



# 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

Summer 2019

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### Like us on Facebook

[www.facebook.com/wnsr](http://www.facebook.com/wnsr)  
**We only have 651 "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.**

## May-August 1944

By the time July 1944 came, Lt-Col RSE Waterman had been the WNSR Commanding Officer for seven months after taking command when Lt-Col Bogert was wounded bad enough to be replaced. At the beginning of July, this new CO would be recommended for the award of an "Immediate DSO" by Brigadier JPE Bernatchez, Comd of 3 Can Inf Bde for his actions in May on the Hitler Line. The last line in the recommendation reads, "Throughout the entire attack, Lieutenant Colonel WATERMAN's bravery and disregard for his own safety were an inspiration to all ranks of his unit." The Distinguished Service Order (DSO) is an award for high gallantry, just short of the Victoria Cross. In May, led by Lt-Col Waterman, the West Novas had been part of the push to break the Gustav Line and the Adolph Hitler Line.



Lieutenant Colonel R. S. E. Waterman, D.S.O.

These were tremendously difficult battles as the Germans were now without their Italian allies and were fighting desperately to keep us away from the back door to Germany. The price in West Nova lives for May '44 was 50 (1 Lt, 1 Sgt, and 48 Junior Ranks). There were two other Ptes wounded in late May who died in June. I have no count of the numbers wounded, captured, or MIA. June 6<sup>th</sup> saw the unit move south to a rest area, and the next day, they were all issued with new berets. On the 16<sup>th</sup> there were recreational tours of Naples and Pompeii, places these boys from Nova Scotia and other parts of Canada had never thought they'd see. Then, on the 19<sup>th</sup> a leave party left for Rome, the Eternal City. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of July, qualifying personnel were awarded the 1939-43 Star, and on the 24<sup>th</sup> there were 25 men confirmed by the Bishop of Lichfield in Rome. Then, as before, came the dreaded time to get back to the bloody business of war.

The Battalion was now set to engage in the Battle of the Gothic Line moving into August. On the 8<sup>th</sup>, they moved to an area near Florence, the 9<sup>th</sup> to Sienna, the 10<sup>th</sup> to Perugia, and the 20<sup>th</sup> to an area near Iesi. On the 26<sup>th</sup> the unit received official notification that Lt-Col Waterman would receive the DSO, and Sgt LJ Newcombe, Sgt A Vingar, and L/Sgt RT McKinnon would each be awarded the Military Medal for their actions in the Battle for the Hitler Line. The weather was fine and warm, and Padre Wilmot, labelled by the men as the "fighting padre", arranged for communion services in the Coy areas. As the WNSR War Diary says, "Light shelling during the early evening but there were no casualties." On the 29<sup>th</sup> of August, the battalion was placed on four hours notice to move before they were sent to relieve the 48<sup>th</sup> Highlanders overlooking the River Foglia in area 0772. The Battle of the Foglia River had begun.

You can find out what happens by reading the Regimental history *West Novas*, Chapter 20.

## Hey! It's the 70<sup>th</sup> WNSRRA Reunion

You don't want to be left out on this one. This year is also the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Regiment, but we published the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary magazine in 2016. Confused? OK. Here's an explanation.

<p><b>The Regiment</b> traces its origins back to the formation of the 1st Regt of Annapolis County Volunteers (8 Oct 1869), and so our Regiment is 150 years old this year.</p>	<p><b>The West Nova Scotia Regiment</b> was formed from the amalgamation of the Annapolis Regt and the Lunenburg Regt (15 Dec 1936), so we celebrated that 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary milestone in 2016 by publishing our magazine.</p>	<p><b>The WNSR Regimental Association</b> was formed a few years after WWII by retired officers and NCOs, and the first Reunion was held at Camp Aldershot in 1949, making the RA 70 years old this year.</p>
<p>NS Highway 10, between Middleton and Bridgewater is being officially named West Nova Way in honour of the West Novas who fought for our freedom and defended Canada.</p>	<p>Our Regimental Magazine was published in 1986, 1996, 2006, and 2016 to recognize the achievements of all the members of our Regimental Family, serving, retired, and cadets for the 50<sup>th</sup>, 60<sup>th</sup>, 70<sup>th</sup>, and 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversaries.</p>	<p>We're planning a major celebration of the achievements of the Regimental Association in 2024 to mark its 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion as the most successful Reserve Regimental Association in Atlantic Canada.</p>

