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**JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ANGLIAN REGIMENT**



June 2010

Vol 16 No 1

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Motorsport Arena

# Motorsport Arena

Oschersleben

## The fast September of touring cars at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben

This will be a hot September on Germany's most northerly circuit. The DTM, the most popular international touring car series will race at Oschersleben just two weeks after the only German event of the FIA World Touring Car Championship.

The prelude to this top-class late summer, packed with a lot of horsepower, will take place at the weekend of September 3rd to 5th when the FIA WTCC will hold rounds 15 and 16. This championship, which visits four continents, will bring Seat, BMW and Chevrolet to the circuit, guaranteeing action packed racing. Conscious of their cars being strong enough to withstand aggressive duels, drivers like reigning champion Gabriele Tarquini (Seat Leon TDI) do not shy away from close contact confrontation. Of course, every race can be watched live in High Definition on Eurosport, but in the entire German speaking area, the Motorsport Arena is the only one offering the opportunity to follow the races live from the stands. More popular racing series like the FIA Formula 2, the Seat Leon Eurocup, the MINI Challenge, the Maserati Trofeo and the ADAC Procar will take place over the course of the weekend. Tickets are available from €10 on [www.motorsportarena.com](http://www.motorsportarena.com).



DTM Oschersleben

Just two weeks later (September, 17th to 19th), the German Touring Car Masters (DTM) will visit Germany's most northerly circuit with the eighth race of the season. The battle between powerful Audi and Mercedes cars sporting more than 500hp will once again attract fans in their tens of thousands, coming to watch the duel between the two rival makes. Reigning champion Timo Scheider intends to lay the foundations for his third consecutive championship title. The Mercedes-Benz drivers however appear stronger this year and after three years without a title are aiming to return to the top. 2010

is another year of big names for this series - Ralf Schumacher, in his third DTM season is joined in Oschersleben by his former Formula 1 competitor David Coulthard, both of them driving for Mercedes-Benz. The supporting series will be just as spectacular. With the Formula 3 Euroseries, the pool of future Formula 1 talents will be on show, the Volkswagen Scirocco Cup will bring young talent onto the track as well as well known racing legends. The Seat Leon Super Copa is well known for a surprise celebrity starter. Tickets are available from €15 on [www.motorsportarena.com](http://www.motorsportarena.com).



WTCC Oschersleben

### Competition

The prize is meeting a BMW pilot in the FIA WTCC. To be in with a chance to win just answer the following question: Who has been champion of the FIA WTCC three times in a row from 2005 to 2007?

- a) Andy Priaulx
- b) Ralf Schumacher

If you know the answer, send it to [presse@motorsportarena.com](mailto:presse@motorsportarena.com) by 31st August 2010. Please include your complete contact details, so we can notify you if your entry was successful.

For a comprehensive listing of all events go to:

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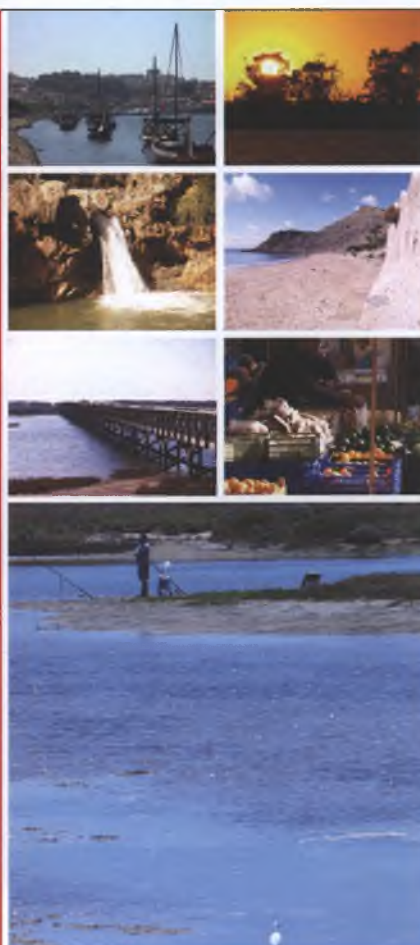
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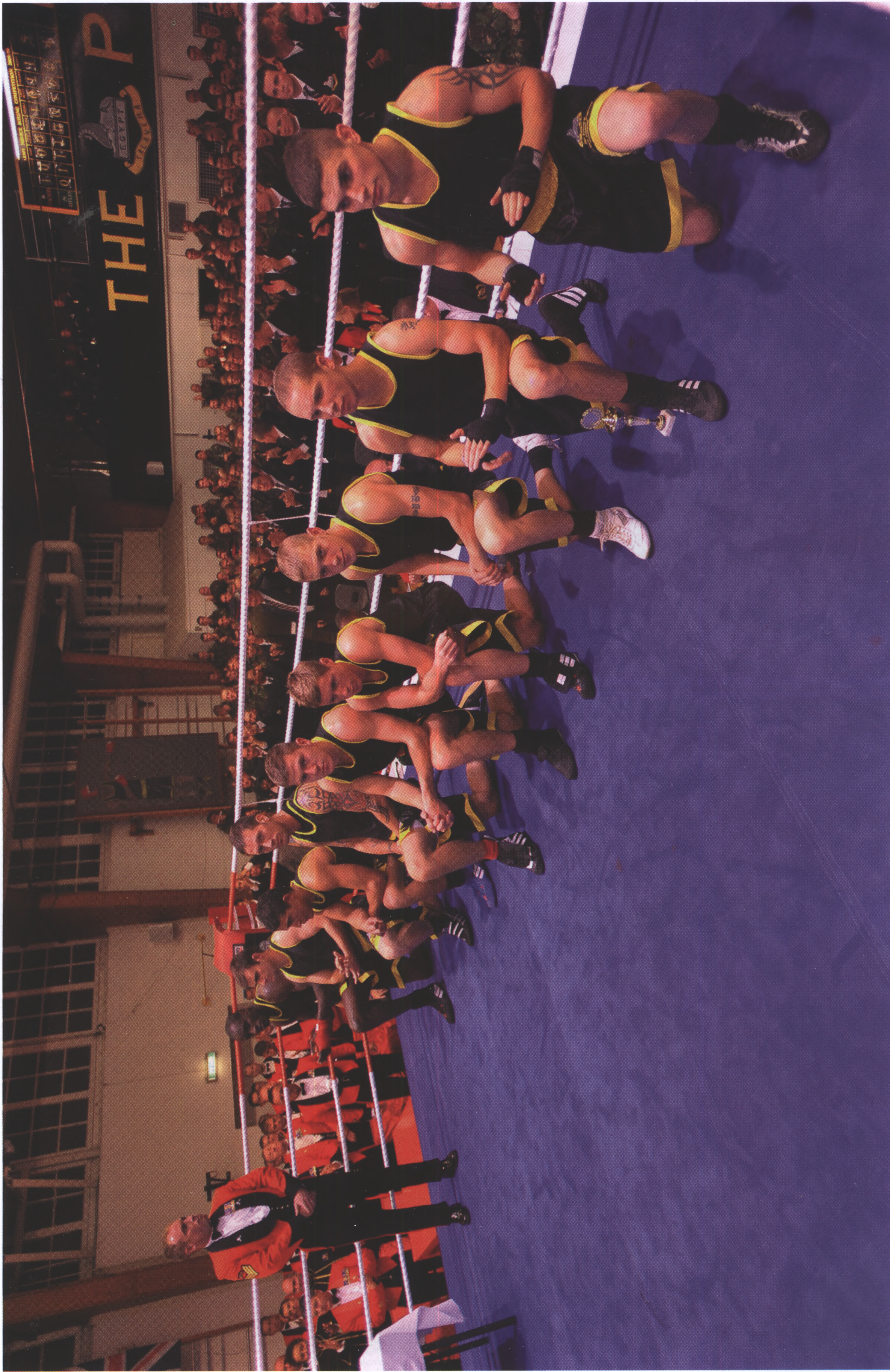
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The Poachers Boxing Team about to receive their winners medals.



