wounded on 5 October 1918 and died of these wound on 3 November 1918 at the 20th General Hospital at Dames Camiers, France.

Along with the Medals, Insignia and badges is a binder with all of Lt Hepburn's documents, which is very significant.

The museum is always on the lookout for artefacts of this nature.

We have distributed Museum Brochures to all the schools and some schools are making appointments to visit.

Thomas Lam
Curator



The Regiment

This has been another busy year for the battalion. Soldiers have undergone a wide variety of training including influencing activities (IA), recce, and of course the ever popular DP3B on top of the unit exercises.

Exercise Ducimus Raid

On the night of 26th of February 2016, soldiers mustered at Chilliwack Base for Exercise Ducimus Raid. Members of Royal Westminster Regiment (Westie's), Seaforth Highlanders of Canada and 12 Medical Company amalgamated to form a coalition platoon. 39 Sigs operated the radios in the command post and radio rebroadcast station. And British Columbia Regiment's light armoured G-wagons acted as the enemy force.

The training exercise was aimed to train soldiers in offensive operations. The platoon was to conduct a fighting patrol through Tamahi trail with the reconnaissance elements, ambush the enemy convoy, all of which led up to a deliberate attack as the finale to the exercise. Major Soley from 39 Canadian Brigade Group Headquarters (CBG HQ) closely accompanied the platoon as the Observer-Controller-Trainer, to assess and critique their tactics.

Tamahi trail welcomed the platoon with all-too-familiar rain: a reminder that they were home. The ground was treacherous with slippery slopes and mud swamps that entrapped a soldier's foot without hesitation. Steep mountain side to their left, the Chilliwack River to their right and enemy ATV's roaming on the trail, these circumstances forced the platoon to venture through the thick tree lines. They made a slow and steady progress through the unbeaten path.

At the command post, signalers stayed awake for the periodic radio checks and situation reports from the platoon. Within the first hour on the ground, the platoon initiated a 9 liner for no-duff injury for a medical emergency. It was a minor knee sprain as a result of a slip in the mud and the individual was evacuated by transport back to command post. Three hours later, another no-duff 9 liner was heard on the radio, with a similar mechanism of injury. These injuries interrupted the platoon's momentum and slowed their progress.

The next day, the Brigade Commander Colonel Awalt, Brigade Sergeant Major CWO Arden, Westie's Commanding Officer Lieutenant-Colonel Vernon along with RSM Gardner visited the troops on the ground. They observed the platoon conduct ambush later in the day and launch a platoon attack on Sunday morning.

1600hrs on 27th of February, the platoon had setup an ambush at objective Riminii, a bend in the Liumchen Creek road, waiting for the enemy convoy to arrive. Under the platoon commander 2Lt Uttley's careful coordination, the platoon quietly waited as the enemy vehicles' engine roared through the woods. And at the perfect time, the C6 machine guns opened fire on the lead vehicle, halting the entire enemy convoy. As the enemy stood disoriented by the hail of fire from the front, the platoon assault element rushed to flank them from the left. The platoon

surprised the enemy force and gave them no chance to flee in their vehicles and escape: a successful ambush.

The platoon continued with their advance to the company hide, where they rested and prepared for the deliberate attack on Objective Peregrine the following morning. It was a rough night for them in the hide as an enemy patrol took random shots from their vehicles in the vicinity attempting to provoke a firefight and locate the platoon's position. But the soldiers were well disciplined to hold firm and defend their position unseen. It was a restless night for the platoon in the rain and the cold wind.

At sunrise, the platoon moved tactically to the next objective ready for enemy contact. The enemy force attacked them from the front; and 2Lt Uttley's swift decision to flank the enemy from the right tree line proved to be effective against the enemy.

The soldiers' morale was high. Their conversation naturally revolved around gripe-worthy situations, such as slipping into quicksand or shivering through the night in a wet sleeping bag. But they reminisced as if they were memorable escapades. They glowed with the pride of overcoming the challenges and were eager for more. And this is what differentiates soldiers from the rest.

