



# WNSR REGIMENTAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Perpetuating the 69<sup>th</sup> and the 75<sup>th</sup> Regiments and the 112<sup>th</sup> and 219<sup>th</sup> Battalions CEF

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### Like us on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/wnsrra](http://www.facebook.com/wnsrra)

**We have 918 "Likes" and 998 followers, but you can change that.**

**WNSR page on Facebook is called: West Nova Scotia Regiment and has 1,411 members**

**If you got your newsletter by mail, we don't have your e-mail address. Please help us save paper, printing and postage costs by sending the editor your e-mail address Thanks.**

## 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Dutch Liberation

The biggest WNSRRA news this year is our active participation in the 80th Anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe, known as VE Day for Victory in Europe. The fighting stopped in Holland on 5 May 1945, so that's the day they celebrate as their Liberation. The official VE Day is 8 May 1945.

A delegation from the RA is travelling to Holland to the very ground the Regiment captured in the Spring 1945. Today's West Novas represent the Regiment at this milestone anniversary. (*More on p. 4.*)

That's not all. On this side of the Atlantic, the The Valley, the RA is hosting an 80th Anniversary of VE Day Commemoration Dinner at the Old Orchard Inn for which invitations have already been sent so that advance arrangements can be made for this special occasion.



## Message from Regimental Association President

I'm excited to write my first message since being elected president last September and in the first newsletter of 2025! My sincere thanks to Ron Stonier who agreed to continue as editor of our newsletter. His expertise in crafting the newsletter is much appreciated. Our Regimental Association was formed in 1949 by World War II WNSR veterans whose intent, at the time, was to connect members and former members of the Regiment, renew old friendships, and to perpetuate the memory of those who fell in service to Canada which remains our purpose today.

For those who may not know me, I served 27 years in the Regiment 1986-2013. It was my privilege to command the West Novas 2009-2013 and to hand over command to my good friend, Todd Harris. My service continued at 36 Canadian Brigade Group, 6 Canadian Combat Support Brigade and 5th Canadian Division HQ, retiring at the end of 2023.



## Commanding Officer's Update

It is my pleasure to provide this update of Regimental activities to the members of the Association. We have been very busy since the last Newsletter in March 2024, and as always, "punching above our weight" within the Brigade and Division.

Just after the last newsletter, soldiers of the Regiment engaged in the Full-Time Summer Employment (FTSE) program, which is designed to maximize employment opportunities while prioritizing career and trade courses. As with last year, the bulk of our soldiers will soon be engaged in FTSE until September. We have been tasked with running two Basic Military Qualification courses during FTSE and will use the summer trimester to prepare training plans for exercises in the upcoming training year.



Last September we conducted dry section attacks and live ranges to re-quality soldiers on the C7 and C9, all in preparation for Ex STEEL ROBUR, a series of live fire exercises in Gagetown that culminate with live fire Section Attacks. The West Nova Scotia Regiment has been tasked with planning and executing this set of Brigade-level exercises in 2025.

The regiment was pleased to attend the annual reunion in September, and while the aforementioned section attacks kept us busy through most of that weekend, we did have a good showing for the Friday evening BBQ. It was great to see some familiar faces!

Over December and January, we conducted a Cold Weather Operator (CWO) course (you may remember it as Basic Winter Warfare). This course consists of several days of theory lectures and a field portion where the soldiers practice winter living and basic Infantry operations under winter conditions.

With the renewed interest in Canada's arctic, I expect the demand for CWO qualified soldiers will only increase.

Also in December we held our annual Soldier's Appreciation Dinner at the Kentville Legion. A good time was had by all, and I hope to see all of you at our dinner again this coming December. A formal invite will follow, but as we have already completed our planning cycle for 2025/26, please keep Saturday 6 December open for us!



While on the topic of planning, every year we conduct our planning conference to develop the Annual Operating Plan for the coming year. We start with a visual calendar, and by the end of the conference there is barely an open space in it - we remain very busy throughout the entire training year!

In February of this year, the West Nova Scotia Regiment provided an outsized commitment to Exercise MAROON RAIDER, our annual 9-day exercise that is a modern incarnation of ARCON/MILCON/RV from days gone by. This year, as last, we took over 300 soldiers to Fort Barfoot, Virginia, where we were supported by US Army National Guard personnel.