June 2010  
Vol 16 No 1



Editor: Lt Col K Hodgson OBE

## Contents

From the Colonel of the Regiment	14	<b>Special Features</b>	
The Regiment	16	<i>Cadet 150 Royal Audience</i>	111
Personalia	18	<i>Iraq Service of Remembrance</i>	111
Regimental Matters	19	<i>Sedgeford Hall Estate School</i>	113
Mainly About People	23	<i>Officer Recruiting</i>	114
Letters to the Editor	26	<i>Confessions of an Aide de Camp</i>	115
The Regimental Museum	29	<i>Royal Anglian Way, Gibraltar</i>	116
Diary Dates 2010	30	<i>In Praise of Regimental County Committees</i>	117
Can You Remember?	31	<i>Young Mr Spriggins Joins His Regiment</i>	117
The Vikings	48	<b>Regimental Association</b>	
The Poachers	70	<i>Obituaries</i>	119
The Steelbacks	88	<i>Association Branch Reports</i>	125
Colour Section	103	<i>Association Branches</i>	143
		<i>Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC</i>	145

### Front cover

Men of D Company, 1st Battalion, on patrol in the Upper Gereshk Valley

### Back cover

The Steelbacks Medal Parade in Bury St Edmunds on 23 May 2010.

### Regiment Internet Website

[www.army.mod.uk/royalanglian](http://www.army.mod.uk/royalanglian)



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Managing Director: Ron Pearson Managing Editor: Katie Mordue Sales Manager: Amanda Ringer

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## From the Colonel of the Regiment

It is evidence of the pace the Army is operating at that since the last issue of *Castle*, elements of both the Vikings and the Steelbacks have completed tours of Afghanistan, whilst the Poachers have been preparing to take over the Theatre Reserve Battalion (TRB) role which will also see them deploying to Afghanistan. At home the pace of Regimental life in the counties never ceases to surprise me, involving Regimental Headquarters, the Regimental Association and our affiliated Cadet Forces.

After an unsettled and uncertain 2009, the 1st Battalion deployed to Helmand in good order to bolster 11 Brigade during Op HERRICK 11. Finding themselves split up to reinforce different battlegroups, each company had a very different experience of the tour. The Vikings' report later in the Journal will give a much better account of the tour than I am able to, but having visited them in January this year, I would like to place on record what an extraordinary job they did. I spoke to Brig James Cowan, Task Force Helmand Commander, during and after the tour and he was full of admiration for the Battalion in all its' various roles. Respected by all they worked with, they displayed the tough, aggressive but compassionate behaviour that is needed right now. They made significant progress in Lashkar Gar, Musa Qaleh, Nad Ali and Gereshk by putting the local people first, but still pursuing the Taleban every day. With their successes came sacrifice and it is with great sadness that we pay tribute to the tragic loss of LCpl Adam Drane, Pte Robert Hayes, Capt Martin Driver, LCpl Scott Hardy and Pte James Grigg. There were also 30 casualties, some with life changing injuries, who will need our continuing support for the long term.

The Poachers have been training hard in preparation for their demanding new role as TRB. They have been building the skills

that will see them through difficult times on deployment. Vehicles, weapons, tactics, culture and languages have been studied, whilst preparation for the move to Cyprus has continued. A welcome distraction has been the Battalion's boxing squad; they put in a fantastic performance winning the BFG Competition and finishing runners up in the Army Finals. We are all very proud of the discipline and commitment shown by these boxers and I applaud the fighters and the team that trained them. The Poachers will be awarded the Freedom of Celle in July in the presence of our Colonel-in-Chief and, as someone with fond memories of that beautiful town, I am much looking forward to that special event.

The Steelbacks sent 11 and 12 platoons to Kabul and Musa Qaleh respectively. It is still fairly unusual for the TA to be deployed as formed bodies, but both platoons did excellent work. I was lucky enough to see 11 Platoon protecting HQ ISAF and 12 Platoon patrolling with the Afghan National Police and can report that they were doing The Regiment proud. This was not just bias from the Colonel of the Regiment either; everyone I spoke to thought that they had been showing the highest levels of professionalism, discipline and judgement. The tours were concluded in fine style by a memorable Medal Parade on Angel Hill in Bury St Edmunds on Sunday 23 May.