The Relentless Warrior

Every Wednesday afternoon, the Westie's close quarter combat (CQC) Team gather at the Royal Westminster Regiment Armory to train and spar. It is rather like watching a game of chess; fighters are attentive to their opponent's every twitch, and every movement has intent. CQC incorporates the finest techniques from a variety of martial arts disciplines including Jiu Jitsu, Judo and wrestling. For many, it was their first formal training in martial arts. And under the watchful guidance of Sergeant Walsh, team captain and CQC instructor, they were quick to learn new movements and master them for the upcoming CQC competition.

The 2016 CQC competition was held on 30 Jan 2016 in Wainwright, Alberta. Participating teams were all from 3rd Canadian Division, regular force and reserve force including Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry, Lord Strathcona's Horse, 1 Combat Engineer Regiment, 3 Canadian Division Training Centre (3 CDTC), British Columbia Dragoons (BCD) and The Royal Westminster Regiment.

The Westie's were the only reserve team to compete in 3rd Division and originally were asked to represent the 39 Brigade Team. However, Major Rob Clarke of 3 CDTC revised the

team name to “R Westmr R” to appropriately reflect the predominant of Westie’s on the team. The R Westmr R team comprised of 10 Westie’s and 1 BCD.

All the Westie warriors fought fiercely against their opponents. Ultimately, Master Corporal Kayla Boston won the Female Absolute Gold medal and the Top Female Contender Trophy. The Male Intermediate Skill Level Welter Weight Silver medal was won by instructor Sergeant Colby Walsh. Both of these victories were by submission.

The Westie’s CQC program provides an excellent opportunity to not only train soldiers in self-defense skills, but also build a strong comradery and a sense of unit identity and pride. Sgt Walsh is pursuing a second training cell in Chilliwack to benefit the Westie’s out in the Fraser Valley.

The Westie warriors that fought in the competition:

Sergeant Colby Walsh (Silver Medal in Welter Weight)

Master Corporal Kayla Boston (Gold Medal in Female Absolute & Top Female Contender Trophy)

Master Corporal Bryce Haley

Master Corporal Andrew Tan

Corporal Lawrence Viola

Corporal Declan Miller

Corporal Gilbert Law

Corporal Taj Aujla

Corporal Phillip Urquhart

Corporal Mike Kent



The Royal Westminster Regiment Close Quarter Combat Team (Source: MCpl Boston)

Left Top: Cpl Law, Cpl Miller, MCpl Tan, MCpl Haley, Cpl Aujla, Cpl Urquhart, Cpl Viola

Left Bottom: Sgt Walsh, MCpl Boston, Cpl Kent



Cpl Viola in action (Source: Cpl Miller)



MCpl Boston carefully coordinating her next move (Cpl Miller)



MCpl Boston's victory against her visibly exhausted opponent (Cpl Miller)



MCpl Boston awarded the Top Female Contender Trophy by BGen Eyre (Source: MCpl Boston)
Left: CWO Stevens, BGen Eyre, MCpl Boston, LCol Trenholm, CWO Halcro



Sgt Walsh's unforgiving finishing move: Triangle of death (Source Sgt Walsh)

Sung Oh

Honours and Awards

Meritorious Service Medal

Sergeant Irvine of The Royal Westminster Regiment was awarded the Meritorious Service Decoration (Military Division) by the Governor General of Canada in December, 2013. He was instrumental in the Send Up the Count project, aimed to promote the mental welfare of serving and retired military personnel. Social media and other methods were utilized to increase the awareness of the program and reach out to Canadian Armed Forces members across the country. The initiative was immensely successful in helping over 9000 members in the first week and it has made significant impact on educating the Canadian population about occupation related mental illness.

The following is a synopsis from Sgt Irvine.

