



Volume 2009/Issue 1  
February 2009



# The GROUND SHEET

The Official Publication of  
**The Royal Westminster Regiment Association**

*'Dedicated to the ideals and comradship  
we knew in wars and peace in our  
services both home and abroad.'*

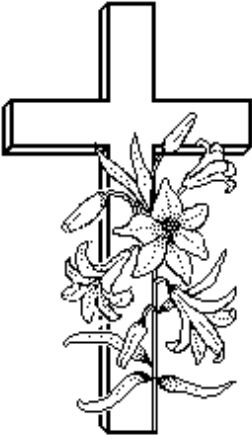
**'Pro Rege et Patria'**

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## *In Memoriam*

<b>Clarence T. Smith</b>	Nov 2008	Saskatoon SK	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>Thomas Stewart</b>	Feb 2008	Rocky Mountain House AB	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>Raymond Pattenden</b>	Apr 2008	Chilliwack BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>William J. Kerr</b>	Jun 2008	Keremeos BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>Stephan Kakowchyk</b>	Jan 2008	Winnipeg MN	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>Jake Esau</b>	Jul 2008	Abbotsford BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>Edmund Cork</b>	May 2008	Grafton ON	Westminster regiment WWII
<b>Colin Cameron</b>	Nov 2008	New Westminster BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>Frederick Godwin</b>	Oct 2008	Vancouver BC	Royal Air Force & 2316 RCACC
<b>Len Bailey</b>	Oct 2008	Nanaimo BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>G. Joe Swift</b>	Apr 2008	Abbotsford BC	Member of CIC with 2316 RCACC.
<b>Hector Vedan</b>	Mar 2008	Burnaby BC	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>Walter S. Westlund</b>	Jul 2007	Olds AB	Westminster Regiment WWII
<b>Maurice Fox</b>	2008	Vancouver BC	

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### Health an 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.

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**Editors Report**

Welcome to another issue of our Groundsheet. I hope everyone had a fine Christmas. I know everyone on the Island and in the Lower Mainland had enough snow for a lifetime.

As I write this another group of Westies are preparing for their tour in Afghanistan. This group is creating a diary of their activities and forwarding those for the website and Groundsheet. I have not included anything in this issue as it will need some editing. Look for the diary in the next issue.

I have a correction to last fall's issue. I did not include 2822 RCACC Surrey in the issue. The cadet Sergeant Major corrected me and this issue has more information on their activities.

Last fall I took a trip to the north to see just how large this country is. I drove from the Lower Mainland to Inuvik. From Inuvik I took a flight to Tuktoyaktuk and dripped my toe in the Arctic Ocean. The roundtrip was approximately 10,000 km and took about 3 weeks to complete. I have travelled around the world and across Canada but one cannot help but be in awe of the vastness, beauty, and diversity of Canada's North. In Whitehorse I stayed with Graham Burton and his wife Dora. Graham was a member of the Canadian Scottish and was attached to our Regiment in the 1970's while he was attending SFU. Graham is retired from the RCMP now and is working with the cadets in Whitehorse. While visiting I managed to learn a lot about the north and its contributions to the military. For such a small population they have had a significant proportion serve in the military. The cenotaph is located in the downtown area of Whitehorse named Veteran's Square. The cenotaph is a major center area in the downtown core. Graham says it is never involved in the Remembrance services as it is usually 30 below at that time of year. Upon continuing my travels in the north I saw multiple mountain ranges, panoramic views of the vast boreal forest and lakes, and people that are very open and friendly. I would say that it should be every one's

duty to travel to the north and see Canada.

Lately at our executive meetings there have been fewer members. We are always looking for new members to help out. If you or some one else you know has are interested please come to a meeting on the first Monday of each month (accept January, July, and August) in the Officers Mess at the Armoury. It is not that bad of a job.

Additionally, I have been receiving more than usual returns on the Groundsheet. People seem to move and are not leaving a forwarding address. If you have moved or know some who has moved and not updated the new address. Let me know by email, phone, or mail.

