

# 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

Spring 2018

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We only have 519 "Likes", but
you can change that.

WNSR page on Facebook is
called: West Nova Scotia

Regiment

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.

#### 2017 Reunion Report

In planning reunions, we usually try to add something new each year so that people have something special to remember every time they come to meet with friends from their days in the Regiment and meet West Novas they may not have met before. As you may know, our Raffle Draw has changed from year to year, and we try to come up with unique ideas for a memorable prize, ranging from a large mounted brass hat badge, to a bar fridge with a camp flag crest to this year's granite plaque with our crest engraved.

We also like to create memories. In 2017, Garry worked hard to arrange for a working WWII Bren Gun Carrier to show up in Aldershot, and with the co-operation of the DCO, Maj Coleman, and the CO of 36 Service Bn, it became a reality. This is a vehicle that so many of the WWII veterans were familiar with from their days in Italy and Holland. Of course, it's always great whenever an infanteer gets to ride anywhere. The carrier was a big hit, especially when the track came off at the Memorial Service. Some fast thinking and some good old problem solving got the vehicle "back on track".



Also special for Reunion 2017, a member from Victoria, BC attended, but this wasn't just any British Columbian; it was Matt Waterman. His grandfather was Lt.-Col Ron Waterman, DSO, CD who was CO of the West Novas from 12 Dec 43 to 17 Sep 44, nine months and five days, the longest period any CO had commanded the unit in combat. During that time, he led the West Novas to victory earning eleven battle honours.

Matt was able to meet with several soldiers who had served with his grandfather through the Italian Campaign in battles such as The Sangro, The Gully, Cassino II, The Gustav Line, the Liri Valley, The Hitler Line, the Melfa Crossing, The Gothic Line, San Martino-San Lorenzo, San Fortunato, and the Rimini Line. The veterans were delighted to meet their former CO's grandson, and Matt heard from them what they remembered about his grandfather. This was one of the great moments of our 2017 Reunion; this is the stuff that makes it worthwhile.

#### 2017 Reunion Report (Cont'd)

In our Reunion planning, we don't want to tamper too much with success, so if our members tell us that something works, we continue to offer it and improve where possible.

- ▶ Our Friday Night BBQ again was a successful event which included displays by the Atlantic Canadian Military History Association. This continues to be an important part of our weekend program. Thanks to Garry and his crew.
- ▶ This was our first year to conduct Registration without Bill Goodwin and Eileen at the desk; Tom Tupper was keeping our nominal roll up to date, recording who attended, giving out membership cards to those who paid their dues online or in person. By the way, you don't have to attend to pay your annual dues. We appreciate your support whether or not you're able to attend.
- ▶ Helen helped us raise some money and made several lucky people happy through raffles for our Regimental Prize and the 50/50 draws. BTW, the DCO, Maj Coleman won the engraved granite WNSR Crest. Thanks, Helen Clarke.
- ▶ Saturday's Banquet at the Kentville Legion was a well-attended event with good food, well-served with great camaraderie amongst our fellow West Novas. Former CO, LCol George McGrath, spoke at the dinner about the ceremonies in Italy where the towns of Castel di Sangro and Kentville were officially twinned. It's time to offer our thanks to Peter Bailey who has made all the arrangements for our Banquet for the last several years. Thanks, Peter.

▶ On Sunday morning, our AGM began at 0900 and finished in time to hold the Memorial Service at our West Nova

Memorial near the Regimental HQ. We managed to get a group photo taken at that time was well, as you can see. The hedge didn't provide too much cover for us at all. The turnout for Sunday's activities was not as great as for some of the other events, but we're hoping that that will change for the coming year. You don't have to be religious to attend the memorial Service, but we'd be proud to stand beside any of our brothers and sisters that want to be there to remember those no longer with us.

Thanks to all who made Reunion 2017 a success by help in organizing or by attendance and participation. It all goes toward Mission Success.



#### Reunions past and Present



The photo to the left shows some of those who attended the Annual Banquet at the RCL Br 006 on Saturday evening. In the front row are WWII veterans Ernie Doucette, Doug Strickland, and Ken Keddy. In the back are Matt Waterman, Garry Randall, and another WWII veteran, Hubert Sullivan.