“None of the 3 commendations I have received (QDJM, Army Commander Commendation and M.S.M) are from my time overseas in Afghanistan.” Here is the narrative below.

Before we ever put a name to it, Send Up the Count was an idea I had shortly after returning from my second deployment. It was spawned from the idea that soldiers didn't need the DND, VAC, and any other outside agency to move forward, we only needed the support and drive from each other. Since day one, the military taught you to forget about your individual effort and to work as part of a team. Post deployment, you have that team ripped from you and go it alone. Send Up the Count was a way to reconnect to that team by asking guys to check in with their old teammates from various deployments or traumatic events.

The final concept was driven home sometime in late 2012 when helping out with the Veterans Transition Program, a Vancouver based group therapy group. It was full of volunteer doctors and grad students. That day I saw the closest thing to magic happen in a room full of 6 veterans, 2 doctors and 1-3 grad students. With no help from VAC, DND, or the military, guys were getting better. A groundbreaking moment was when I saw a soldier and an officer connect over a traumatic experience. One had loaded a buddy into a chopper and the other was on the receiving end of that chopper and did everything he could to save the man. That man died and both the soldier and officer were left wondering what happened on the other end. The two were in a

group therapy session I had the privilege of being on when the two shared the same story. They realized the other had the ability to fill in all the blank spaces. After hours, the two connected and shared. It was that at that moment it was solidified in my mind that there was a segment of soldiers that didn't need counselling, VAC, DND or the CF to intervene and help them through the fog of war. It was each other. It was the soldiers in and around the battle space that they had existed in that held the keys to moving forward, that could help them get passed the war and reclaim the person they were.

2013 was a busy year. I took a couple months off life after being accepted into the RCMP with a tentative date many months down the road, and backpacked through China, Korea, Honk Kong, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and Macau. When I returned, I completed 6 months of training at the RCMP's training facility, Depot, in Regina, Saskatchewan. I was first posted to Fort St John, British Columbia, where I found I had the down time to finally move ahead on my idea to have soldiers reach out to each other and try and fill in the blanks.

Prior to kick starting SUTC, I was trained by the Vancouver Crisis and Intervention Center in crisis intervention and de-escalation and completed my time there as a phone worker, manning a suicide hotline and crisis phone. I moved on to helping train the phone workers and with that experience and knowledge, with permission, I used the Vancouver Crisis Center's intervention model to move forward with SUTC. In short order, all the admins were on board with the de-escalation techniques.

During my Sgt's course in Gaagetown, New Brunswick in 2011, I met Brian Harding. I would reconnect again with Brian on a social media site that allowed RCMP recruits accepted to Depot to acquaint themselves with each other before there 6 months in Regina. Brian and I were on the same troop at Depot and it was through the 6 months of training that I was able to see the soldier, leader and steadfast man that he was. He was just the right man to present the idea to.

Both being RCMP Constables and NCO's in the reserves required a constant transition of Civilian hats, Police hats and NCO hats, a balancing act that never proved easy. Over the first 2 years of SUTC, we were directly involved in over 30 interventions of soldiers attempting suicide. Our involvement ranged from hours on the phone or social media deescalating

situations to having police attend to apprehend people under various Provincial mental health regulations.

SUTC was new, it was uncharted and it wasn't immediately welcomed with open arms. I was warned by several people, that our efforts could be dangerous and leave us liable due to the sensitive nature of mental health issues. We had a team of 6 administrators, which oversaw every intervention SUTC got involved with. There were hundreds of situations that we monitored while our membership helped deescalate long before the need for intervention was ever required. At our worst of times, Brian and I, being the only two police officers, juggled between our respective civilian and police hats with pure hope that what we were doing what was in the best interest of the person(s) we were helping. Our worst situations saw us intervene purely in an almost police roll, we spoke directly to policing partners doing the interventions and passed on the relevant information.