The Melfa Weekend has been set for May 15th, Golf, May 16th Dinner, May 17th AGM. Additionally, we will be rededicating the VC and Museum Plaques on the 6th Street Side of the Armoury. We would like to see' as many people out for all of these events as possible.

Finally, I would like to say that I have taken on another hat from Ted Usher. Ted is moving on and giving up his title as webmaster. I will be taking over with some help from Gary Brooks. It will take us some time to get up to speed on this so bear with us. At least the website is in great shape thanks to Ted's efforts. I do believe this will make Gary's and my work a lot easier.

Len Wohlgemuth  
Editor



## Presidents Report

Once again I would like to take the opportunity to bring you all up to date with what's going on with the association executive. The executive held our first meeting of 2009 on Monday February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Planning of this years Melfa weekend is underway. The Golf Tournament will be on Friday May 15<sup>th</sup>. The dinner will be in the Armoury on Saturday May 16<sup>th</sup>. The Brunch and Annual General Meeting will be on Sunday May 17<sup>th</sup>. As always, I urge all Westies to mark that weekend on their calendar and think about attending. We had a great turn out at the golf tournament last year and I hope we can improve on it this year. The numbers at the dinner were also better than the last few years and I hope we can improve on that also.

We also intend to install and re-dedicate the two plaques that were stolen two years ago on the Saturday afternoon. We have had the two new plaques made in marble and we need to get them back out in public view. Stay tuned, we will update how this will be accomplished in the Groundsheet issue just before the Melfa.

Our Vice-President Terry Leith attended the Men's Christmas Dinner last December, and was able to present tour certificates to quite a few of our recently returned Afghanistan soldiers.

I would also like to let you all know that we have some new blood taking care of our website. None other than Len Wohlgemuth and Gary Brooks. I would like to say a great big thank you to Ted Usher for his outstanding work in setting up the website and maintaining it over the last few years. Ted will be a hard act to follow, I'm sure our new team will be up to the job.

New Westminster Secondary School has been in touch reference the annual bursary. As usual the bursary is available to be awarded to a student with family ties to the Regiment. Last year no one qualified, hopefully this year we will have a candidate.

I look forward to May and the Melfa weekend, it will be upon us in no time. As always lets see if we can locate some of our missing members from years gone by and can encourage them to get back in touch.

Pro Rege et Patria

Alan Morton, President

## The Regiment

Greetings current and former Westies,

In December, we had a historic day as RSM Ray Crevier passed his pace stick to our new RSM, Paul Plante. Ray was in his seventh year as RSM, and we wish him well in his next appointment. Paul Plante came to us from the Van Doos over ten years ago. He has six deployments under his belt (most recently to the Sudan), and first saw combat when he was with the Canadian Airborne Regiment in Cyprus in the 1970s when the Turkish Army attacked Canadian positions. Since then, he has acquired a wealth of experience that he is now using to put his stamp on the Regiment's NCOs.

The day of the Soldiers' Christmas Dinner, we had Lt. Col Dave Grossman, a noted author and public speaker deliver his 'bulletproof mind' presentation to the unit before our annual pugil fighting tournament. At the Soldiers' Christmas Dinner itself, I had the pleasure of awarding the Regimental Marksman award to Cpl Wong, the Regimental Pugilist award to OCdt Lester, and the Regimental PT Champion award to Pte Li. All were well deserved.

At time of writing, we have just sent off another twenty soldiers for pre-deployment training for TF3-09, the next deployment to Afghanistan. They will train with their mounting units, for most that is 1PPCLI, before deploying to Afghanistan in September, 2009. In another bit of late-breaking news, the Westies have overtaken the Canadian Scottish as the largest Militia unit in BC.

The unit's training is now focused on preparing our contribution to the large collective exercise in May, Ex Western Defender. In recognition of the fact that the Westies are the best unit in the brigade, I have been selected to command the composite battalion / Task Force being exercised at this exercise. This great honour was earned by all ranks working hard over the last few years.