We are always happy when our WWII veterans are able to join us at the Reunion because it was their generation who started West Nova Reunions when they met at Camp Aldershot on 18 Sept 1949 when they elected an executive and planned the first reunion to be held in Aldershot the next year on 17 Sept 1950. At that time, they decided that everyone was to pay annual dues of \$2.00.

Since members came mostly from Nova Scotia and "The Island" (PEI), reunions were held in West Nova locations such as Bridgewater, Bridgetown, Bedford, Truro, Charlottetown, Lunenburg, Sydney, and Kentville. Every Reunion had a parade which marched to the town's Cenotaph where a Memorial Service was held to remember

those who did not return.

In 1958, the salute was taken by Major General "Pat" Bogert, CBE, DSO, CD who was the CO who led the Regiment into combat in Sicily and Italy. The 1959 Reunion was held in Bridgetown on 6-7 June to coincide with the Presentation of the Colours at Fort Anne. West Nova Vets met and reminisced every year since 1949 and have maintained a strong, if not the strongest Regimental Association of any in the Atlantic Provinces. As our motto says, "Semper Fidelis".

#### The Italian Connection of July 2017

For several years, some of us wanted to visit Italy to see the places the Regiment had been during the Italian Campaign. That opportunity arrived through contacts on Facebook and a visit by Alessandro Teti of Castel di Sangro at our WNSR Reunion in 2016. Castel di Sangro and Kentville agreed to twin their towns. Why Kentville? Because it's the Home Station of the West Nova Scotia Regiment, the unit which liberated Castel di Sangro from the Nazis in late November 1943.

Finally a date was set for the ceremony in Castel di Sangro. The official Twinning Ceremony would take place in Italy on 29 July 2017. Mayor Angelo Caruso would direct the ceremony in the Italian mountain town, and Mayor Sandra Snow would represent her town of Kentville in Italy. The West Novas were asked to attend because of their rescue of the people of that town 74 years before. Because the CO was deployed to Iraq, the West Novas were represented by (then) Captain Mike Bobbitt as well as a delegation from the Regimental Association (George and Cathy McGrath, Garry Randall and Donna, Laurie Arnburg and Tina, and Ron Stonier). There were no WWII veterans available to participate, and it was a great and humbling honour to represent the liberators of Castel di Sangro on this important occasion.

From the time Alessandro picked us up in Rome until they waved goodbye to us four days later, we were treated royally. Once the Castel di Sangro residents knew who we were, they were extremely friendly. There were "Welcome Canadian" signs in the windows of almost all businesses. Our delegation was joined for the official ceremony by Colonel Roger Cotton, the Canadian Forces Attaché to Italy. Saturday morning started with the official Twinning Ceremony at the Town Council Chambers where gifts were exchanged between the two towns. This was followed by a parade with a band, Italian Alpini soldiers, the local Alpini Veterans Association, both the Canadian and Italian delegations, and a pair of Carabinieri on horseback with sabres drawn. It was a very hot day, but there were hundreds of spectators as the parade wound through the narrow streets of the medieval town.

The official public Ceremony of Remembrance took place in the Town Square where their cenotaph is located. Both the Italian and Canadian anthems were played, followed by speeches in both languages, laying of wreaths, reading the names of the fallen, and playing the Last Post. Then, we were driven to a nearby banquet hall for a sumptuous feast, followed by a chance to change and rest before going off on foot to see their newly opened



War Museum which very prominently featured the West Novas. Garry was able to present the gift of a WWII battledress uniform with authentic West Nova shoulder flashes for their display. Then, it was off to eat again, followed by a concert arranged in honour of the Canadian Delegation.

Sunday morning saw us in a mini-bus headed to the Moro River Cemetery (1,615 graves, 1,375 of them Canadian, and of that 102 West Novas, 7 of them killed at Castel di Sangro) We had a plan and placed a Canadian and a Nova Scotian flag (donated by our MPs and MLAs) on every West Nova grave there. We did the same at Cassino Cemetery when we visited there two days later (51 West Novas, 8 of them with no known graves commemorated on the Cassino Memorial). Two other graves were decorated with our flags, one in Naples and the other in Rome. Each cemetery held only one West Nova grave. In each of those cemeteries, there was also a lone Cape Breton Highlander laid to rest, and we paid them our respects and left them flags as well.