Back in the UK the 3rd Battalion have been involved in a full training cycle in preparation for taking over Op TOSCA (UNFICYP). This deployment is unique amongst TA Battalions and we should all be very proud that the Steelbacks have been selected to continue the Army's commitment to security in Cyprus.

At the time of writing the Vikings are preparing for their Homecoming Parades on 14-18 June in Huntingdon, Cambridge,



The Colonel-in-Chief arrives to inspect Oakham School CCF on their centenary. Brig David Clements in attendance.



**The Colonel of the Regiment talking to members of 12 Platoon, 3rd Battalion, after a patrol.**

Barking and Dagenham, Ely, Southend and Norwich. This return to our County roots will provide an excellent opportunity to welcome the Battalion home and remember the sacrifices made. Later in the year, the annual Regimental Gathering will be replaced with the Dedication Ceremony of the Regimental Memorial. The construction of the Memorial is now moving apace and the end result will be a worthy tribute to all those who have died on duty whilst serving with The Regiment since formation. This special and moving day, which will focus on our bereaved families, is likely to be very well attended and so it will be necessary to allocate tickets in advance. July will also see the indomitable Christine Bonner leading a band of volunteers, supported by Capt Ty Smith and Capt Aidey Penn, through the roads of East Anglia on All the 4s. The 150 mile route will take 10 days to complete and the funds raised will go to The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Charity. We wish her and the complete team the best of luck.

In closing I welcome home all those who have been deployed and thank those who have remained behind for the marvellous support they have given. Outstanding operational performance is only



**The Colonel of the Regiment accepts the Freedom of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham on 27 January 2010.**

sustainable from a firm base. The Regiment, from Cadets, through the Battalions, to the Association is as strong as it has ever been. That strength flows from the commitment, comradeship and loyalty of our Regimental family.



**Meeting 3rd Battalion soldiers on Exercise Steelback Patrol 11.**



## The Regiment

### Colonel-in-Chief

HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO

### Colonel of the Regiment

Gen Sir John McColl KCB CBE DSO

### President of the Regimental Association

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### Honorary Chaplain to the Regiment

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### Deputy Colonels of the Regiment

1st Battalion: Maj Gen PD Jones MBE

2nd Battalion: Brig DJ Clements MBE

3rd Battalion: Col JD Lacey CBE DL

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Col JD Lacey CBE DL

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## Regimental Locations

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**Regimental Secretary:** Lt Col K Hodgson OBE  
 Email: regimental-secretary@anglian.army.mod.uk  
**Assistant Regimental Secretary:** Maj RC Gould  
 Email: ars@rhqroyalanglian.org.uk  
**Regimental Careers Officer:** Capt NGV Denning  
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**Records Officer:** Mrs M Dreina  
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 Clerk: elahqbse@rhqroyalanglian.org.uk

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 Email: info@royalanglianmuseum.org.uk  
 Website: www.royalanglianmuseum.org.uk

## Battalion Locations

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CASTLE

# Personalia

## Honours and Awards

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Lt Col CS Calder RRF

**Commissioning**

*The following were commissioned from RMA Sandhurst on 16 April 2010:*

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2Lt TJW Green  
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**Promotions**

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Maj Gen PD Jones MBE  
Brig SL Porter CBE

*The following officer has been selected for promotion to Brigadier:*

Col AJC Wild MBE

*The following have been selected for promotion to Colonel:*

Lt Col SJR Browne OBE  
Lt Col JM Woodham MC

*The following have been selected for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel:*

Maj DSJ Biddick MBE MC  
Maj AF Hawley

*The following have been selected for promotion to Substantive Major:*

Maj SF Roberts  
Maj DJ Robinson  
Maj APT Wilde  
Maj MJ Abbs (LE)

*The following have been selected for promotion to Captain:*

Capt AK Luff  
Capt SM Broomfield  
Capt JR Granell  
Capt AD Mackness  
Capt WS Otridge  
Capt S Thomas

*The following officer has been selected for conversion of commission:*

Maj D Mackness from IRC to Reg C(LE)