West Novas filled many key roles, including:

- Myself and CWO Ed Smith as the exercise CO/RSM
- Major Adam Parrish as Officer Commanding Training Support Company
- Live fire ranges led by Captain Chris Robinson, Captain Ryan Legere, Warrant Officer Curtis Baglee, and Sergeant Travis Hardy
- Infantry Quartermaster duties performed by Sergeant Andrew Everett

- Chaplain services provided by Captain Evan Colford

With numerous additional roles filled by our soldiers, the Regiment maintained its reputation for stepping up and leading the way.

The excellent work done by our soldiers was evident when Cpl Campbell earned a Brigade Commander's coin, earning a glowing nomination from his (mostly PLF) command team. Similarly, Capt Colford earned a coin, with universal praise (pun intended) for his willingness to be in the field with the soldiers, and for the soldiers.

The first half of MAROON RAIDER saw us conducting live fire ranges, working from individual and pairs all the way up to Section and Platoon live fire. The platoon attacks enjoyed some extra realism by integrating Engineers for obstacle breaches, and Artillery for overhead fire during the attack. The second phase of the exercise was a field exercise, where soldiers focused on urban operations and trench warfare in a nod to the current geopolitical situation.

I am happy to report that our relationships with our fellow soldiers to the south remains intact - every US soldier we met was keen to support the exercise and appreciative of our willingness to integrate them into it. The profession of arms transcends political distractions.



I've given a very Infantry-centric view of the exercise, but while our folks were employing cam and concealment to counter the drone threats, the Artillery were conducting gun lifts with Blackhawks, Armoured had their TAPVs doing live fire battle runs, the Military Police were providing real-time updates on flooded roads, the medical staff

were conducting combat first aid sessions, and so much more!

In addition to everything noted above, we continue to conduct normal unit functions. This includes the never-ending administration required to keep a Battalion operating smoothly, not the least of which is the Performance and Competency Evaluation (PaCE) system. which replaces the old PERs. Now completely electronic, it demands that nearly every soldier receive a Feedback Note at least 4 times a year - even when they are away on summer training.

Despite the ever-present administrative burden, "readiness" must remain our focus as we prepare soldiers to serve in operational tours around the globe. 36 Canadian Brigade Group has been tasked to deploy a platoon of soldiers to Op REASSURANCE in Latvia each year for many years to come. Of note, Sergeant Wesley Eichel recently returned from Op REASSURANCE and provided a compelling presentation on drones in the modern battlespace to the unit.

On the home front, I am pleased to report that our personnel situation is looking up, with the WNSR ORBAT growing for the first time since the pandemic began. In fact, Sergeant Hardy, our Recruiter, was the only one in the Brigade to exceed his enrollment quota!

Looking a bit further into the future, we are working on a plan (currently in draft) to conduct the laying up of the old Colours during the WNSRRA Reunion in September 2026. Keep your contact info current with the Association to learn more!

When you see us then, we may look a little different. In addition to the new CADPAT Multi-Terrain (MT) Modernized Combat Uniform (MCU) uniform already being rolled out, the Distinct Environmental Uniform (DEU) is to be replaced within the next year or two.

Thanks for taking the time to catch up with the Regiment,  
**SEMPER FIDELIS**  
 Mike Bobbitt  
 Lieutenant-Colonel  
 Commanding Officer, WNSR



## West Nova Scotia Regiment pers on Ex MAROON RAIDER Fort Barfoot, Virginia, 14-23 Feb 2025



**Back LtoR:** LCol Bobbitt (CO), WO Baglee (RFC Ops WO), Pte Hillier, Cpl DeEll, Cpl O'Brien, Cpl Crooks, Cpl Fraser, Cpl Anthony, Pte Bridge, Cpl Fraser, Cpl Alcorn, Cpl Sanche-Spencer, MCpl Noble, Cpl Campbell, CWO Smith (RSM)

**Front LtoR:** Capt Colford (Chaplain), OCdt Ben Veyt (ROTP volunteer), Maj Parrish (OC A), Capt Robinson (Ops O), Capt Legere (Adjt), Sgt Hardy (Recruiter)

Absent: Sgt Everett, who was preparing the exercise for redeployment back to Canada!

