

The GROUND SHEET

The Publication of The Royal Westminster Regiment Association

*'Dedicated to the ideals and comradeship
we knew in wars and peace, in our
service, both home and abroad.'*

'Pro Rege et Patria'

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The Armoury, 530 Queens Avenue
New Westminster, B.C., V3L 1K3

www.royal-westies-assn.ca



Lest We Forget



In Memoriam

Don Nicks	Moose Jaw, Sask	31 March, 2022	The Royal Westminster Regiment and Royal Canadian Air Force
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DONALD NICKS

20 January 1953 – 31 March 2022



It is with the heaviest of hearts that we announce the sudden passing of Donald A. Nicks, aged 69 years of Moose Jaw, SK on Thursday, March 31st, 2022. Don was born in Summerside, P.E.I. but moved about frequently during his youth. Being the son of an RCAF pilot, this was very common. Though he was born in Summerside, he considered Burnaby, BC his true hometown. Don had a long and satisfying career in the Armed Forces. Initially, he began this with a stint in the army serving with The Royal Westminster Regiment and then join the Air Force, he served for thirty-six years of duty, all over this country. A pilot, a teacher, an author, a goaltender, a historian, a husband, and a father, Don was a man who touched everyone he met.

*The Royal Westminster Regiment
Association will be on parade for November
11th. The Parade will form up at 0930 hrs. If
you need our new beret, come to the
Association Officer at 0830 hrs and they
will be available for \$25.*

Your Executive
2023-2024

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Hello fellow Association members:

Good day to all.

I hope everyone is enjoying this rain we are having. The province sure needs it. We are very fortunate to have our military help with our forest fires. It was very special to have our Westie's join our forest fire team. Thanks too our fire crews and our military.

We are coming up to Remembrance Day, if you are able to come out to our home parade site and parade with the Regiment.

I received an invitation to the WOs and Sgt's Passchendaele Dinner. Brought back many memories. Who remembers the 6 am club?

Melfa is only 7 months away, please mark your calendar, last weekend of May, and let's have lots of members and guests join us for dinner, need lots of the 60s, 70s and 80s come out.

Pro Rege et Patria

Linda Pickell
Editor

Health & Welfare

Births to the following members.

Sgt & Mrs. Dales had a baby boy, Jameson Michael, born 17 August 2023

Lt Col and Mrs. Chan had a baby boy, Jacob born 10 September 2023

Capt & Mrs. Corbin had a baby girl, Halle, born 19 August 2023

If we have missed your baby's birth, please let the Editor know.

President's Report

Hello everyone, with Remembrance Day coming up, please ensure that you have one of the new Association berets to wear. They are \$25 each and we have a range of sizes.

I am sorry to say that we have had to postpone the “Association Smoker” originally scheduled for 21 October at the Armoury. This is due to the construction work at the Armoury. The building is encircled with scaffolding as all the siding needs to be replaced.

Planning for our trip to Northwest Europe continues. The proposed schedule includes covering activities of the 47th Battalion, in the First World War, during the last week of April 2025 and then the activities of the Westminster Regiment (Motor), in the Second World War, during the first week of May 2025. On the 5th of May 2025, the Dutch will be celebrating the 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands. So, we will be there to celebrate with them.

Congratulations to the Westie team, who achieved a Silver Medal at the 2023 Cambrian Patrol competition, you did us proud!

Regards

Bill White
President

Regimental Council

On the night of 12 October 2023, a meeting of the Regimental Council was held in the Warrants' and Sergeants' Mess. The Council, which is a recent development, consists of representatives from all components of the Regimental Family. This includes the Association, Band, Battalion, Cadet Corps, Historical Society, Kit Shop, Museum, and Senate. The meeting was chaired by the Senior Serving Member of the Senate, Col Matthew Haussman. Those present included, the Commanding Officer, Lt Col Greg Chan; President of the Association, Bill White; Deputy Commanding Officer, Capt Mike Kelly; Regimental Adjutant, Capt John Milne; Cadet Liaison Officer, Capt Sung Oh; Dennis Keeton, President of the Historical Society; Capt John Perry CO 1789 RCACC (along with Lt Hans Mulder); Capt Paul Savoie, 1838 RCACC; Capt Jason Doherty, CO 1922 RCACC; Capt Christopher Lee, CO 2316 RCACC (along with Lt Ernie Bodrogi). The intent of the meeting was to provide updates on items of interest to all and promote and facilitate co-ordination of activities especially amongst the Cadet Corps and with the Battalion.