For those interested in the historic lineage of the Regiment, we've inserted an outline on the next page to show our roots. Some say, our lineage goes back even further to the British Army Regiment the 40<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Foot, raised in 1717 at Fort Anne in Annapolis Royal. They were British Regulars while our heritage has always been in the line of the local militia soldiers defending home and hearth; however, I would say that the settlers they recruited in Annapolis and surrounding areas would be members of the local militia, so we "do" have a strong and recognizable connection.

## News from the Unit



In the photo on the left you can see that our Regimental family includes our affiliated Army Cadet Corps.

**Kentville** - LCol Butterworth and RSM Rogers attended the 2444 Kings County RCACC ACR in Camp Aldershot on 25 May and helped to promote about a dozen happy cadets to the rank of Sergeant on the well-attended parade. Some former 2444 cadets, now in the RA, were there to witness the parade.

**Bridgewater** - RSM Rogers was with the CO when he acted as the Reviewing Officer for the ACR for 2688 Bridgewater RCACC on 26 May at the Lunenburg County Lifestyle Centre in Bridgewater. This was also a well attended parade with Hon Col Don Downe in the front row as well as a number of RA members.

## Unit Training and Highway Naming

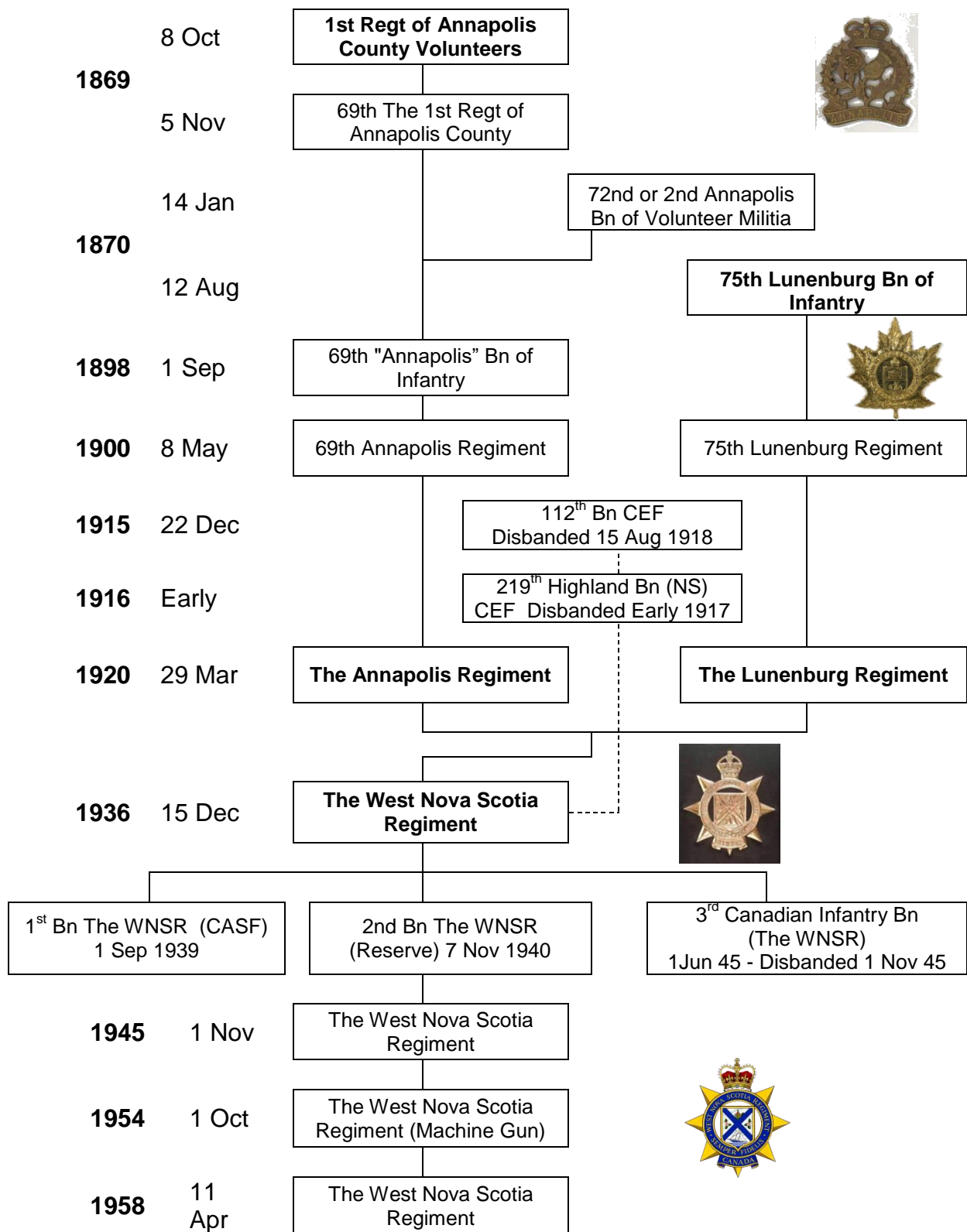
The Bn HQ will be operating to administer the unit members wherever they are for their training, but the unit will be dispersed either giving or receiving training. The new recruits will be completing basic training planned for them, and the second year FTSE members will complete individual trades training appropriate to their level of expertise.

