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February 2024

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’

The Armoury, 530 Queens Avenue,
New Westminster, BC
Canada, V3L 1K3
www.royal-westies-assn.ca



Health and Welfare

It would be appreciated if all members of The Regimental family would report births, marriages and deaths within our membership and their families. I am sure with such a young Regiment there will be lots of babies born. So please drop us a line if you know anything.

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2023-2024

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Hello fellow Association members:

Good day to all.

This edition of the Groundsheet has been in the works for almost 2 months! What with waiting for articles to be written, getting pictures and Christmas and also life getting in the way it has been a long process. We are into February all ready? The Regimental Mess Dinner is next month, and we are only **3 months** away from Melfa. We hope everyone has the date marked (May 25th) on your calendar and making plans to attend. How about getting more of you old guard to come out. The 60 & 70s soldiers I am talking about. The other thing I am asking for is more articles to be sent to me. It could be about your time in the regiment, good or bad, what about old friendships you formed or how your children and grandchildren have carried on the military traditions.

Hope to hear from you soon.

Pro Rege et Patria

Linda Pickell
Editor

President's Report

Hello all, now that we are into another new year, I would like to reflect on how things have gone over the past year.

Starting with the monthly coffee mornings, many thanks to Annette Dombroski and Debbie Cooke for organising the coffee and treats. These have been good opportunities to get together for fellowship and sharing “westie” stories.

In the spring we had another successful Melfa golf tournament and Melfa Dinner. At the dinner we were pleased to announce the award of our three bursaries to deserving soldiers. We put on a BBQ for the Battalion during the range weekend in September which was well received.

The one disappointment is that we had was the postponement of our fall “smoker”. But when the scaffolding is down, and the Armoury is back in shape we will be able to have one again. It is really strange at the moment is to see the Armoury shrouded in a construction “cam” net. It is almost like having “black out” conditions again!

At the Remembrance Day Parade, we were proudly wearing the new beret.

The Soldiers' Christmas Dinner was a boisterous affair. The Association was able to present a number of Certificates of Meritorious Service to soldiers that had been on deployment including the Westie Team that won Silver at the Cambrian Patrol competition. We have also resurrected the practice of offering lunch to soldiers returning from an overseas deployment. The deployment included Operation Reassurance and Unifier as well Operation Lentus, support to the province during the fires last summer.

Thanks to the sharp (QM) eyes of Terry Leith, some of the missing copies of the Groundsheet were discovered in the Archives and which have been added to our Association website.

Progress was made regarding our planned trip to Northwest Europe in 2025. More detail is included in the article in this edition.

I would like to thank members of our Board for volunteering their time to work on activities for our Association.

On behalf of your Board of Directors, I would like to extend best wishes to you and your families all the best for the New Year

Regards

Bill White
President

Visit to the New Westminster Archives

I made a visit to the New Westminster Archives on 17 October 2023. Upon asking to see the file that they have on the 104th, I was both shocked and surprised by what was in the file. I discovered three sets of nominal rolls that had been typed up in the Orderly Room of the 104th Regiment. The nominal rolls were grouped by place of residence. They are titled as follows;


- First Contingent – Nominal Roll of Men of the 104th Regt Quota to the 1st B.C. Batt C.E.F.- Now on Active Service - Orderly Room, New Westminster BC – April 27th 1915 (See photo below showing part of the 1st page)
- Second Contingent - Nominal Roll of Men of the 104th Regt Quota to the 29th Battalion C.E.F. - Now Stationed in Hastings Park, Vancouver - Orderly Room, New Westminster BC – April 28th 1915
- Third Contingent – Nominal Roll of Men of the 104th Regt Quota to the 47th Battalion C.E.F. - Orderly Room, New Westminster BC – April 20th 1915

The 1st BC Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force became the 7th Battalion C.E.F. that was formed up in Val Cartier, Quebec.

My thanks to the staff of the Archives.

WW

Property of New Westminster Archives

 NEW WESTMINSTER
Museum and Heritage Services

FIRST CONTINGENT.

NOMINAL ROLL OF MEN OF THE 104TH. REGT. QUOTA TO THE 1st. B.C. BATT.

C.N.F. NOW ON ACTIVE SERVICE IN EUROPE.

Orderly Room,

RESIDENT IN NEW WESTMINSTER.B.C.