Cambrian Patrol 2023

The Cambrian Patrol is an annual military exercise that takes place in the rugged and unforgiving terrain of the Cambrian Mountains in Wales, United Kingdom. The exercise is renowned for being one of the toughest and most physically demanding challenges in the military world. It tests the endurance, mental agility, and team working skills of its participants, pushing them to their limits and beyond. The Cambrian Patrol is not only a test of physical fitness, but also a test of character, determination, and leadership.



The origins of the Cambrian Patrol can be traced back to the early 1960s when it was created as a means to train and assess the navigation and patrolling skills of the British Army. Over the years, it has evolved into a prestigious event that attracts military teams from all around the world. Each team consists of eight soldiers who embark on a grueling 65-kilometre patrol over two days, carrying all their equipment and supplies. They are required to navigate through difficult terrain, including rivers, mountains, dense forests, and marshlands, whilst completing various military tasks along the way.

One of the defining features of the Cambrian Patrol is the lack of sleep. Teams are given minimal rest periods throughout the exercise, adding to the physical and mental strain they experience. This sleep deprivation is deliberate, as it aims to test the participants' ability to think and act logically under extreme fatigue. It forces them to rely on their mental resilience and teamwork to overcome the challenges they face.

The exercise also incorporates a competitive element, with teams being scored on their performance. They are judged on various criteria, including skill at arms, patrol techniques, leadership, and tactical awareness. This creates an atmosphere of healthy competition and encourages each team to push themselves to their limits to achieve the best possible result. The overall winners receive the coveted Gold Medallion, a symbol of their exceptional performance and endurance.

The Cambrian Patrol places a strong emphasis on leadership and teamwork. Each team is required to work together to overcome obstacles, successfully complete tasks, and navigate the challenging terrain. Leadership

skills are critical in guiding the team effectively and making quick decisions under pressure. Effective communication and cooperation are crucial to ensure the safety and success of the entire patrol.

The physical and mental demands of the Cambrian Patrol are not to be underestimated. The harsh weather conditions, treacherous terrain, and sleep deprivation all combine to create an environment that tests the limits of human endurance. However, it is precisely these adverse conditions that make Cambrian Patrol such a valuable training exercise. Soldiers who successfully complete it emerge stronger, more resilient, and better equipped to face the challenges of real-world operations.

During this demanding competition, The Royal Westminster Regiment managed to stand out by winning a Silver Medal. The Westies were the only primary reserve unit in their serial of fourteen teams in phase two of the competition. The Westies “bested” and/or tied several regular force and special forces patrols.

However, what makes their success even more remarkable is the composition of their patrol included the Youngest Patrol Commander, the Oldest Patrolmen in the competition, and one patrol member who recently overcame a significant health issue.



The Westie Team from left to right; Cpl Cole Johanessen, Cpl Tyler McColl, Cpl Simon Jorgensen, Cpl Spencer Hilliard, Cpl Dennis Cui, Cpl Inderjit Bhabba, Cpl Brook Czajkowski, and MCpl Justin Fernandes.

The Royal Westminster Regiment's success in the Cambrian Patrol highlights Infantry skills of adaptability, resilience, and perseverance that are essential in any military setting. The accomplishment of a team silver medal serves as an inspiration to others, demonstrating the power of determination and unity in achieving extraordinary results.

WESTIE CADETS & OFFICERS MAKE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AT CTC VERNON.

The summer of 2023 marked the second summer that Vernon Cadet Training Centre (CTC) hosted Cadets and Officers from across Canada in a “traditional” Cadet Summer Camp session, in a post-pandemic environment.

The summer training cycle also saw several members from the “Five Westie Corps”, or those members affiliated with the Royal Westminster Regiment, be recognized by their peers and the Canadian Cadet Organization for their Leadership Skills and Values.