It wasn't always easy, with the tight team of 6 admins, we bounced every idea, ever problem off each other and came to a consensus on every issue. Brian and I are often credited for creating and maintaining SUTC but it is the entire team of admins, Dan McInnis, Dana Batho, Josh Thompson and Eric Davis that keep it running. Be it 5pm or 3 am, they are standing by to aid someone in distress.”



The Governor General's presentation of honours to more than 150 remarkable recipients at Chan Centre for the Performing Arts in Vancouver, British Columbia. "Each of these great Canadians is making this a better country, one day at a time, one remarkable act a time," said His Excellency. "Today, we're here to say thank you for your compassion, for your excellence, for your sacrifices."

(Source: www.gg.ca Photographer Sgt Ronald Duchesne, Rideau Hall)



Presentation of Meritorious Service Medal (Military Division) for their exemplary deed.
Left: Sergeant Brian Harding, Governor General His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Sergeant Jordan Irvine
(Source: www.gg.ca Photographer Sgt Ronald Duchesne, Rideau Hall)

Honours and Awards

Commander's Commendation



My first real experience in Tripoli, Libya, as a CP team member of Op Lobo, Roto 6, was a very brief drive around the city centre. Roto 5 team members were helping us with the RIP (relief in place) and were showing us around the city. On this day (my second on ground) the dude from Roto 5 was getting myself and my Team 2 I/C familiarized with one of the primary routes to and from the Canadian embassy. My 2 I/C was driving and I was riding shotgun. Our Roto 5 tour guide was relaxing in the back of our armoured Toyota Land Cruiser. I remember thinking to

myself that the traffic was just horrible. We were about half way into our drive when the car in front of us rear-ended the car in front of it. Believe it or not, this is not uncommon in places without traffic lights or speed limits. As we stopped rather abruptly, I checked my arcs and observed my surroundings. I see that the driver of the car that was rear ended had gotten out and around to the passenger side to check out the damage away from oncoming traffic. Now this is all pretty normal for a minor traffic incident so I don't really think much of it. Suddenly, the drivers of both cars begin screaming and assaulting each other. All three of us are now watching this event unfold. The two 140 lbs grown North African men just going at it in the street is pretty entertaining. We all had a laugh... Then it got real.

The driver that was rear ended aggressively opens his truck and pulls out an AK47. He chambers a round and starts shooting at the guy that just hit him. Seeing how we didn't have any diplomatic staff with us we simply made a U-Turn over a concrete divider and went back to our residence.

Welcome to Tripoli.

My deployment was full good times with great people. Being on a small team really brought us together and helped us through some difficult times. When we were extended (due to the airport being blown up) we had to lean on each other to deal with the stressors associated with being stuck in theatre. I had an absolute blast haha.



MELFA WEEKEND May 27-28, 2016

MELFA GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Melfa Golf Tournament will be held at The Delta Golf Course on May 27th 2016. First Tee time is 9:00 am The Cost is \$65.00 per golfer which includes Golf and Beer and a Sandwich
If you are planning on entering, Please contact Alan Morton @ amorton25@telus.net

Melfa Golf

Date: Friday, 27 May 2016

Location: Delta Golf Club

Time: 0900 hrs

Cost: \$65

Contact: Alan Morton amorton25@telus.net

AGM

The AGM will be held in the Junior Ranks Mess at 11:00 on 29 May, 2016.

AGM

Date: Sunday, 29 May 2016

Location: Junior Ranks Mess

Time: 1100 hrs

Dress: N/A

MELFA DINNER

Melfa Dinner

Date: Saturday, 28 May 2016

Location: The Armouries

Cocktails: 1800 hrs

Dinner: 1900 hrs

Association Dress: Blazer no Medals

Dress: Business Casual (no jeans, no t-shirts, no runners)

Cost: \$50

Contact: Karyn Dyer karyn1@shaw.ca

Please remember to bring cash as there will be a silent action. The purpose of the auction is to raise money for the Melfa 2019 trip.