Late August will see members of the unit engaged in the annual field exercise planned by 5 Can Div in CFB Gagetown, most likely in an area where many of you have eyeballed the scenery and taken cover in the shrubbery.

Upon their return to Aldershot, they'll have about two weeks before they provide support for our 70<sup>th</sup> Annual WNSRRA Reunion. Most people wouldn't notice, but your Regiment provides significant support in the background to help the RA put on a good reunion.

This year, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Regiment, we will be given the honour of having NS Highway 10 from Middleton to Bridgewater named "West Nova Scotia Regiment Way" in honour of West Novas who have served Canada and Canadians. The final date for the ceremony has not been determined yet, but it would be proper to have a significant representation from the Regimental Association present. I know there will be whenever it happens because we're Always Faithful. This is a tremendous honour for our Regiment, one I'm sure other units will envy and try to imitate; however, West Novas lead the way, just like we did during the Invasion of Italy. Keep an eye on your email because you'll be informed as soon as I am. We need our membership out in numbers for this historic day. Don't miss it. We'll sure need a group photo for this event.

# Historic Lineage of The West Nova Scotia Regiment 1869-Present



## WNSRRA Kitshop Online 24/7

[wnsr.ca/catalog/24](http://wnsr.ca/catalog/24)

• Get WNSR kit online any time. Many members plan to attend some Reunion events in the RA Kit (Blue blazer with crest, white or light blue shirt with Regimental tie, gray trousers, and black shoes). **Go online and order your kit today.**

[wnsr.ca/catalog/24](http://wnsr.ca/catalog/24)

• **Regimental history**, *West Novas*, by Thomas Raddall is **SOLD OUT**. Many thanks to those who purchased one of the

300 copies we had printed three years ago. 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 [wnsr.ca/catalog/24](http://wnsr.ca/catalog/24)

**Better still, come to the Reunion, get all the kit you want, and save to postage.**



## We Are Looking for WNSR History Items

**Do you have letters, documents, news clippings, books, pictures, stories, items of uniform, badges, etc? Please consider donating to the West Nova Collection. We are interested in West Nova medal groupings from WWII to be displayed with the name of the soldier who earned them.**

To better tell the story of our Regiment, we're looking for documents, photos, recordings and artifacts that would help to preserve memories of those who have worn the West Nova uniform before us. Most veterans of WWII have passed on, making it more difficult to preserve their stories. Also, we have to start preserving the memory of post-war West Novas.