I know I can speak for all on our trip and say that



the Italians treated us very well, indeed, not for what we did, but for what the West Novas did 74 years ago. We owe them so much. "They shall grow not old as we who are left grow old", and we will remember them. Semper Fidelis.

#### **WNSR HQ Changes**

Things have changed at West Nova HQ since last year. There are new members in the Command Team who are going to lead the Regiment into this era of increased recruiting opportunities in the Canadian Army Reserve.

- 16 Sep 17 Change of Appointment Parade for RSM CWO Brad Rogers, CD was appointed RSM, and CWO Rich Mills, CD moved on to be the RSM of the Halifax Rifles in Halifax. CWO Rogers began his military career as a West Nova and transferred the Royal Canadian Regiment for a full career, retiring as a combat experienced MWO, completing a number of operational tours, including Afghanistan. Welcome RSM Rogers.
- 4 Nov 17 Change of Command between LCol Todd Harris, CD and LCol Ken Butterworth, OMM, MSM, CD. LCol Harris assumes a position as as G9 (Influence Activities) at 5 Div HQ and CO of 36 TBG. Also no stranger to the Reserves, LCol Butterworth started out in the Cape Breton Highlanders and, after RESO training, joined the Royal Canadian Regiment where he spent a full career. His service included serving with the British Army, three years with US Central Comd, CO of 35 Service Bn and 5<sup>th</sup> Canadian Ranger Patrol Group, G3 at LFAA HQ, and Assistant Military Attaché at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC. Welcome, LCol Butterworth.
- We also have a new Adjutant Captain Edouard Lidstone, an RCR officer who has Reserve Army experience as well. Welcome Capt Lidstone.

## Opportunities in the Canadian Army Reserve

In the very near future, the Canadian Army Reserve will grow by **900** positions. These will be growth positions, many of them coming from summer programs. Units are recruiting now to fill many of these positions. Benefits include:

- Starting daily rate of \$96-105
- Up to \$2000 per year tuition reimbursement
- Four years guaranteed summer employment
- 14 different occupations available

For more detailed information, see: Strengthening the Army Reserve

For information on joining the West Novas: **(902-678-7930 Ext 2121 - David.Morse2@forces.gc.ca)** You can still serve by offering this opportunity to a relative, friend, or neighbour who could use a chance to

serve Canada in this way. Seriously, this is a way to help the Regiment and a young Canadian.

## Commanding Officer's Message

Fellow West Novas,

It is an exciting time to be in the West Nova Scotia Regiment. In these pages we celebrate another year of loyal and dedicated service to our country, community and Regiment. West Nova soldiers are currently deployed in operations, have recently returned and are preparing to serve overseas. I want to pay special tribute to LCol Todd Harris; in his final year of command, he served six months in Iraq and was awarded the United States Meritorious Service Medal. It is a rare accomplishment for a Reservist to be awarded such an award and a true indication of professionalism and dedication.

In the fall and winter collective training period, our Regiment was busy welcoming new recruits, dusting off old skills and preparing for the 2018 Full-time Summer Training Program (FTSE). Recently, the Canadian Army announced its new recruiting strategy and intention to raise the overall size of the Reserve Forces. Every soldier recruited will be guaranteed four summers of full-time employment and four two thousand dollar grants

for post secondary education (\$8,000 total). Potential recruits need to have completed grade 10, be 16 years of age with parental consent and be medically fit for service. The Regiment will also re-role a section into dismounted Pioneers and, in 2020, accept the role of dismounted Reece as our primary effort. Yes, it is an exciting time to be in the Regiment.

My job is now to build a Regiment to meet this challenge and our new role and mission. Over the coming weeks, the summer individual training period will be at full capacity, and Camp Aldershot is expected to grow to 1,000 soldiers. It is my intent to keep a close watch on the performance of our soldiers and select the best for leadership roles. We need to rebuild our Senior NCO leaders and attract new potential officers to lead the Regiment in the future.

