

ARMY HISTORY



PCMR members of 29 Coy, Sardis, B.C.

Pacific Coast Militia Rangers to be featured at the museum

World War II brought about a sense of insecurity not seen before in British Columbia. Citizenry were uneasy as they felt the threat of war creeping ever closer to their doorstep. There needed to be a way to reassure the population.

On the 31st of January, 1942 a letter was sent from Ottawa to the Pacific Command in Victoria which stated, "I am directed to say that in the present situation it is considered most important that everything possible be done on the west coast to satisfy public opinion in respect to military security, provided it can be done without prejudice to our major war effort."

It was determined that the organization of a Home Guard could meet these security needs and do it with citizens



Lower Fraser Valley Commander, Lt. Col. A.L. Coote (right) with Capt K.H. White, CO of 29 Coy, Sardis, B.C.

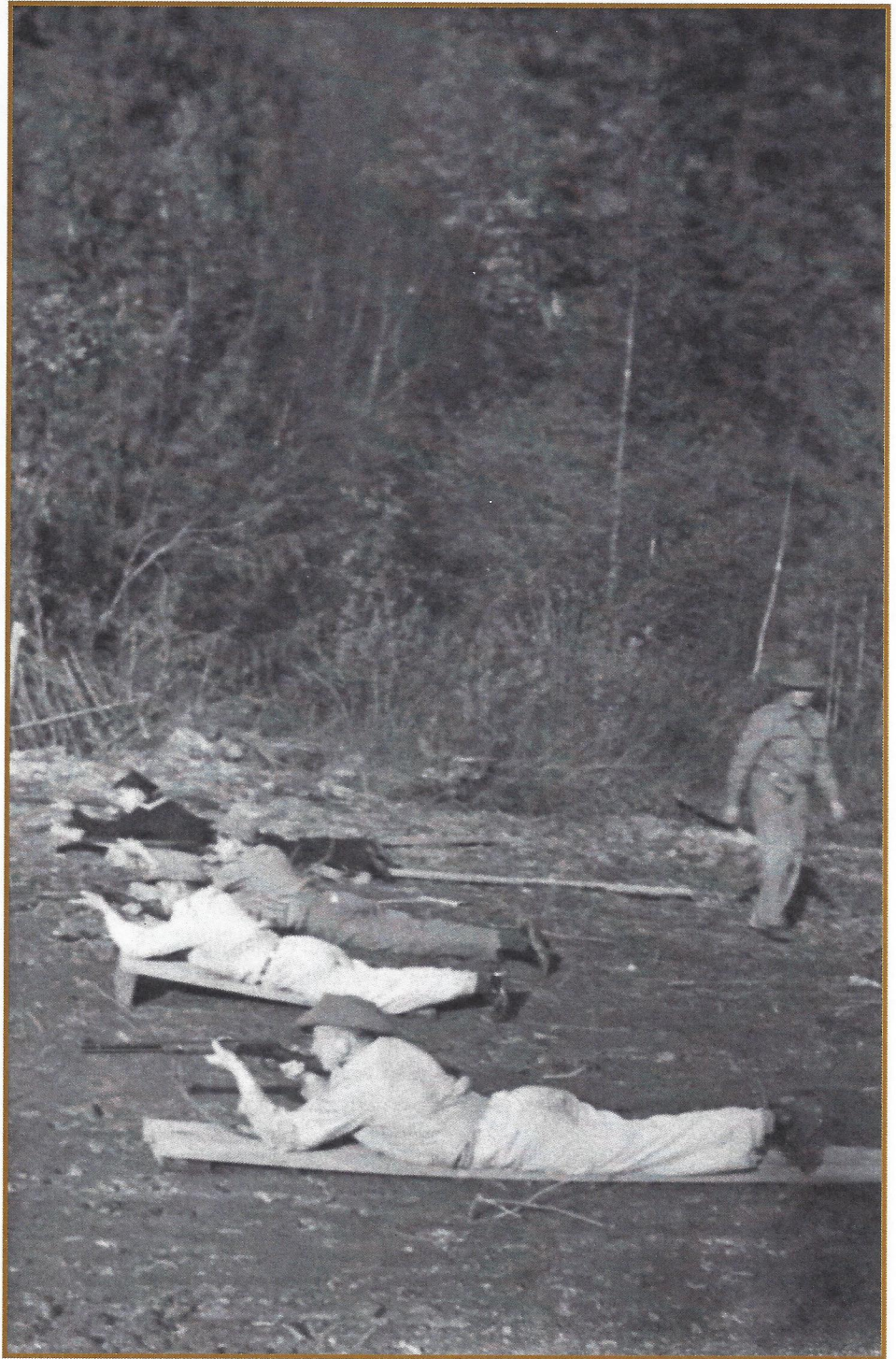
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who came ready prepared and trained to deal with British Columbia's rugged terrain and coastline: the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers or PCMR.

Though many British Columbians may have never even heard of them or know of their existence, they were there to keep us safe, our own home guard. The men who volunteered to protect the west coast were, in many cases, considered to be too old to go overseas to fight but still wanted to be able to contribute in meaningful ways. The PCMR were made up of loggers, trappers, fisherman and any number of skills that required a deep knowledge of the terrain and local environment. They were there to keep watch for threats from potential invasion by land, sea and even from the air with the arrival of Japanese incendiary balloons or Fugo.

From 1942 to September 1945, the Pacific Coast Militia Rangers, BC's own Home Guard, played an important and unique role in the history of Canada. We want to recognize that role at our museum in an upcoming exhibit. We have a unique collection of PCMR material such as copies of their publication the Ranger Magazine, nominal rolls from 29 Company (Coy), uniform components and photographs. We need more. If you have or indeed know of anyone who has some PCMR material they would like to donate, please have them contact us. If you do not wish to donate, we can in the case of photographs make digital copies. We want to remember these men and not forget their important contribution to the protection of British Columbia and Canada.

- by Debbie Towell,
Museum Curator



PCMR training on the rifle range.