For the first time since 2018, an Army Cadet was appointed as the Cadet Sgt/Maj for the Vernon CTC. Cadet CWO Alana Nguyen from 2822 RCACC (Surrey) secured this appointment in a month-long preselection process, beating out 50 other Cadets for the appointment. In recognition for her determination in this role, she also received the R.M. Bashaw Memorial Award and a \$1,500 Bursary towards her Post-Secondary Education.

Cadet Jaelyn Ross of 1922 RCACC (Aldergrove) was recognized as the Top Course Cadet in her Platoon (6 Platoon) this summer on the Air Rifle Marksmanship Course.

In addition, two officers were recognized for their efforts as Adult Staff Members. Lt Ernest (Ernie) Bodrogi from 2316 RCACC (New Westminster) was presented with the “Sword of Distinction” as the top Platoon Commander out of the 12 Training Platoons during the summer training session. While Capt Travis Meade from 2822 RCACC (Surrey) received the Junior Officer “Sword of Excellence” as the most outstanding junior officer at the CTC. Vernon

Cadet Training Centre’s main focus this summer was on the Senior and Instructor Level Courses. These included Fitness, Music, Drill & Ceremonial and Air-Rifle Marksmanship Instructor. The Courses saw over 200 Cadets from across Canada and from all three services come to the CTC to put into practice the theory and knowledge that they had learned previously, in a weeklong Distance Learning portion.



Lt Ernest Bodrogi (2316 New Westminster) receives the Formation Commander’s Challenge Coin from Brigadier-General Dominique Brais, Commander Cadets and Junior Canadian Rangers Group. (The Coin was given to select members at the Vernon CTC for their commitment to ensure the success of the summer training cycle and the mentorship of his peers.)



Cadet CWO Alana Nguyen (2822 Surrey) at the Vernon CTC Appointment Parade, after receiving her Pace-Stick and selected as the CTC Cadet Sgt/Maj.

Vernon's traditional role as an exclusively Army Cadet Camp has evolved over the last number of years, to include all three elements. With Sea, Army and Air members filling the roles as not only course cadets, but also Staff Cadets and Officers.

These members now will return to their respective Corps'. And will no doubt continue the hard work and dedication that was recognized this summer.

Westies Deploy to Northern BC on Wildfire Firefighting Duty

(Vanderhoof, BC) Soldiers from The Royal Westminster Regiment once again answered the call, this time with Operation LENTUS 23-08, in response to the Province of BC's request for assistance with the wildfires this summer. The Domestic Response Company was deployed to the fires near Vanderhoof and Fort St. James for three weeks in August and September, providing unit crews of S100 (Wildfire Fighting) trained soldiers to assist the BC Wildfire Service (BCWS) and contracted crews with duties relating to mop up, patrols, firebreak construction, and an assortment of related tasks.



S100 Wildfire Fighting training was being conducted at the Col. St. John OMM CD Armory in Chilliwack throughout the summer in anticipation of the request for assistance (RFA), and a number of troops had previously been on firefighting operations this summer already. This meant when the request came in on the weekend of August 25th, things could start moving fairly quickly.

The LTF consisted of over 160 soldiers from 39, 41, and 38 Brigades, with detachments of MPs, medical, signals, cooks, and Canadian Rangers to help keep things running.



As troops arrived in Prince George from Vernon, they were greeted by a familiar friendly face, CWO Bergan, former RSM for briefings on the operation. Once in Vanderhoof, another Westie, WO Neff was on the ground as a Ranger Instructor with the 4CRPG contingent to provide predator protection (black bears were attempting to take on the cooks in the flying kitchen, having smelled the quality fresh rations on offer).

Once on the ground and housed on cots in an exhibition barn at the Nechako fairgrounds near Vanderhoof, troops were issued the iconic red NOMEX coveralls, hardhats, and pulaskis (fire axes) before heading to the fire line at 0615 the next morning. Several contingents, called unit crews (a platoon minus) went out each day to the fires north of Vanderhoof, while another unit crew was rotated farther north of Ft. St. James every 5 days to protect a remote community there, trapped between two fires.