We have recently witnessed significant changes in the Regiment. Honorary Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel (Ret'd) Eric Meisner completed his term as an honorary and most recently, Honorary Colonel, The Honorable John Leefe stepped down as our Colonel. Both served with distinction and demonstrated a true love for our Regiment and our soldiers who serve within. It is a difficult, long and slow process to appoint replacements but changes must come and



an announcement is expected soon. I know that our family will welcome new members in the role of Honorary Colonel and Honorary Lieutenant Colonel and offer our full support and confidence.

To all of you and your families, I offer my sincere thanks and appreciation for the warm welcome that I received on arrival to our Regiment. It has been a busy year and I have been impressed by the dedication and professionalism of today's serving soldiers and those who stand behind and support their efforts. Together, we form an excellent foundation for the mission and tasks that Canada will soon require of the West Nova Scotia Regiment.

Semper Fidelis K.F. Butterworth Lieutenant Colonel Commanding Officer

#### **WNSR History Committee**

One of the objectives of the Regimental Association is "To perpetuate the memory and deeds of all those members of the West Nova Scotia Regiment and especially those who gave their lives in the service of humanity." We know what West Novas have done for Canada and Canadians, and we need to let others know. We do this in several different ways.

- One way is through the publication of the history of the Regiment. This has occurred with the publication and sale of Raddall's *West Novas* in 2014 and with Thexton's *Times to Remember* in 2016. We also published the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Magazine in early 2017.
- Public speaking events to pass on the history and events of the Regiment have also been ongoing to make more people aware of the success of our Regiment. Over the last two and a half years, seven different speakers have made 15 presentations on various aspects of the Regiment to 15 different organizations.
- Newspaper articles tell our story as well. We have had several articles over the last two years related to the WNSR Museum exhibits and our trip to Italy for the Twinning Ceremony at Castel di Sangro.
- WNSR Museum Exhibit We have planned and executed two successful museum exhibits at two local museums. We are now installing a permanent exhibit, "West Novas in Peace and War" at the Macdonald Museum in Middleton for a five year period. It has been on the wish list of the WNSR leadership for a long time to have a Regimental Museum. Having a permanent exhibit in a local museum achieves the same aim, and we're doing it right now.
- How can you support this noble cause?

  First, you can attend the opening of the WNSR Museum Exhibit as shown in this poster.

  Second, you can contact any of the committee members to offer your services to assist with this ongoing initiative.

  Third, you can contribute artifacts or information to help us expand on the Post-WWII part of the exhibit. We are trying to expand our exhibit to include UN and NATO service or Domestic Operations to help tell what contemporary West Novas have done or do in the service of Canada. Don't be modest; help us tell the story. Contact me: stonier@live.ca



#### **WNSR Army Cadet News**

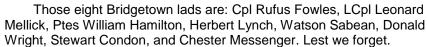
• The Regimental Association believes that one of its important roles is to help support the five Army Cadet Corps affiliated with the West Novas. They wear our badges and belong to the Regimental Family. One of the highlights of their training year is the Annual Cadet Review (ACR) which used to be called Annual Inspection for those of you who were cadets yourselves, and I imagine there are quite a few in our Association.

RAC AGER ACERPORI

If you look at the last page of this newsletter, you'll find a List of "Dates to Remember". Please try to make yourself available to see one or more of these ACRs. It helps improve the turnout, and it's satisfying to see these Canadian Youth doing something to improve themselves through service.

• Earlier in the training year the West Nova affiliated Army Cadet Corps in Bridgetown made a significant change. They officially changed the name of their corps to 686 Passchendaele RCACC. This decision was not made lightly.

The Battle of Passchendaele was fought near the Belgian city of Ypres during The Great War (WWI). It lasted three months and ten days and was fought one hundred years ago. As you can understand, the casualty count is difficult to verify, but generally speaking there were 260,000 German casualties and about 325,000 on the British side. Eight of the Canadians killed in action there were from Bridgetown, and their names are on the monument at the Bridgetown Legion. The remains of five of these eight men were never found, and so their names are forever inscribed on the walls of the Menin Gate in Ypres along with more than 54,000 other British and British Commonwealth soldiers with no known grave, including three other men from Bridgetown who were lost earlier in the war.