If you have items you think would help us preserve the history of our Regiment, we'd be pleased to hear about them. It would help us educate the public and recognize the achievements of

those who have gone before us. The Regimental Association welcomes the contribution of any WWII artifacts and stories the public may have, but we're also becoming interested in items since the War as well. We need to put some focus on the post-war history of the West Novas. We invite you to [contact us](#) if you have any artifacts to donate.



## On Loan from the Canadian War Museum to WNSR Museum Exhibit



Throughout the winter, three folks have been working diligently to obtain West Nova WWII artifacts from the Canadian War Museum (CWM): Garry Randall, Tom Stinson, and Janice Slauenwhite.

Garry visited the CWM and found Padre Wilmot's helmet, armband, and Red Cross flag and made inquiries about borrowing these items to display in our exhibit at the Macdonald Museum. He was joined in his efforts complete the formal request to bring these items to Nova Scotia by Janice, Director of the Macdonald

Museum, and Tom, former West Nova CO and 36 CGB Comd.

They filled out plenty of government forms and answered long lists of questions before the CWM staff would consider whether or not to lend us the artifacts which the Padre had donated to the CWM. I'm happy to say that the hard work and determination of our team to obtain these items was successful, and you can see them in our exhibit when you come to the Reunion in September.

The photo is from the inside cover of *Testaments of Honour: Personal histories of Canadian war veterans*, by Blake Heathcote. Hon Capt Padre LF Wilmot, MC sits in the Coliseum in Rome on leave, probably in June 1944. The book is a collection of the stories of 24 Canadian War veterans: the first and last are West Novas -- Alex MacInnis and Laurence Wilmot, MC.

### Historical Note

*Prior to the Korean War, all chaplains held honorary ranks until that was changed through the efforts of another West Nova, BGen RGC Cunningham who was a WWII PI Comd, a jump-qualified Korean War chaplain with 2PPCLI, and later the Chaplain General (Protestant) for the CF (1973-76). After retirement, BGen Cunningham served as WNSR Honorary Colonel (1986-90) and President of the Regimental Association (1991-93).*

## WNSR WWII Military Medal Recipients

Name and Rank of MM Recipient at time of Award	Month and Year of Award
Pte JW King, MM	Sep-43
Pte GF Spinney, MM	Oct-43
Pte AJ Amero, MM	Feb-44
Pte RE Brown, MM	Feb-44
Pte JA MacLeod, MM	Feb-44
Sgt DG Tait, MM	Feb-44
Cpl JW Marshall, MM and Bar	Mar-44 Oct- 44
Pte HW Pelly, MM	Mar-44
Pte HS Wayne, MM	Mar-44
Sgt A Vingar, MM	Aug-44
Sgt FE Blakeney, MM, BEM, CD	Oct-44
Cpl RT McKinnon, MM	Oct-44
Sgt LJ Newcombe, MM	Oct-44
Pte AK Minard, MM	Dec-44
Sgt VC Amberman, MM	Feb-45
Sgt MG Mclsaac, MM	Jul-45

The Military Medal (MM) was a military decoration awarded to personnel of the British Army and other arms of the armed forces, and to personnel of other Commonwealth countries, below commissioned rank, for bravery in battle on land. The award was established in 1916, with retrospective application to 1914, and was awarded to other ranks for "acts of gallantry and devotion to duty under fire".

Listed here are the names of the 16 West Nova soldiers who were awarded the MM, listed by the date won. The ranks listed are the ranks held when the soldier earned his MM. The only exception is Cpl JW Marshall who earned his first MM as a Pte and seven months later earned another as a Cpl.