We will conclude our training year with the Melfa Dinner on May 16<sup>th</sup>, and I hope to see you all there. This year is my last year as CO, as I'm set to hand over command to Maj Doug Poitras on Sunday, September 13, 2009. It would be great to see all current and former Westies out at this event.

Westies have built quite an enviable reputation in this brigade for getting the job done and getting it done right. Part of this success is due to our excellent recruiting NCOs, and to the word-of-mouth recruiting that all members of the Regimental family do on our behalf. So thank you for your continued efforts at encouraging all suitable young men and women to call recruiting at 604-666-4282 to learn more about how to become a Westie.

Pro Rege et Patria  
M.P. Haussmann  
Lieutenant-Colonel  
Commanding Officer

## Our Cadets

**1789 Agassiz** - No Report.

### **2316 New Westminster**

Again this year, 2316 RCACC hosted the NSCE Phase 1 cadets for their big test on Jan 17th. Lots of smiling faces, some not so.

CO's Parade at the end of January had several Army Cadet Fitness qualification badges being presented and a few select promotions. Congrats to those hard working cadets!

Mid-February had 2316 again hosting NSCE Phase 2. Long, busy weekend.....

End of February will see CWO Correia "aging out" and preparing for our upcoming Annual Ceremonial Review.

End of March, 2316 will be attending the Battalion Joint exercise. Canoeing and Abseiling will be the order of FUN, at Stave Lake, Mission.

April 2009 will see 2316 participating an orienteering competition. OCdt Meade has been working with several cadets to ramp up a strong team.

2009 will see our 60th ACR and ALL of the previous Commanding Officers are being located for invitation.

Cadet corps is a little small in numbers BUT ..... BIG of Heart!!!

*Capt. WE Blomme CO 2316 RCACC*

**1838 Maple Ridge** - No Report.

**2822 Surrey** - See page 8.

**1922 Aldergrove** - See page 9.

### 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

Gerry Churley	Jeff Courson
David Crossfield	Ed Farkas
Pat Hyska	Kirsten Luomala
Beryl McKinney	Ken Moyes
Tom Rusnak	Mrs. J Rosso
Richard Ruggles	Ben Vaughn
M.J. Gillis	Rick Cable

## Melfa Weekend 2009

Melfa Golf	May 15th Maple Ridge Golf Course
VC and Museum Plaque Rededication	May 16th Armoury
Melfa Dinner	May 16th Armoury
Brunch/AGM	May 17th Armoury

### **Cadet Exchange Trip To Calgary**

Our exchange went very well, much better than expected. Thursday Nov 27 08 2822 traveled to Calgary where we were met by 2 air cadets and an officer from 185 Olds. We then had a nice dinner, and traveled to their squadron (in Olds) to participate in their classes. Every army cadet was given the opportunity to try out the flight simulator- we learned the basics, and how to do a few different maneuvers. We spent our first night in a motel. On Friday we traveled to Banff where we spent time in the Whyte Museum, the cave and basin, and went in the hot springs. Both the army and air cadets were very well behaved and had a lot of while learning some history. On Saturday we travelled back to Calgary to spend some time in the Military Museum, many of the air cadets had been before but it was the first time for us. After returning to Olds we watched a Christmas parade, drank hot chocolate, ate popcorn, watched a few dance/signing performances, and got to know one another. Both Friday and Saturday we stayed over night in a gym with the air cadets, we spent a lot of time learning our similarities and differences in the way we ran our corp/squadron. Sunday was spent at the Royal Tyrrell Museum. The cadets were given a lot of freedom-which they greatly enjoyed. Sunday evening we said good bye to the air cadets and travelled back to our motel. In the morning 2822 travelled to the local Olds Museum, and then travelled to the Calgary airport, where we spent some time at the Space Port learning about gravity, rockets, and trying another simulator. The cadets of 2822 would like to thank Lt Henderson and Captain Stamp for all the hard work and for making this trip possible.

In other news, we will be welcoming a new RSM soon, as the current one will be aging out at the end of Feb.