Congratulations to all cadets and staff on your new name. Pictured above celebrating the name change are Cadet Cpl L Armstrong, Capt Dean Tidd (CO), and Capt Wm Henderson who also serves as Sgt-at-Arms for the Corps sponsor, Royal Canadian Legion Br.033 Bridgetown.

#### Regimental Memorial Coin Project Connections



Each RA member receives a Regimental Memorial Coin as part of membership. However, additional coins for yourself or for friends and family may be purchased for \$25 each without joining the RA.

Actual size 1% inches

Memorial Coins each show the Name, Rank, Date of Death, plus Age and Service Number where available for West Novas killed in WWII. We have tried to unite Memorial Coins with the families to which they belonged or to close friends. So far, we've been successful in doing so on eighteen occasions as shown below:

#### Name of West Nova

#### Person who has the Coin

Lieutenant JA Blanchard, KIA 23 Nov 1943 Michael Conway (Nephew)
Private MH Brittain, KIA 17 Dec 1943 Steven Brittain (Nephew)
Corporal JW Colp, KIA 18 Nov 1943 Barb Cain (Niece)

Private EG Drillio, KIA 23 May 1944 Passed to Family by Dale Stevens
Private WE Dykens, KIA 15 Sep 1944 Sandi (Cousin) who passed to Aunt
Private CM Fairfax, KIA 17 May 1944 Passed to Family by Dave Gibson

Private AH Gallant, KIA 31 Aug 1944 Passed to Brother by Edmond Arsenault (WWII Vet)

Private FD Goodchild, KIA 11 Oct 1943 Ron Goodchild (Brother)

Private JR Goyetche, KIA 22 May 1944 Passed to Grandmother by Prem and Angela Rawal

L/Corporal SR Graham, KIA 19 Sep 1944 T. Edward Graham (Son)

Private WH Graves, KIA 17 Dec 1943 Earl Graves (Son)
Private JW Horton, KIA 7 Oct 1943 Grant Horton (Brother)

Private GW Jacques, KIA 20 Sep 1943 Mother of Lesley MacDonald (Sister)

Major JH Jones, MC, KIA 4 Dec 1944 Major Harry Eisenhauer (Wartime friend)

Private CO Parker, KIA 12 Feb 1944 Helen Clarke

Private WL Peach, KIA 23 May 1944 James Peach (Nephew)

Lieutenant SF Williams, KIA 11 Oct 1943 Richard Stonier (Grand-nephew)

Corporal HL Woodworth, KIA 24 May 1944 Robie Woodworth (Son)

At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember them.

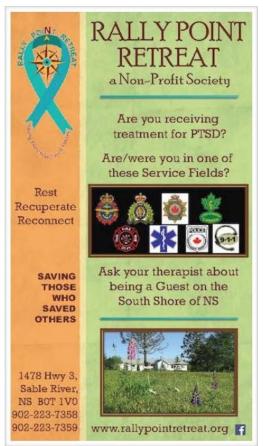
to bertf@eastlink.ca. Memorial coins are each one of a kind; that is, a soldier's name will not be used a second time.

If there is a special soldier you wish to honour by the purchase of his Memorial coin, you can send a request by email

## Rally Point Retreat Ever heard of Rally Point Retreat?

Rally Point Retreat is a "safe" zone for people with PTSD, to visit and interact with others dealing with the same sort of issues, reactions, and feelings. It provides peer support and help with the social issues encountered on a daily basis.

The focus at the retreat is on helping Canadian Armed



Forces Regular and Reserve members and veterans as well RCMP, Police Officers, Corrections Officers, and other First Responders who are receiving therapy for PTSD. From time to time, they support events such as the Rucksack March at Yarmouth on 14 Apr at 0900 hrs, shown in the picture on the right. Could be a great day for a 13.6km march. Think about signing up for the march.