Each morning began with briefings and assignments, such as building fire breaks, patrolling for hot spots, or mopping up and moving equipment. Fortuitously, one of the main BCWS leaders was a former ‘Vandoo’, so he was able to brief the crews and assign work in fluent “army-speak”. Some of the work was mundane, such as rolling hose, and most of it was dirty, muddy, and smelly, and not quite as glamorous as one would think, so don’t wait out for a Westie firefighter calendar. When one encountered actual flame, there was brief excitement, but it is a simple matter of putting water on it, then back to making mud; digging up the fire smoldering underground, and putting more water on it, day in, day out.



Once done for the day at 1800 or 1900 hrs it was an over an hour back to camp on the forest service roads, with a stop for fuel and junk food at the service station enroute. Morale remained high, despite the long days and crowded livestock exhibition barn serving as barracks, buoyed by warm fresh breakfasts and dinners, and perhaps a spectacular red sunset behind the smoke, or on the occasional clear night, green northern lights danced in the sky as you went about your ablutions before getting some well-earned rest.

Rededication of Cloverdale Monument – 18th August 2023

By Chuck MacKinnon (LCol Retd) - Manager of the Royal Westminster Regiment Museum

On the 18th of August 2023, myself, and Sgt (ret'd) Greg Bell attended the re-dedication ceremony in Cloverdale, BC. We were representing LCol Greg Chan and CWO Chris Hennebery of The Royal Westminster Regiment as well as the RWRA. The CO and other serving Westies currently engaged in Force Generation of Westies onto OPERATION LENTUS 2023 – BC Forest Fires. In fact, Westies were already deployed doing mop up on the fire lines.



Greg Bell and I had attended the previous dedication ceremony in 2006. Unfortunately, we were revisiting the monument this time due to a vandal kicking off the bronze statue and damaging the monument.

Why were we at the ceremony? What was the unit's connection to the monument?

The monument erected in 1920 to remember the fallen of WWI. The fallen whom had been members of the 104th Westminster Fusiliers. Our ancestral unit had a Company in Cloverdale along with seven other companies located in various communities from New Westminster to Chilliwack, BC. The Cloverdale lads recruited and trained at the Queens Park depot in New Westminster and then departed for Europe as members of the 47th Canadian Expeditionary Force and other CEF Bn.

Their sacrifice was not forgotten as businessperson Trigg helped raise money for the monument having lost his two sons – one at Vimy Ridge and the other at Passchendaele. LCpl Thomas Fleetwood's mother made application to the province and in fact had her community renamed after her son. Later a bronze statue of her son was erected and sits besides the Community Centre in that community. The unit attended that ceremony in 2008.

The original monument when erected had a 77mm or whiz-bang German Gun mounted on top which the 47th CEF had captured.

As time marched on the second world war broke out. Metal was scarce and all was collected at home to help the war effort. This included the German gun. The stone chocks that held the gun in position are still in place on the monument.

Prior to the 2006 dedication ceremony the monument was moved to its current location. Royal Canadian Legion Branch 6 collaborated with local school groups. Educating the children and asking for their input in the design. A sketch of the kneeling 47th CEF Bn soldier in front of a grave marker came to be the new monument's design.

The monument not only has WWI and WWII soldiers who served with Canada but one who served in the Submarine Service of the US Navy. Additional panels were also installed to recognize Canadian service personnel during the Korean War and on Peacekeeping Operations. There is one name on the monument whose details remain a mystery.

At the ceremony, Her Worship Brenda Locke said a few words and Memorial Medal Mother Sian LeSueur said a few words as well as unveiled the monument. Ms. LeSueur was the mother of Garnet Chidley. Pte Garnet serving with 1 PPCLI and was KIA in 2009. The same tour that Greg and I served on. I unknowingly attended his ramp ceremony in KAF a few days later after Pte Chidley was KIA. Greg advised me that himself and his team were dispatched to the incident site to conduct the recovery operation.

Even though this monument was erected to remember the fallen of WWI and WWII there is still connection between the community, family, and recent veterans of war.

These are not the only memorials in the Township of Langley that The Royal Westminster Regiment is connected to. Located near the Langley Airport is the Walk of Remembrance memorial. The idea for this memorial coming from two siblings – Michael and Elizabeth Pratt. There are 157 trees planted to remember each person fallen with a single bare tree trunk that has a single continuous ribbon that wraps around the tree with all the fallen names inscribed including Master Corporal Colin Bason.