New Westminster.B.C.

April 27th.1915.

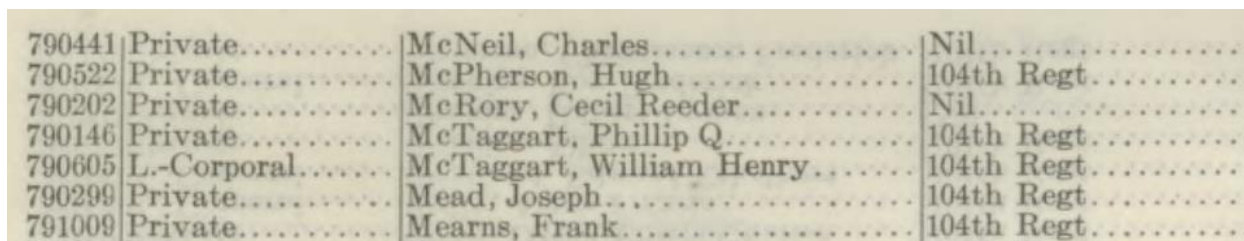
NO.	RANK.	NAME.	ADDRESS.
	Major	Doherty.	C.E. Asylum. N.W.
	Captain	Haines.	L.E. Third Avenue.
	Lieut.	Diamond.	J.H. Queens Avenue.
148	Sergt. Maj.	Philpot.	D. 6th. Avenue.
22	Col. Sergt.	O'Reilly.	J.F. Asylum.
161	Sergt.	Griffiths.	H.F. 115 Durham Street.
437	Act.Sgt.	Ruddock.	H.F. 230 Queens Avenue.
236	Lie. Sgt.	Wells.	F.V. 501 Agnes Street.
48	Corp.	Garroway.	L.B.H. New West.
187	Eugster.	Mortison.	W.F. 417 8th. Street.
490	Private.	Anderson.	J. Royal City Hotel.
536	"	Alcock.	G. 727 4th. Street.
426	"	Blackburn.	F.D. 229 Pearse Street.
506	"	Bundy.	L. Essendale.
423	"	Benge.	H. Room 3 116 McInnes Street.
487	"	Babcock.	W.L. General Delivery.
462	"	Bernays.	L.A. 245 Sandringham Avenue.
458	"	Barnes.	A. 341 Cumberland Street.
517	"	Cleghorn.	W.S. 408 Eighth Street, Sapperton.
494	"	Clamberlain	C.C. Dominion Hotel.
298	"	Cairnduff.	J. 1102 Seventh Avenue.
495	"	Cave.	D. 320 Columbia Street.
408	"	Campbell.	K.M. 816 Kennedy Street.
484	"	Dunford.	E.T. Land Registry Office.
509	"	Drum.	J.A. Dominion Hotel.
277	"	May.	W.M. 208 Regina Street.

Last Post Fund Research – A Very Rewarding Passion

by Wendy Trepke

I am a volunteer researcher for the Last Post Fund. The objective of the Last Post Fund – Unmarked Grave Initiative is to provide a permanent military marker for eligible Veterans who lie in unmarked graves. I would like to tell you how my passion for honoring those who served started, and the process I go through to honour them through this program.

I started on this journey in November 2020 when volunteering to be a photographer of headstones for Find a Grave. FindaGrave.com is a free website where memorials can be created, or existing ones found for deceased loved ones. An individual in Belfast, Ireland contacted me and asked if I would take a photo of his great uncle's headstone. Reporting back that his relative was resting in an unmarked grave, he revealed that his great uncle was a WW1 Canadian soldier and a recipient of the Military Medal. How sad that this brave soldier rested unrecognized for 43 years! I applied to the Last Post Fund for a military headstone, and it was so rewarding to see my first headstone placed, that I decided I would research in earnest to find more unmarked veterans' graves. A book titled "Canucks in Khaki" by Warren Sommer, providing WW1 historical military context and personal information about men who enlisted from Langley and the Lower Mainland was my inspiration. Many of these men enlisted with the 131st Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) based in New Westminster, British Columbia. The unit began recruiting in late 1915. The Nominal Roll for the 131st Battalion is a list of the Officers, NCOs and Men (no women) compiled prior to embarking for England on October 31, 1916. It provides the soldier's Regimental Number, Rank, Name, Former Corps, Name of Next of Kin, Address of Next of Kin, Country of Birth, as well as the place and date they were "Taken On Strength".