**Postings**

Maj Gen PD Jones MBE  
Brig SL Porter CBE  
Col AJC Wild MBE  
Lt Col RCJ Goodin  
Lt Col NA Johnson  
Lt Col AN Wylie  
Lt Col MP Aston MC  
Lt Col CBK Barry  
Capt JA Perring  
Capt A Simmonds  
Capt RA Wicks

from MA to SRSG  
from ACOS J5 SHAPE Staff (BAE)  
from RCDS  
from Mil Cap Pol 1  
from SO1 Cap D Army Plans  
from SO1(W) ISTAR  
from 2IC 2 R ANGLIAN  
from 2IC 1 R ANGLIAN  
from BATUS  
from ITC(C)  
from 1 R ANGLIAN

to Director Force Reintegration HQ ISAF  
to SAC Trans Rep Europe  
to DA Post  
to SO1 SAG HQ ISAF Kabul  
to SO1 Plans D Army RP MOD  
to SO1 Eqpt Cap JFS(A)  
to SO1 Plans FD&T HQ LF  
to CO CTTAT Yemen  
to SO3 G7 Trg FS MG Wing Brecon  
to ADC to Dep COS FRIC HQ ISAF  
to SO3 Gar Ops HQ Aldershot Gar

# Regimental Matters

## Regimental Council Meeting

The Regimental Council met on 7 May 10 in London. Important issues on the agenda were:

### Support to Operations

1st Battalion has been warned for Op HERRICK 16 Apr - Oct 2012. 2nd Battalion moves to Cyprus Jul/Aug 2010 and takes on the Theatre Reserve Battalion role for Afghanistan in Oct 2010. 3rd Battalion is undertaking Op TOSCA (C2 and Coy Gp in UNFICYP) in Apr-Oct 2011 and has been warned for Op HERRICK 16 (Coy Gp) Apr-Oct 2012.

### Care of Wounded Soldiers and Bereaved Families

The welfare system was constantly being updated and Lt Col Slater's Paper has been overtaken by events. However, it was clear that the Regimental Association organization requires attention if it is to help with the welfare of the many soldiers injured in recent conflicts.

### Regimental Memorial Dedication Ceremony:

12 Sep 2010 at IWM Duxford

The Royal Anglian Regiment Memorial will be in memory of those members of The Royal Anglian Regiment and the East Anglian Regiments who died whilst on duty. It will be dedicated in a ceremony at the Imperial War Museum Duxford on Sun 12 September 2010. The Regimental Council has directed that the focus of this day is to be on our bereaved families, hosted where possible by comrades who knew the fallen. The tone of the day will be solemn and dignified and any media attendance low key and unobtrusive. The Dedication Ceremony is to replace the annual Regimental Gathering at Duxford for this year and the key timings are:

0930: Gates open.  
1000: Seating commences  
1100: Regimental Association members to be seated.  
1110: Major donors and hosts to be seated.  
1125: Bereaved families and hosts to be seated.  
1130: Dedication Ceremony commences.  
1215: Dedication Ceremony ends; bereaved families view the Memorial.  
1230: Bars, kiosks and stalls open.  
1300: Memorial available for all to view.  
1530: Beating Retreat around Memorial.  
1700: Bars, kiosks and stalls close.

Members of the Regimental Association are invited to attend the Dedication Ceremony in order to demonstrate support for our bereaved families and remember our fallen. However, as space around the memorial is tight, an overall attendance limit of 4500 persons, with ticket only entrance, has been agreed with the Imperial War Museum. Those without tickets will be denied access.

### Book of Remembrance

It was agreed that The Regiment should commission a 'Book of Remembrance' containing the names of all members of The Regiment who died, in any circumstance, whilst serving. The inclusion criteria will be the same as the 'Roll of Honour' that is displayed in the Chapel of the Royal Hospital Chelsea. The Book will be displayed in the Regimental Museum. Maj Gould will lead on this project.