At the going down of the sun we will remember them.

HONOUR ROLL

The following is the list of names on the Cenotaph with details added about the units they served in and their place of interment.

On the east side of the Cenotaph (from left to right)

Pte Henry James Goldstone, 433131, KIA at St. Eloi, 22 March 1916; while serving with the 49th CEF Bn; interred at Bedford House Cemetery, Enclosure, Belgium 4 XV. B.11.

Private (LCpl) John Charles Wicks (from the 104th then the 131st), 790413, DOW at Passchendaele 1 Dec 1917; while serving with the 7th CEF Bn; interred at Etaples, Military Cemetery, France, XXX N. I5.

Pte Reginald Bruce Triggs, (from the 104th and then the 131st), 790990, KIA at Passchendaele 24 Oct 1917; while serving with the 47th CEF Bn, interred at Menin Gate (Ypres), Belgium, Panel 28.

Pte James Curtis Abbott, 75042, DOW at Rouen 11 Aug 1918; while serving with the 29th CEF Bn; interred at St. Sever Cemetery Extension (Rouen), France, Q. V.G.23.

Electrician Archie Duncan McRae, killed in the Pacific Ocean, 17 Dec 1917; while serving in the US Navy Submarine Service, buried at sea.

Pte George Courtney Davis, 101345, died at Shorncliffe England 23 May 1916; while serving with the 66th Bn CEF, interred at Shorncliffe Military Cemetery, Kent, United Kingdom, O. 404.

Pte George Quible, 2021519, KIA at Dury 2 Sep 1918 while serving with the 72nd Bn CEF; interred at Wancourt British Cemetery, Pas de Calais, France, II.D.4.

LCpl Sidney Smith, CH/873(S), KIA at Ypres 29 Nov 1917; while serving with the 1st Bn Royal Marine Light Infantry; interred at St Julien Dressing Station, Belgium, II. K. 32.

Pte Harry Triggs, (from 104th and then 131st) 790810, KIA at Vimy Ridge, 16 Mar 1917; while serving with the 47th CEF Bn; interred at the Vimy Memorial

Pte John Giblin, 2138014, KIA at Monchy 2 Sep 1918; while serving with the 72nd Bn; interred at Vimy Memorial

On the north side of the Cenotaph, (from left to right)

Pte Frank Donald Ash 645266, KIA at Vimy Ridge 9 Apr 1917; while serving with the 54th Bn; interred at Givenchy Road, Neuville-St. Vast France, A. 28.

Pte Ernest Moody (from the 104th) 628245, KIA at the Somme 11 Nov 1916; while serving with the 47th CEF Bn; interred at Adanac Military Cemetery, Somme, France, II. I. 34.

David Arnott Nicholl (no other details on the cenotaph)

On the west side of the Cenotaph (from left to right)

LCpl Thomas Fleetwood, 629376, DOW at Lens 8 Sep 1917; while serving with the 47th CEF Bn; interred at Barlin Communal Cemetery, France, II. D. 15.

Pte Fredrick William Gooch (from the 104th then the 131st) 790547, KIA at Chapel Corner 18 Oct 1918; while serving with the 47th CEF Bn; interred at Chapel Corner Cemetery, France, E. 10.

Pte John Short (from the 104th then 47th Bn) 428021, KIA at Ypres 2 Jun 1916; while serving with the 7th Bn; interred at Menin Gate (Ypres) Belgium, Panel 28.

Pte George Albert Rowland, (from the 104th then the 131st) 790773, DOW at Poperinge, 21 Oct 1917; while serving with the 47th Bn; interred at Nine Elms British Cemetery, Belgium V.E.14.

LCpl Alexander Bates, 1015481, KIA at Valenciennes 4 Nov 1918; while serving with the 72nd Bn; interred at Valenciennes (St. Roch) Communal Cemetery, France, I. B. 14.

LCpl Hew McKenzie Bradshaw, 1015482, KIA at Arras 2 Sep 1918; while serving with the 72nd Bn; interred at Wancourt British Cemetery, France II. D. 11.