790441	Private.....	McNeil, Charles.....	Nil.....
790522	Private.....	McPherson, Hugh.....	104th Regt.....
790202	Private.....	McRory, Cecil Reeder.....	Nil.....
790146	Private.....	McTaggart, Phillip Q.....	104th Regt.....
790605	L.-Corporal.....	McTaggart, William Henry.....	104th Regt.....
790299	Private.....	Mead, Joseph.....	104th Regt.....
791009	Private.....	Mearns, Frank.....	104th Regt.....

Portion of the 131st Battalion Nominal Roll (Library and Archives Canada)

To reach the point where one can determine if a veteran rests in an unmarked grave, it is best to use an example: Regimental Number 790605 – McTaggart, William Henry

The Service Record on Library and Archives Canada provides Birth Date: 1893-09-18; Birth Location: Mission City, BC, Next of Kin: George Alexander McTaggart, father residing Matsqui, BC; Discharge: Demobilization; Battalion: 7th Canadian Infantry in France. Death notification may be included and provides death date and location: February 12, 1970. Awards or medals are detailed. Additional Library and Archives sources are Veterans Death Cards: First World War and Military Medals, Honours and Awards, 1812-1969. The service card provides the address as of 1921 which can be helpful to know where the veteran went after the war.

BC Archives provides death registrations on-line up to 2002. The death registration is located, and place of burial is found. If the veteran left the province and died elsewhere, Ancestry.ca is used to research the death location. A search for an obituary on Newspapers.com can often provide the

burial location. It can also state surviving family members which can assist in locating burial location. A veteran cremated and not interred does not qualify for the program.

Find a Grave is used initially to determine if a memorial has been created and if a headstone has been photographed. If not, the memorial is created, the plot location is requested from the cemetery, a photo request is submitted, or a trip to the cemetery is required to locate the gravesite. If no headstone exists an application is submitted to the Last Post Fund.



There were 1052 soldiers on the 131st Battalion Nominal Roll. Of the veterans researched, 45 were found to be resting in an unmarked grave. Applications have been submitted for these brave men. Research beyond the 131st Battalion has uncovered an additional 358 veterans resting in an unmarked grave.

During my research, there were some stories that touched me deeply and have stayed with me:

Alphonse Joseph Angelo, 790101. Born in Fernie, BC, the son of an indigenous mother and Italian father. He enlisted from the Providence Orphanage in New Westminster at 17 years of age, leaving his younger brother Joseph behind. Alphonse died of wounds sustained in battle in 1918 and rests in the Queant Communal Cemetery British Extension Cemetery in France. His younger brother was adopted into an indigenous family.

Private Tadashi “Tow” Inouye, 688274. Born in Japan, he served with the 47th Canadian Infantry Battalion in France and was awarded the Military Medal for bravery at Cambrai. He died in 1926 and his surviving family members were interned in the Japanese internment camp. His final resting place is unknown, but he is memorialized on the Japanese Canadian War Memorial in Stanley Park.