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## The WNSRRA Visits the Netherlands

In May of this year, six members of the WNSRRA will be visiting the Netherlands to celebrate the 80th Anniversary since Liberation on May 5th, 1945. In addition, Sgt Jason Fudge, a West Nova currently serving at NATO HQ in Belgium, will also be participating in the events. We have been invited by the people of Hoogland, which is a suburb of the Town of Amersfoort, to represent the West Nova Scotia Regiment in their celebrations.

There will be a good mix of former soldiers from the Regiment, including the WNSRRA Vice President and former Commanding Officer (CO), LCol Todd Harris, former CO LCol George McGrath, WMO Dave Blanchard, MWO Darrel Leighton, Garry Randall, and Sgt Laurie Arnburg. Team members will also have their partners with them for this special event.



The plan is to arrive in the Netherlands on the 27th of April, landing in Amsterdam. The group will then do some sight-seeing in and around Amsterdam before departing for Hoogland on the 30th of April.

Once in location in Hoogland, we will join up with our hosts, who have arranged a busy schedule to visit many places of interest.

They will take the team to Deventer-Apeldoorn to see the sights the Regiment would have seen during their battles to finally drive out the Germans in 1945. They will visit Nijmegen (members of the Regiment have participated in the Annual march) and Arnhem (made famous by "A Bridge too Far") on the 2nd May, while ending the day with a visit to the Groesbeek War Cemetery, where we will locate and have a small service for the Regiment's fallen. The

next day will be visiting the Hoogerheide Battlefield for a tour in the south of the Netherlands, where LCol McGrath's father was wounded and captured at the Battle of the Scheldt. The next two days will be focused on why the team is visiting, participating in a Church service on the Sunday, and celebrating Liberation Day on the 5th with our hosts.

Once those activities are complete, the team will split with some returning to Canada, some carrying on to Italy to visit more locations, including Castel di Sango once again, Rome, and other places nearby.

Premier Tim Houston of Nova Scotia will be sending his greetings which we will be happy to pass along. If all goes according to plan, you can expect a full debrief on the trip during Italy Day/VE Day celebrations later.



*As much as we've tried, we don't know who these smiling soldiers are, but we do know that they are West Novas by their badges. They're surrounded by recently liberated, happy Dutch citizens with tulips, so we know that the date is on or probably shortly after 5 May 1945.*

*What an incredible relief for these people who have survived years of war and Nazi Occupation. This is why we are welcomed back to Holland to celebrate with them 80 years after this photo was taken.*

## The WNSRRA Kit Shop - Always there for you

Get WNSR kit online any time. Many members attend regimental events such as parades, inspections, or funerals in the RA Kit (Blue blazer with crest, white or light blue shirt with Regimental tie, gray trousers, and black shoes). This is an order of dress referred to as "mufti". The term 'Regimental Mufti' for the WNSR refers to an informal order of dress consisting of a navy-blue blazer, normally with the Regimental crest as a blazer badge on the left breast, Regimental tie and grey slacks. The term 'mufti', referring to this order of dress, seems to have its origins with the British Army in India in the early 1800s "ordinary clothes, citizen's dress worn by officers when off duty".



**We invite you to go online and order your kit today.**

We still have copies of *Times to Remember* by Bill Thexton.

■ The Kitshop now operates online in a hassle-free, convenient way to get the kit you want. We have blazer crests, Regimental ties, brass cap badges, ball caps, licence plates, and much more at <https://wnsr.ca/kitshop> Come in and browse around to see if there's anything you like.

## Some WNSR Soldiers Who Fought in the Netherlands

The following stories of West Nova exceptional wartime performance were prepared by Dave Gilhen who is a diligent researcher of the West Nova Scotia Regiment.