Sgt William Stokes, MM, (from the 10th and then the 131st) 790993, DOW at Vancouver 25 Aug 1919; while serving with the 47th Bn; interred at Vancouver Mountainview Cemetery. Jones 9. 45. 4.

Pte William Fraser McCaskill 2024860, died at Kinmel Park Wales, 24 Oct 1918; while serving with the 1st Reserve Bn; interred at Bodelwyddan (St Margaret) Churchyard, Wales, United Kingdom, 443.

Pte Charles Harris Hurford (from 104th then the 131st) 790702, KIA at Passchendaele 26 Oct 1917; while serving with the 47th Bn; interred at Ypres, Menin Gate Memorial, Panel 28

Gnr Walter Gowans Robertson 339075, KIA at Arras 2 Jun 1918; while serving with the 20th Fd Bty, 5th Bde; interred at Anzin-St Aubin British Cemetery, France, III. C. 20.

Abbreviations

Bde – Brigade	Bn – Battalion
Bty – Battery	CEF – Canadian Expeditionary Force
DOW – Died of Wounds	Fd – Field
Gnr – Gunner	KAF – Kandahar Airfield
KIA – Killed in Action	LCpl – Lance Corporal
MM – Military Medal	PPCLI – Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry
Pte – Private	Sgt - Sergeant

Author's note. At the beginning of the WWI, the 47th CEF Bn raised a Bn and three separate reinforcing drafts. During the later part of WWI, the 47th CEF Bn was referred to as the Western Ontario Regiment. This was due to where the reinforcements were coming from.

#2316 RCACC New Westminster

Our Corp has had a good start for the training year. There seems to be plenty of enthusiasm and anticipation for the upcoming year. The Change of Command parade had to be rescheduled to Thursday 5 October. Presently, we are parading 50 cadets with 65 cadets total strength. So far new cadets total 12 and it is anticipated more recruits will join over October. 5 new civilian volunteers are also joining the team. There is a good mix of Army and Air experience along with former cadets.

Area directed activities will provide more cadets with a more diverse selection of activities to choose from over the course of the year. Those activities will take place at various locations. Cadets will have the opportunity to mix with the other units and other elements. They will participate in sports tournaments, junior NCO development, competitions and orienteering. 2 successful Expedition weekends were conducted at Cultus Lake in September. 2 More will follow in October.

As the Armoury will not be available to us over November, we will be training out of the 513 Hornets "nest" at Queens Park for November.

#1838 RCACC Maple Ridge

Our cadets stood to on 07 September. 24 members attended the first evening with 3 new recruits. The first CO's parade will be held on Sept. 14.

A number of cadets attended local CAP camps during the summer with positive results.

We have a one-day canoe/hiking exercise scheduled for Sept. 24. Team training will be starting in October.

These will consist of a shooting team, drill team and pre-para training.

Our focus will be on recruiting and fun exercises for the year.

1922 RCACC (Aldergrove)

We kicked off the 23/24 training year with a successful welcome BBQ. Capt Jason Doherty is now the CO. We lost two cadets due to aging out and work, but gained about 12 more at the BBQ. Total strength currently stands at 47 on paper, but more BBQ guests plan to return their paperwork this week.

During the Summer, WO Jaelyn ROSS topped her platoon for the Air Rifle Marksmanship Course.

Our next exercise will be a regional exercise organised by RCSU for October.

#1789 RCACC Hope

The Westie Cadet Corp in Hope started out with a bang this September, they participated in both the Hope Brigade Days parade and the Agassiz Fall Fair parade. It was a real treat to see some of the officer's parade with the cadets. At the Hope Brigade Days, they set up an information both and had a lot of interest. They have 5 new recruits and still have more interest.

Are Your Dues Up To Date?

The Royal Westminster Regiment Association depends on your dues and donations. Yearly dues are \$20 and a Life Membership is \$200.

Send in your dues today to;

Treasurer@royal-westies-assn.ca

Thanks.

Don't forget to purchase your new beret from the Association.

What became of Kelly?

(Help us reconnect with former members)

How about reaching out to your friends that you soldiered with and persuade them to join the Association.

Rob Patterson Burton

Terry Salandi

Luru Wang

Kathy Fynn