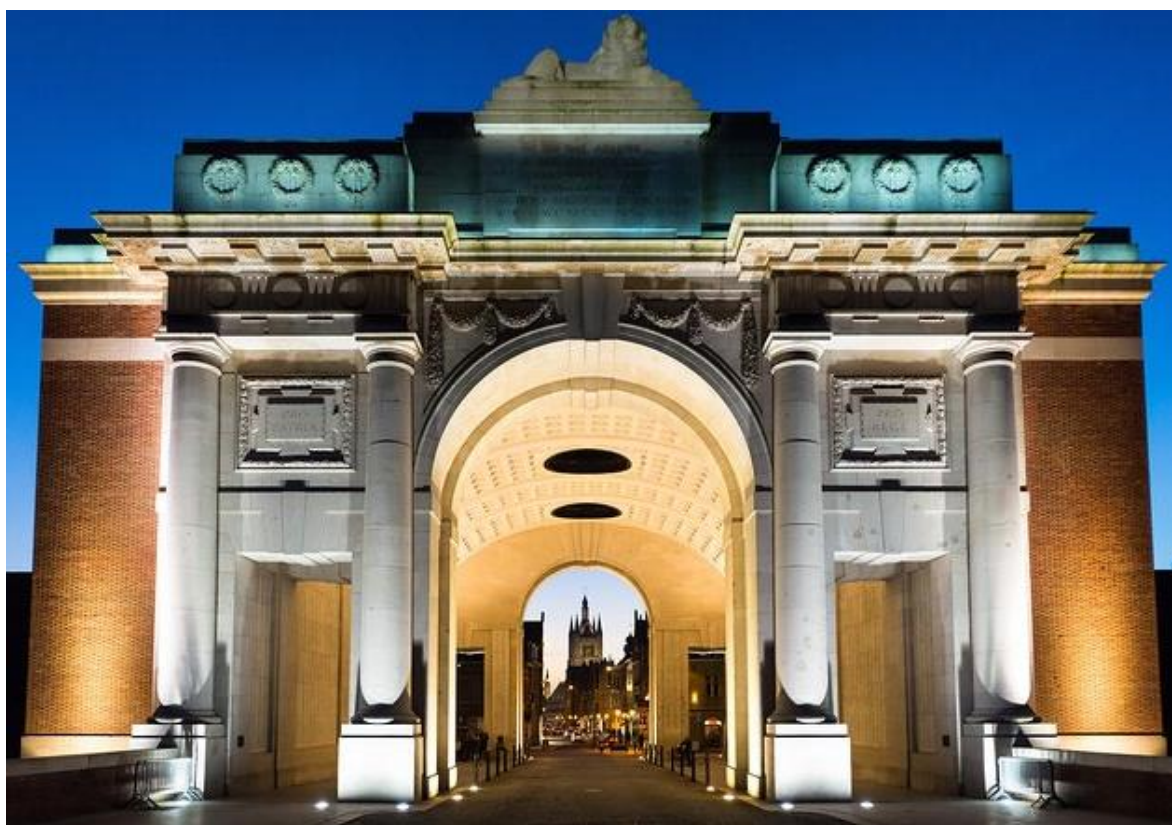
My heartfelt thanks to the patient staff at the many cemeteries I have contacted; to the tireless Find a Grave volunteers who create memorials and fulfill requests for photos of gravesites; and a special thank you to the Last Post Fund counsellors who process the many applications submitted.

“Lest We Forget”

**The Royal Westminster Regiment Association
Trip to Northwest Europe 2025
Commemorating the actions of the 47th Battalion
and The Westminster Regiment**

The Board of the Association have been engaged in planning a trip, to include all members of the Regimental family, Band, serving Battalion, Cadet Corps and retired members and family, to Northwest Europe. The intent of this trip to cover and commemorate the activities of the 47th Battalion C.E.F. during the First World War and the Westminster Regiment in 1945 in the Second World War. The second part of the trip coincides with the 80th Anniversary of the Liberation of the Netherlands by the British and Canadian Armies.

Similar to our trip to Italy in 2019 the Association will be sponsoring senior cadets from our five Cadet Corps to give them an opportunity to attend.



Menin Gate – Ypres Belgium

1st Phase 25 April to 30 April 2025

This first phase is dedicated to the engagements of the 47th Battalion during the First World War. The tour will start by flying into Paris and then travel to Arras. During this phase we have visits to locations of our battles, which include;

- **Somme 1916**
- **Arras 1917-1918**
- **Vimy 1917**
- **Hill 70**
- **Ypres 1917**
- **Passchendaele**

- **Amiens**
- **Drocourt-Queant**
- **Canal du Nord**
- **Valenciennes**

We will take part in the Parade at the Menin Gate – Last Post Ceremony on 28 April 2025.

We will pay our respects to our fallen members at a number of locations in France and Belgium. Due to the vast number of our war dead and the numerous locations will not get to all of them. If there are family members who have a relative buried in France and Belgium, we will make arrangements for them to visit the cemetery or commemorative panel.