### F31534 Private Ivan Gregory Gallant (WIA April 14, 1945) - Bronze Lion



On the evening of 13 April 1945 at approximately 2000 hours the West Nova Scotia Regiment was approaching the area map reference 84100155, with 'B' Company leading. Immediately on reaching their objective 'B' Company was subjected to intense enemy shell fire causing twelve casualties. Six of which were of a very serious nature. An urgent call was put through for a Regimental Aid Post vehicle but it seemed impossible for a vehicle to approach

along the road since it was being so heavily shelled. Private Gallant volunteered to take the Regimental Aid Post carrier forward and bring out the wounded. On the way forward Private Gallant was wounded in the head by a piece of shrapnel, which rendered him unconscious for a moment or two. On regaining consciousness, he carried on intent on collecting casualties. He returned later to Regimental Aid Post with six seriously wounded soldiers. It was not until that all the casualties were safely in the Regimental Aid Post that he allowed his own wounds to be examined by the Medical Officer, who immediately evacuated him to hospital. Private Gallant's devotion to duty and complete disregard for his own personal safety was a splendid example and inspiration to all ranks. His courage and speed in collecting the wounded without a doubt saved the lives of several of his comrades.

Additional sources: [https://dhh-dhp.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/cao-aco/doc/D1\\_FOX-GRA\\_037.pdf](https://dhh-dhp.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/cao-aco/doc/D1_FOX-GRA_037.pdf)  
<https://www.tracesofwar.com/persons/101507/Gallant-Ivan-Gregory.htm>  
[https://www.currentobituary.com/obit/14637#google\\_vignette](https://www.currentobituary.com/obit/14637#google_vignette)

### F43555 WOII (CSM) Enos Eleazer Nauss (WIA Sept 11, 1944) - Bronze Cross



On 13 April 1945 the West Nova Scotia Regiment was advancing on Apeldoorn. After an advance of six miles 'A' Company had reached their final objective only one hundred yards from the German defence outside Apeldoorn. The company positions were pinpointed by the enemy and came under very heavy artillery, mortar and machine gun fire. Only

by strict adherence to slit trenches and dugouts were these positions tenable. Since the company had orders to push forward within an hour, it was imperative that the ammunition supply be replenished. Warrant Officer Class II (Company Sergeant Major) Enos Eleazer Nauss, realizing this need, organized a carrying party, and with utter disregard for his own safety he led the party back to Battalion Headquarters, returning with the much needed ammunition. This act was accomplished under intense small arms fire and heavy shelling. Company Sergeant Major Nauss then organized the advance of the company and was a fine example to his men by his initiative and courage as he continuously walked amongst the men encouraging them. Due to his display of cool courage and steady nerve 'A' Company was able to successfully continue its advance.

Additional sources: [https://dhh-dhp.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/cao-aco/doc/D1\\_MIN-NIC\\_088.pdf](https://dhh-dhp.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/cao-aco/doc/D1_MIN-NIC_088.pdf)  
<https://www.tracesofwar.com/persons/101750/Nauss-Enos-E.htm>  
[https://www.fenety.com/NSCL07\\_na.pdf](https://www.fenety.com/NSCL07_na.pdf)

**F40702 Sergeant John Edward Salsman (WIA  
May 23, 1944) - Bronze Cross**



On 18 April 1945 the West Nova Scotia Regiment was advancing west from Apeldoorn in the area MR 7099. The tail end of the regimental column was suddenly subjected to heavy fire from a group of Germans who were dug in along the verges of the road. The anti-tank platoon commanded by Sergeant Salsman was moving at the end of the column and was in great danger of being cut off from the remainder of the unit. Sergeant Salsman realizing the seriousness of the situation displayed outstanding initiative by organizing a force of drivers, despatch riders and gun numbers and attacking the enemy. As a result of this immediate attack three of the enemy were killed and five were taken prisoners. The courage and initiative displayed by Sergeant Salsman gained sufficient time for a rifle platoon with flame throwers to put in a further attack which resulted in the capture of twenty additional prisoners and the complete clean out of the enemy position.