Each has a separate tale of courage under fire in Italy or Northwest Europe. Each recipient is a citizen soldier who volunteered to serve his country and did so in an exemplary manner in the face of the enemy.

It is our plan to tell the stories of these men in subsequent issues of the RA Newsletter so that we can share the history of our Regiment with our members and their friends and families.



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

As you can see, 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 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](http://www.wnsr.ca/ra/docs), complete the application for contact information (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 829 members, many of whom you probably know. You can also support us by liking **West Nova Scotia Regiment Regimental Association** page.

*Semper Fidelis*



# 2019 Reunion Schedule

# WNSRRA 70<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion

Kentville and 5 Cdn Div TC Det Aldershot - 13-15 Sept 2019

**Registration** Borden Hall, Camp Aldershot  
Royal Canadian Legion Br. 006  
36 River St, Kentville - 678-8935

Fri 13 Sep 1900-2100  
Sat 14 Sep 1030-1200 and 1300-1730  
Bar will be open for general get-together

Borden Hall, Camp Aldershot

Sun 15 Sep 0830-0930

**Fees**  
Annual Dues .....\$30  
Registration for Members..... \$20  
Member's spouse or Guest.... \$20  
WNSR Widows.....No Charge

These fees can be paid online at *Reunion 2019* on [www.wnsr.ca](http://www.wnsr.ca) by Paypal, using a credit card, or debit card.

\*\*\* **Please let us know you're coming by sending RSVP online** \*\*\*

Before 3 September -- <http://wnsr.ca/ra/2019/rsvp>

Time	Activity	Place and Details
<b>Friday - 13 Sep</b>		
1900-2330	Barbeque and Social Hour Registration and prize draw	<b>Borden Hall</b> , Aldershot (Open bar, food costs extra). There will be a <b>free-will</b> offering to help with the cost of the BBQ and cake
<b>Saturday - 14 Sep</b>		
1030-1200 1300-1730	Registration and general get-together	<b>Kentville RCL Br. 006</b> Nametags, membership cards, and Regimental Coins. Check out the RA Kitshop. Legion bar open
	<i>If the Highway Naming takes place on our Reunion weekend, we hope it occurs at Middleton in this time slot. As soon more information becomes available, I will pass it on through email and Facebook. We regret any inconvenience or confusion.</i>	
1730-1930	Reunion Banquet	<b>Legion Main Hall</b> – Roast Beef dinner with all the trimmings Bar available 1630-1930 Guest Speaker: Major Dr Trevor Jain, OMM, MSM, CD, MD
1930-2359	Social time	Borden Hall <u>or</u> Legion Dance (State preference in RSVP no later than 1 September)
<b>Sunday - 15 Sep</b>		
0830-0930	Registration	<b>Borden Hall</b> , Aldershot Kitshop open - Free coffee available
0930-1045	Annual General Meeting	<b>Borden Hall</b> , Aldershot - All members are encouraged to attend. Your chance to have a voice in the WNSRRA.
1100-1130	Memorial Service Colour Party available for the service	<b>WNSRRA Memorial</b> – Aldershot - All members are encouraged to attend. Your chance to honour your fallen comrades - West Novas who died in WWII and since. Wreaths laid at Memorial
1130-departure	Happy Hour and Farewell	<b>Borden Hall</b> , Aldershot - Sandwiches, sweets, tea/coffee available - Bar will be open 1130-1330
<b>Have a good Reunion and Travel Safe</b>		<b>Reunion Committee -</b> Ron Stonier – Darrell Leighton – Tom Tupper- Bert Fitzgerald - Garry Randall

**Please remember to RSVP at**

<http://wnsr.ca/ra/2019/rsvp>

**by Tuesday 03 September (it helps us reduce costs)**

**You can also pay dues and registration in advance through PayPal.**

**Stay Overnight at Aldershot**

Limited accommodation may be available at Aldershot on a first-come first-served basis. To book, please call Garry Randall at **902-680-6352** Arrangements for payment made through Garry.