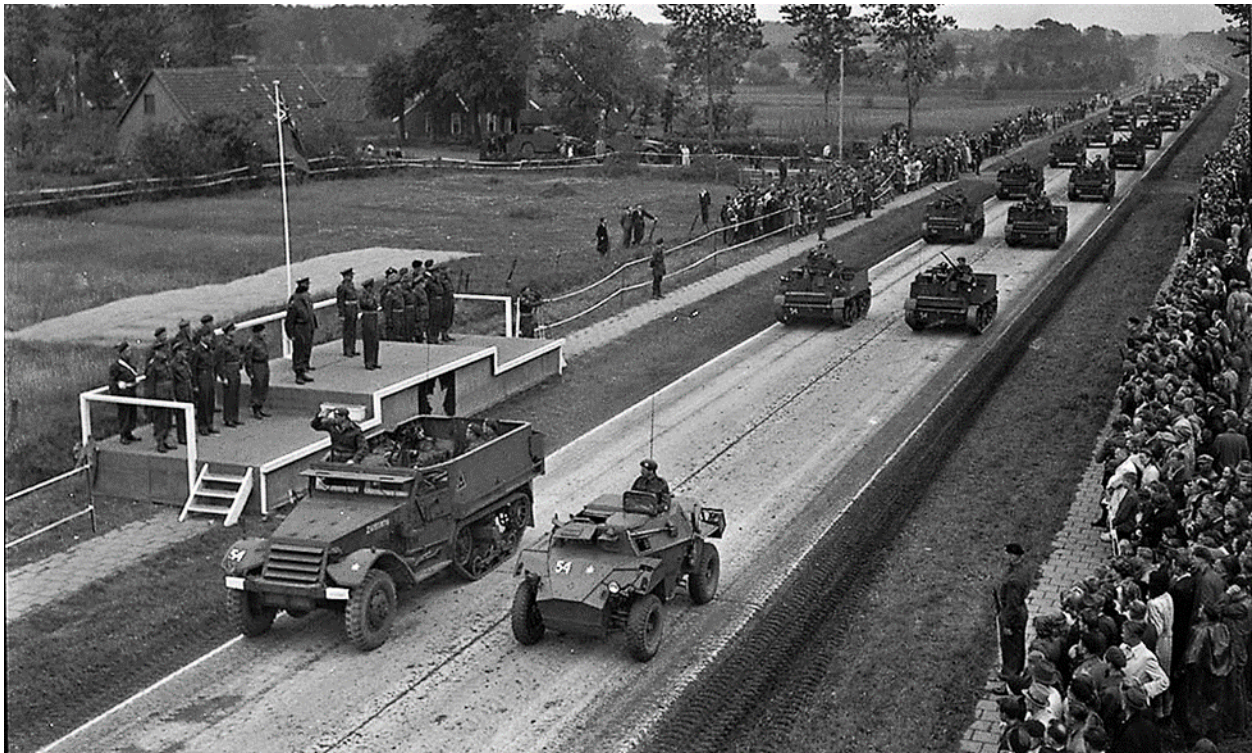
The Vimy Memorial – Vimy Ridge, France

2nd Phase 01 to 07 May 2025

The second phase involves travel to the Netherlands with a visit to Bruges on route. This phase is dedicated to the engagements of the Westminster Regiment and the part played in the Liberation of Holland. This includes visits to ground where our battles took place;

- Operation “Destroyer” and the “Island”
- Operation “Cleanser” (battle honour **Ijsselmeer**)
- Delfzijl Pocket and Operation “Canada” (battle honour **Delfzijl Pocket**)

On 04 May 2025 we will also participate in the commemorations, to honour our fallen members, at the two Canadian War Cemeteries at Holten in the morning and Groesbeek in the evening.



(Library and Archives Canada Photo, MIKAN No. 3203475)

Westminster Regiment passes the saluting base during Gen H.D.G. Crerar's review at Eelde airport, 23 May 1945.

The tour will end in Amsterdam.

Advance tour

If there is sufficient interest, there will be a pre-tour trip to Normandy.

Soldiers' Christmas Dinner – Saturday 09 December 2023

The annual Soldiers' Christmas Dinner was held at the Armoury. This was part of Exercise Villa Nova 2023. (Villa Nova, Italy was where the Westminster Regiment spent New Years Eve and New Years Day 01 January 1945.)

As was customary, there was an exchange of tunics between youngest soldier and the CO and oldest soldier and the RSM. There were 111 soldiers in attendance served by 28 Officers, Senior NCOs and members of the Association.

There were a number of promotions, presentations of the Commanding Officer's Commendation, Certificates of Meritorious Service from the Association and other awards.