### Salamanca 200

The 200th Anniversary of the Battle of Salamanca falls in 2012 and will be celebrated by the Essex Regiment Association on 24 June 2012. It is proposed to mark this milestone at Warley with attendance from all descendant units ie Essex Regiment, 3 E ANGLIAN, 3 R ANGLIAN (Reg), C(Essex) Coy 1 R ANGLIAN and descendant TA companies/units. Col Lacey, as Chairman of the Essex County Committee, will lead on taking this proposal further.

### Ex Steelback Cadet

Ex Steelback Cadet will take place at STANTA 15-17 October 2010, hosted by the 3rd Battalion, with a capacity of 300 ACF/

CCF cadets. It will be supported by both regular battalions and will include detachments from NE London ACF.

### Freedom Awards

The Regiment was honoured with the award of the Freedom of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham at a ceremony held on 27 January 2010. The Freedom is to be exercised for the first time by the 1st Battalion on 15 June 2010.

The London Borough of Havering honoured the Regiment with the award of the Freedom of the Borough at a ceremony held on 24 March 2010. It was agreed that the 1st Battalion would provide a contingent to participate in the Armed Forces Day celebrations on Saturday 26 June 2010 and would exercise the Freedom of the Borough for the first time on a suitable date in 2011.

*Afternote:* The Regiment was subsequently honoured with the award of the Freedom of Huntingdon at a ceremony held on 14 June 2010. D (Cambridgeshire) Company, 1st Battalion, accepted it on behalf of The Regiment.

### The Day's Pay Scheme

The Day's Pay Scheme funds the vast majority of The Regiment's Benevolence. The numbers of donors has tailed off recently and RSMs are therefore to be encouraged to take the total of those giving back to over 90 per cent.

### Normandy Pilgrimage

The 2011 pilgrimage will be a change from the norm and will take place in the Low Countries in September 2011, covering battles fought by the Lincolns, Norfolks and Suffolks. In 2012 the pilgrimage will return to Normandy.

### Worshipful Company of Poulters

All past winners of the Poulters' Prize were invited to the Poulters' Christmas Court Lunch on 12 January 2010 where they were presented with an engraved glass tankard. Maj Wilde, 1st Battalion, also attended and gave a short update on his Battalion which was well received.

Earlier this year the Poulters donated 150 Easter eggs to each Battalion for distribution to their families. They are also hosting a lunchtime Reception for 80 members of the 1st and 3rd Battalions on 10 June 2010 in the Armourers' Hall, London, to mark their return from operations.

### Dress

Queen's Division sweaters will cost £31 including VAT, although 2nd Battalion could get theirs duty free. They are to be worn in Barrack Dress by offrs/WOs and will be available in September 2010. Side hats/canes could be worn with the sweater at CO's discretion.

### Regimental History

Col Woodrow has kindly agreed to be the Chairman and Secretary of the Regimental History Committee. The Committee's first meeting was held in March 2010 and their subsequent proposals were approved by the Meeting.

## Officer Recruiting at RMA Sandhurst

*Maj AHC Borgnis, RMA Queen's Division and Royal Anglian Regimental Representative writes:*

I have now been at RMA for two terms and have got to grips with the nuances of working at RMA. I am the Queen's Division and Regimental Representative and in May will get a Junior Company to take through the Academy until their commissioning.

Having a strong Regimental presence at RMA is critical. We are lucky to have Maj David James-Roll (SO2 O&D in Academy Headquarters) and Capt Andy Buxton (Short Courses Training Officer) who both take a keen interest in all the cadets here who are contemplating joining The Regiment, or those who are already Royal Anglian on the TA CC. CSgt Love has been in the Skill at Arms Wing since he arrived in September 2009 and has already had a huge impact on the cadets. In May he will join me in Old College as a Platoon CSgt, a job he is very much looking forward to.