Natasha Nanka RSM 2822 RCACC



### **1922 RCACC - Aldergrove -**

The Corps has recently participated in the Zone Biathlon competition which was held in January at Whistler, BC. All Cadets who participated had a great time and scored very well for being a junior team. The Biathlon team members are practicing to enter next years event in the hopes of qualifying for the Provincial competition.

The Corps is also preparing to take a trip to Moncton, New Brunswick from 5-9 March, 2009 as part of the Inter-Provincial Cadet Exchange (ICE). Last year the unit hosted a Sea Cadet Corps from Kanata, Ontario as part of the ICE and this year, the Corps has the opportunity to visit a Corps somewhere within Canada. The Regional Cadet Support Unit (Pacific) selects the destination that the visiting Corps will travel to.

The aims of the Inter-Provincial Cadet Exchanges are:

- to support the citizenship aim of the Canadian Cadet Organizations (CCO) by exposing cadets to the multicultural composition of Canada; and
- to support the physical fitness aim of the CCO by promoting active living through participation in sports.

Also, the Corps held a special Commanding Officers parade and inspection on 04 February 09, to see the awarding of the Canadian Forces Decoration to the Corps Commanding Officer, Captain Brandon Banks. The ceremony was presided over by Lieutenant Colonel Terry W. Kopan, OMM, MOM, CD, AdeC - Region Advisor (Pacific) Cadet Instructors Cadre Branch Advisory Council, and Chair of the Regional Advisory Council. Captain Banks was appointed Commanding Officer of 1922 RCACC in March 2007. Prior to this appointment, Capt Banks was the Commanding Officer of 1725 RCACC Chilliwack from Feb 2003-Feb 2007.

Cheers,

Capt B.W. Banks CO 1922 RCACC



**Westies Nov 11-08 Chase Legion**

Herb Brown  
Brian Knipstrom  
Bruce Howells

## **Regiment Fall/Winter Activities**

It has been a busy autumn for the soldiers of The Royal Westminster Regiment. We celebrated the regiment's 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 20 November and over the course of four exercises, managed to check off all of our annual individual battle task standards (IBTS) requirements.

The training year kicked off with exercise Westie Broadsword in September. It consisted of Observation Posts (OPs), vehicle checkpoints and vehicle searches. In addition, a variety of scenarios were used to conduct medevac and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) rehearsals. By night, the soldiers conducted reconnaissance patrols on numerous objectives.

The second exercise of the fall, Westie Musket, was conducted at Vokes Range, near Chilliwack - one of the most beautiful backdrops in the country oddly contrasted with a frequent roar of rifle fire and grenade explosions. There, the unit ran troops through their personal weapons test level 3, including both "rundowns" and night shoots. In total, nine soldiers received marksmanship recognition.

Exercise Westie Spartan was a section competition that took place in November. From the moment the Westies exited the bus the challenge began. Each of the six sections was issued a DAGR (a fancy name for GPS) and was given a grid reference, but no map, and a task to set up an OP. With full rucksacks averaging 25 kilos, they marched off at ten minute intervals to begin a six-kilometre hike up a hill to their bivouac site and OPs. They were assessed on various aspects, including their ability to set up improvised early warning devices, create range cards and site their positions. An enemy force tested their reactions and kept them busy until 0530 the following morning.

The morning greeted them with a timed nine-kilometre rucksack speed march, ending with an assessment of their knowledge and handling of foreign weapons. Upon completion, the soldiers were trucked off to be scored at marking and extracting a casualty from a minefield as well as conducting first aid on two additional casualties. Once complete, they began a five-kilometre march which included crossing a rope bridge over a canyon at Sleese Creek. Once across, they moved to Sleese Demolition Range to be assessed on their aim with M203 rifle grenade chalk rounds and 9mm pistols. By night, the troops conducted rappelling, night firing by parachute-flare, and night observation with night vision goggles (NVGs) and Kite sights. In the morning, the troops were required to complete yet another 6.5-kilometre rucksack speed march. The exhausted Westies were taken back to the range to fire the C7 rifle and C9 light machine gun from behind cover and the C6 machine gun, where each shot was scored, thus completing the competition.