To Sgt; Tam (3rd across), Fabian (5th across)



To MCpl; Czajkowski (3rd), Gomez-Castaneda (4th)



To Cpl; back row - Chahal, Kang, Zhang , Sarai
Front row - Rolf Von Den Baumen, Lanji, Smith, Lim

CO's Commendations



Commendation to Cpl Cui



Commendation to Cpl Pengally



Commendation to Sgt Kullar



Top Shot – PWT3 - Sgt Pepper



Hand Grenade “award” to Private Lim



Top Shot in the Turkey Shoot – Cpl Johannessen



Top Soldier of the year – MCpl Fernandez



Mrs Anne Bason’s gift to the Junior Ranks Mess

Presentations of Meritorious Service from the Association included;

Operation Lentus 17 – 04 (July to September 2017)

Private J.G. Plata

Operation Lentus 21 – 04 (August 2021)

Lieutenant William Li

Operation Reassurance – Rotation 20-22 – Lativa (12 June to November 2022)

Master Corporal WTW Whittier

Corporal J Gomez-Castaneda

Operation Reassurance – Rotation 23-01 – Lativa (14 December 2022 to 15 June 2023)

Corporal J.E. Simpson

Operation Unifier – Rotation 15 – United Kingdom (20 February to 13 July 2023)

Coporal G.M.L. Cherris-Kelly

Operation Lentus 23-05 (August 2023)

Corporal N.G. Charron

Sergeant M.A. Esaw

Master Corporal W.T.W. Whittier

Operation Lentus 23-08 (September 2023)

Corporal K.A. Campbell

Chief Warrant Officer C.B. Hennebery

Corporal M. Le

Private A. Rolf Von Denbaumen

2nd Lieutenant H. Sangha

Corporal J.E. Simpson

Corporal Z. Teskey

Master Corporal W.T.W. Whittier



Cambrian Patrol Team with Certificates of Meritorious Service presented by the Association President, Bill White

Our Cadets

TAKE A DIVE INTO THE 2316 WESTIE CORPS

2316 RCACC the Royal Westminster Regiment is a yearly program for children between the ages of 12 to 18 that teaches them about the fundamentals of survival, keeping up with physical and emotional health and promoting interest in sea, land and air armed forces. Through the program, there are weekly training nights where you'll be taught by one of our officers or more often, a senior cadet, someone who has put in the commitment, and time and can teach you a topic they learned when they had just started.

Outside of weekly training nights, there are days where cadets can learn specific skills and be available for more opportunities outside weekly training nights. These skills can be, marksmanship, learning how to properly and safely use a daisy air rifle and getting to practice shooting. Reconnaissance, where we learn in-depth survival skills that can be used during field training exercises. Physical fitness, this year we have the opportunity to learn and prepare for Pre-para or in other words learning how to parachute, this takes intensive and committed work of cadets to condition themselves in fitness. All of these extra training nights can teach skills and discipline cadets can use outside of the program.

During the year we have the opportunity to participate in overnight or all-day activities. Usually led by the senior cadets they introduce a lot of those skills taught during weekly training nights to the test. Field Training Exercises (FTXs) are overnight activities where the core head up into the wilderness and spend a weekend together, learning about our environment, and how to use it to our advantage and even play fun games hosted by the senior cadets. These weekends put skills like navigation, survival, teamwork and leadership to work. All-day activities are activities that are usually held in our area, close by the armoury, planned by an officer and led by senior cadets. These activities can range from a city scavenger hunt or participating in community service. These activities all encourage teamwork and commitment among everyone.

The Westie family is like no other. When you stay with us you'll start to grow up with your peers, especially if you join at 12 and stay until you age out at 19, you'll find yourself connecting with them and making unforgettable connections. We treat each other like family, we care and look out for everyone in our family, no matter who you are, we're all one big family. The New West Army cadet program is a place where you'll learn skills you won't learn at your average everyday school class lecture and make friends that you'll learn to grow with and you'll start to build yourself up to be someone you strive to be.

As of this year we've been working very hard to re-build skills we've lost during the pandemic and we're starting to polish them. We've also had an incredible amount of new recruits in our ranks, that we hope will carry on our core as we grow. Since September we have been practicing our marksmanship and slowly trying to build a marksmanship team to send out to competitions. This year we've also had Pre-para, something that's been brought back after a long time and we've been working on preparing everyone to see if they're up for a new skill. The senior cadets are also working on getting old traditions back, like mess dinner, slowly organizing how it'll look. We are looking forward to having a lot more bonding activities in the core and hope for another outstanding year.