Additional sources: [https://dhh-dhp.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/cao-aco/doc/D1\\_ROB-SEA\\_063.pdf](https://dhh-dhp.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/cao-aco/doc/D1_ROB-SEA_063.pdf)  
<https://www.tracesofwar.com/persons/44815/Salsman-John-Edward.htm> <https://ns.legion.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/NSCL08Volume4-aac.pdf>

**F29839 RSM William Robert Callaghan - MBE**

Regimental Sergeant Major William Robert Callaghan has had a most outstanding military career in the Canadian Army. He has been in the Army on active service and in the Non Permanent Militia continuously since 1913. During the Great War Regimental Sergeant Major Callaghan served four

years in France and was wounded twice. At the outbreak of this war he volunteered immediately for overseas service and in December 1939 embarked for England with the West Nova Scotia Regiment. He went to Sicily as Company Sergeant Major of the Support Company and



served in that capacity until June 1944 when he was appointed Regimental Sergeant Major. As a Regimental Sergeant Major he has been outstanding especially when in action. It has been his particular duty to keep the leading companies supplied with ammunition even in the midst of battle and this he has always managed to do. During the advance in Holland he drove many times over roads which were almost impassable and which were subjected to enemy mortar and machine gun fire. In a recent engagement one of the forward companies found itself in serious need of ammunition. Realizing the urgency of the situation Regimental Sergeant Major Callaghan immediately drove forward with his jeep and trailer loaded with ammunition. He knew the roads had not been swept for mines and that there were many mines in the area but nevertheless he carried on even though an area was being mortared by the enemy. Despite these hazards Regimental Sergeant Major Callaghan delivered the urgently needed supply of ammunition to the company concerned and the impetus of the attacked was not retarded. Regimental Sergeant Major Callaghan has always had a stimulating effect on the morale of the troops. His genial disposition and pleasing manner have always been a great asset to the Regiment. His sense of responsibility and devotion to duty are highly commendable. Additional sources: [https://dhh-dhp.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/cao-aco/doc/D1\\_CAK-COM\\_005.pdf](https://dhh-dhp.forces.gc.ca/dhh-dhp/gal/cao-aco/doc/D1_CAK-COM_005.pdf)  
[https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/memorials/canada/fort-masse/fin\\_plot/482](https://www.veterans.gc.ca/en/remembrance/memorials/canada/fort-masse/fin_plot/482)

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## Reunion 2025 at Camp Aldershot

Details are still being worked on for a fantastic Reunion. Pulling all the bits and pieces together for one of these events can't be set in stone too far in advance, so here are the things we know for sure. We agreed that the routine format works, so we'll stick to that:

- The date is the second weekend after Labour Day, so **12-14 Sep.**
- Friday evening **BBQ**
- Saturday registration, displays, and **banquet** at Kentville Legion
- Sunday morning **Annual General Meeting** and **Memorial Service** at Aldershot
- **Kitshop** will be available throughout the weekend
- Details to follow in July Newsletter on availability of Aldershot **accommodation**

The information presented here is the freshest intel we have. If more current and accurate information becomes available, it will be distributed as a Reunion Update in the form of an email or in the July Newsletter. Of course, you can always keep up to date by following the West Nova Scotia Regiment page on *Facebook*.

This is going to be a great event with an excellent turnout. Come and meet with your fellow West Novas for a few days and be part of this event. Looking forward to seeing many familiar faces in September.

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## Not yet a member of the Regimental Association? Wondering how to pay your annual dues? Want to support projects for your Regimental Family?

The Regimental Association is an active organization, preserving the past, supporting the present, and preparing for the future. We need a strong team to do this, and the task will be easier with greater numbers.

There are still many former West Novas who haven't received this newsletter and don't know what they're missing. If you know a West Nova who doesn't get our newsletter, please forward this one and encourage him or her to join the Regimental Association.

Even if you're not able to attend Reunions, you can help support the projects of the Association to preserve the memory of soldiers of the WNSR by joining the

WNSRRA and paying your \$30 annual dues.

Just go to [www.wnsr.ca/ra/docs](http://www.wnsr.ca/ra/docs), complete the application for contact information (if you're not already a member), and pay your dues online with PayPal. You will have joined the best Regimental Association in the Canadian Army Reserve.

On *Facebook*, "Like" us at **West Nova Scotia Regiment** and join an excellent group of 1,300 members, many of whom you probably know. You can also support us by liking the **West Nova Scotia Regiment Regimental Association** page.

*Semper Fidelis*