In the end, less than 50 points separated most of the scores, clearly illustrating the overall strength and excellence of the skills the Westies possess. Cpl Owen McIntyre's section was the winning section. This exercise truly tested the grit of the troops as they marched over 30 kilometres in two days. Next year, the Westies plan to invite other units to join in the 'fun'.

December was ushered in by Westie Mukluk, a winter exercise conducted in Coquihalla, between Merritt and Hope. During the exercise the troops honed their basic winter warfare skills, such as tent routine, snowshoeing, and moving in a winter environment.

December also so saw the last of the 29 Westies from Task Force 1-08 in Afghanistan complete their leave and return to work. They were joined by MWO Paul Plante, our lone Westie to deploy to Sudan. They bring with them a wealth of knowledge to pass on to their fellow soldiers. The experiences of our recent combat veterans combined with challenging exercises that push the troops to their limits, will ensure that the fine tradition of Westie excellence, initiated in two world wars, is perpetuated into the future.

2Lt R. Manmohan

## **Denial...**

On 20 December 2008, The Royal Westminster Regiment was privileged to host Lt. Col. David Grossman, who gave a presentation covering the denial of society, the truth about sleep deprivation and ways to prevent post-traumatic stress disorder. Lt. Col. Grossman has given presentations at West Point and has been a resource to the U.S. government in their understanding of PTSD.

This article will share Lt. Col. Grossman's views on the abject denial under which many in our society live when it comes to the threat we face in our everyday lives. He begins by asking the audience how many children have died in a fire in North American schools in the last 50 years. The answer is zero. Our society accepts that fires do occur and that steps are required to prevent them. We have in place fire extinguishers, fire sprinklers, fire escapes, emergency lighting, fire alarms, and emergency exit signs. All of these things have contributed to no fire deaths during the last 50 years.

Lt. Col. Grossman then posed a tougher question. In only the last 10 years, how many children have died from shootings in North American schools? The answer is 74. In addition, there have been over a quarter of a million injuries from these shootings. Examples such as Columbine, Virginia Tech and Montreal demonstrate that the threat that faces our society today has changed.

School violence can not only destroy life, it can change the way of the family and cripple our economy. So why hasn't our society taken steps to prepare for today's more deadly threat? The answer is simple...we are in denial.

Col. Grossman points out that if our society had spent half the time preparing for violent situations as we have for fire, we would have been much better prepared for the events discussed above.

Society can be divided into 3 types of individuals: 1%...98%...15. The first 1% of individuals are the wolves of our society. They are the psychopaths and sociopaths who will take any opportunity they can to assert their power over others. Rapists also fall into this category as rape is not about sex; it is about having power.

The bulk of society (98%) is made up of the common person. They go about their lives thinking that these events can never happen to them. This percentage of society lives in abject denial, and to continue our metaphor, they are the sheep. After 9/11 happened 7.5 years ago, our North American society realized how grossly unprepared we were to deal with terror attacks. Since then, only small changes have been made and the bulk of society has once again become complacent, believing that it could never happen again; they have sunk back into denial. The perception is similar with school shootings...it can never happen to us.

**Continued/...**

## **Denial...**

The remaining 1% of individuals are those in our society who have a propensity for violence, but a love for people. They will defend their fellow citizens and step up in times of need, putting their lives on the line to help. These are the sheepdogs and it is their responsibility to guard the sheep. When bullets fly there are only warriors and victims. The opposite of denial is acceptance, and the sheepdogs cannot afford the luxury of living in denial. They must accept that trouble can occur at any moment and spend the time now to prepare for it. However, if the sheepdogs are not getting ready then they are letting down those who have put their faith and confidence in them.

Col. Grossman summed up the difference with this final analogy; “a mother cat will go into a burning building to save her kittens, but it is the sheepdog that will go in to save other peoples kittens”. When terror comes, and there is no doubt that it will come, will you be ready, or will you still be in denial?

Contributed by 2Lt R. Manmohan

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*Lt. Col. Grossman at the Regiment*



*Lt. Col Haussman and Lt. Col. Grossman*