RPR is in the process of expanding after

**OSI Awareness** Rucksack TSD, Anxiety, De n to all Veteran and Non \*Rucksack Optional To Register Emai tmuise222@gmail.com (no registration fees **Donations Welcome** Support of Rally Point Retreat S Shelburne County Route Start at Yarmouth Cenotaph and walk to the Memorial at Maple Grove, loop back and end at the Yannouth Legion, 13.6km loop. Sponsored by rmouth Legion Branch 61 Wedgeport Legion Branch 155

acquiring 200 acres of land to build cabins for homeless veterans and first responders. If you think you could do more, please contact Craig Leonard. He's a WNSRRA member, and he's also is a strong supporter and the Vice-President of the Board of Directors for Rally Point Retreat.

Find more information at their website <a href="http://www.rallypointretreat.org/">http://www.rallypointretreat.org/</a>

## Regimental Kitshop is Online 24/7

- •The RA Kit shop is online at wnsr.ca/catalog/24 and you can order kit at any time. Many members plan to attend the Reunion in the proper RA Kit (Blue blazer with crest, white or light blue shirt with Regimental tie, and gray trousers with black shoes). **Go online and order your kit today.** wnsr.ca/catalog/24
- We still have some copies of the Regimental history, *West Novas*, by Thomas Raddall as well as *Times to Remember* by Bill Thexton.

The Kitshop now operates online in a hassle-free, convenient way to get the kit you want without hiccups or snags. All items we have in stock are included with photos and descriptions. We have Blazer crests, Regimental ties, genuine brass cap badges, crested ball caps, licence plates, and much more at wnsr.ca/catalog/24



#### Dates to Remember for RA Members

We've made a note of Regimental Family events that we hope you might be interested in attending, and we'll list them here as a reminder that there are ways that you can show support for your Regiment.

APRIL	14	OSI Awareness Rucksack March – 13.6km ruck march starts at Yarmouth Cenotaph 0900 hrsrucksack optional. Register at tmuise222@gmail.com. No registration fees – donations welcome.
MAY	06	Opening of the WNSR Exhibit West Novas in Peace and War at Macdonald Museum, 21 School St. Middleton, NS at 1400 hrs - reception follows. Static display on museum grounds from 1300 hrs.
	12	WNSR Italy Day Ball at Camp Aldershot Drill Hall 1700 hrs. All RA members are invited.  Dress: Mess Kit/Formal or Business Civilian Attire RSVP: NLT 1 May 2017 Sgt G. Gallant (902)  678-7930 ext 2106 or E-mail: Graig.Gallant@forces.gc.ca - \$15 per person
	27	ACR for 2688 Bridgewater RCACC, at the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Center (LCLC) in Bridgewater. Please be seated by 1345 for 1400 hrs.
JUNE	02	ACR for 2444 Kings County RCACC, at Camp Aldershot Parade Square. Please be seated by 1345 for 1400 hrs.
	02	ACR for 686 Passchendaele RCACC, at Bridgetown Arena. Please be seated by 1345 for 1400 hrs.
	09	Combined ACR for 603 Weymouth RCACC and 1714 Annapolis Royal RCACC, at the Havelock Community Center, 4628 Highway #340, Havelock, Digby Co. Please be seated by 1345 for 1400 hrs.
JULY		Watch for the WNSRRA July Newsletter Visit the WNSR Exhibit West Novas in Peace and War at the Macdonald Museum in Middleton (15 Jun-31 Aug Mon-Sat 0900-1630) and (1 Sep-16 Dec Mon-Fri 1030-1630)
AUGUST		Free admission. Let us know your opinion on the museum exhibit
SEPT	14- 16	WNSRRA 69 <sup>th</sup> Reunion in Camp Aldershot and Kentville: Friday evening BBQ, Saturday Banquet and get-together, Sunday AGM and Memorial Service Registration Fri-Sun. Come and be back in the Regiment.

#### Why not join the WNSR Regimental Association?

As you can see, the Regimental Association is an active organization as we attempt to preserve the past, support the present, and prepare for the future. We can do this together, 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 of someone, feel free to forward the newsletter and encourage him or her to join the Regimental Association.

Even if you're not able to attend the Annual 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 annual dues of \$30. All you have to do is go to www.wnsr.ca/ra/docs, complete the application if you're not already a member, and pay your dues online. 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 681 members. You can also support us by liking West Nova Scotia Regiment Regimental Association page.

Semper Fidelis