Sgt Alayna Arandela

2316 RCACC New Westminster

Our Westie Corp is presently parading about 45 cadets on our Thursday nights. New recruits continue to walk in and our total strength is 68. Our team participation has also increased. We run marksmanship and pre-para on Monday and Recce and now First aid on Tuesday.

Our last parade prior to Christmas had a fun visit from the team at bubble soccer and battle archery. Santa also was able to drop in and made our closing parade more fun than usual.

Due to the snow we had to cancel a few parade nights in January. Area-directed activities continue and are well attended by our members. EX WESTIE RAID was attended by 9 senior cadets and 3 officers from our Corp and a contingent of 5 seniors and 1 officer from 2922 Abbotsford Westies. The weekend was a great success. Lots of fun for the cadets with challenging field craft, navigation and patrolling lessons ending with a night nav ex. The highlight on Sunday morning was being in the middle of the raid at the end of the EX. We got more training done in one weekend than most can accomplish in 3 weekends.

Fantastic effort and dedication by the whole regimental team to make it a successful and worthy event for our cadets.

1838 RCACC Maple Ridge

Our nominal roll is currently 35 cadets with 25 of them parading regularly on Monday and Thursday nights. We keep getting new recruits through word of mouth with a total of 4 this past month. Unfortunately, 2 cadets left the corps in January. We have added a new member to our pre-para team even though none of our cadets will be eligible for this year's course due to age, we are hoping for positive results next year. Our cadets are also continuing to improve with new shooting awards being handed out monthly.

Our annual mess dinner was a great success back in December with special guests from the Regiment, the Maple Ridge Legion and the Army Cadet League.

We were lucky to only lose one night worth of training due to the snow.

We had an excellent winter exercise this past weekend in Manning Park. Mukluks and military sleeping bags were provided to all. Cadets mainly set up camp the first night. A few lessons about winter survival and appropriate dress for various activities were presented while in the modular tent we had set up. Thanks to ASU for their support in providing the equipment. Cadets slept in tents the first night. On Saturday morning, cadets learnt about how to make snow trenches for sleeping in. Unfortunately, there wasn't enough snow to build snow caves. After the lessons, the cadets put into practice what they had learnt. In the afternoon we went snowshoeing. It was a challenging trek of 5.5km with a considerable amount of it being a steep uphill. For some, this was their first-time snowshoeing. Everyone managed to push through and get the job done. Prior to dinner cadets continued on their snow trenches. Most cadets felt comfortable sleeping in their handmade shelters overnight. Games were played prior to everyone going to bed for the night after an exhausting day. With a light snow coming down most of Sunday was spent on camp clean-up. Taking down the shelters, the tents and the mod-tent etc. ready for the bus ride home. When picking up their cadets, most parents commented how tired yet happy they looked. A very successful training weekend was had by all!

Next month will bring more star level training with an emphasis on leadership and drill.

1789 RCACC Hope

The Cadet Corps has been very active in the last few months. Every parade night their numbers keep growing with attendance at 100% The officers and CiCs must be doing something right. The cadets participated in the Remembrance Day Services in Hope and have been busy with their training.

1789 held their Christmas dinner at the Hope Legion Hall in the form of a teaching Mess Dinner, I was privileged to attend and watch these young cadets start to leave some of the social graces of a dinner.

Linda Pickell

2nd Lieutenant Johannes Mulder – Medal of Good Citizenship

Johannes Mulder, Hope was one of 21 British Columbians to have been awarded a Medal of Good Citizenship in 2023. He was recognized as being a “Community Champion in times of crisis in the Upper Fraser Valley”



Premier Eby, Joannes Mulder, Jackie Tegart, MLA for Hope, and Minister Lana Popham
(Photo courtesy the Province of BC)

To recognize this achievement Major Tom Buchenauer, CD (Retired) organized a dinner in his honour. This was held at The Greek Islands Restaurant in Chilliwack on Friday evening of the 26th January 2024. To the right is a picture of Hans and his wife Amber at the dinner.



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.

MIA/AWOL

(Help us reconnect with former members)

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