## Regimental Matters



**Commissioning Parade December 2009. From left: 2Lt George Waterfield, 2Lt William Hoy, 2Lt Jamie Powell, Brig David Clements, 2Lt Richard Weston, Maj Tony Borgnis and 2Lt Mark Garner.**



**Commissioning Parade April 2010. From left: Maj David James-Roll, 2Lt Tom Green, Colonel of the Regiment, 2Lt Michael Goodman, 2Lt James Walters, Maj Tony Borgnis.**

We are currently on track to reach our officer recruiting target of nine young officers this year to join the ranks of the 1st and 2nd Battalion. We have 4 places left to offer to the cadets on CC101 and there seems to be high interest in us, both as a Regiment and as a Division. The new Choice of Arm process has had a few teething problems, but essentially cadets have to nominate a first and second choice of regiment or corps in which they wish to serve. They are then committed to this order from Week 7 of the Intermediate Term, with the Regimental Selection Board conducted in Week 12. The key factor in the new process is, therefore, to get as many cadets (of the right quality) to put Royal Anglian as their first choice.

The Regiment remains in high regard at RMAS both amongst the staff and the cadets. The extremely successful and well publicised operational deployments of the Vikings and Poachers over the last two years and the high manning levels mean we still continue to attract some top quality cadets. Future forecasted operational tours and postings also continue to act as a draw for many. So five young officers commissioned into the Regiment in December 2009; three commissioned in April 2010; and a further two officers will commission in August 2010.

The Regimental Careers Officer, Capt Nick Denning, has been organising potential officer visits to the battalions prior to their arrival

at RMAS. This has proved extremely successful with the majority of potential officers arriving at RMAS already committed to The Regiment. Clearly, this only works if the visits are fully supported by the battalions and I would like to thank the CO and officers of the 2nd Battalion who have run some really terrific visits over the last nine months. The visit reports are a key piece of evidence at the Regimental Selection Board as to whether a cadet is offered a commission in The Regiment and I would urge all involved in completing these reports to provide as much detail on the cadets as possible.

Regimental representation at RMAS is crucial if we are to continue to attract the very best cadets. The key to improving current regimental representation is to get more quality colour sergeant instructors posted here. RMAS is a challenging and busy, yet professionally rewarding and hugely satisfying place to work; and it offers two years of relative stability when compared with the uncertain and hectic lifestyle being experienced out in the Field Army. My experience is that colour sergeants who return to regimental duty after being an instructor at RMAS do so with a huge advantage over their peers and many go on to both be WO1 (RSM) and gain a Commission thereafter. So we must identify candidates early and then encourage and groom them for a RMAS posting in the future.

## Regimental Matters

### Pte James Osborne VC

*Maj Bill O'Driscoll writes:*

A Victoria Cross that was awarded for gallantry in 1881; handed over to the 2nd Battalion the Northamptonshire Regiment in 1928; placed in a bank vault in Belfast in 1939; destroyed along with the Officers' Mess Silver in a bombing raid in 1941; had an application by the family for a replacement medal refused in 2009; and was subsequently replaced by a replica medal, presented to the recipient's grand-daughter in 2010. That was not a scenario I had anticipated; but it is what happened.

Pte James Osborne was serving with 2nd Battalion the Northamptonshire Regiment in South Africa during the period of the Zulu War of 1877-1879. Following on from this conflict, he found himself involved in the 1st Boer War, fighting against the newly declared Boer Republic; he won his Victoria Cross at Wesselstroom in February 1881.

Osborne returned to Wigginton, Hertfordshire, at the end of the war and took a job on the Rothschild Estate, where he worked for 26 years. After his death, aged 71, in February 1928, his daughter and son-in-law handed his Victoria Cross into the care of the Northamptonshire Regiment (there is some confusion as to whether this was a gift in perpetuity or a loan).

From 1936 to 1939 the 2nd Battalion the Northamptonshire Regiment were stationed in Ballykinler, Northern Ireland. After mobilization following the outbreak of the Second World War, the Regiment moved back to England in the middle of October 1939. Prior to moving from Ballykinler, the Regimental Silver and Osborne's Victoria Cross were sent to Belfast and lodged in the Ulster Bank for safe keeping.

On Easter Tuesday, 15 April 1941, 180 German bombers attacked Belfast and bombed the city's industrial heartland, housing and commercial sectors. The city suffered extensive damage and the Ulster Bank was severely damaged by fire, with its contents. The Northamptonshire Regiment's silver and James Osborne's Victoria Cross and South Africa campaign medal, all being lost. Due to the war it would appear that the Northamptonshire Regiment did not apply for a replacement medal; nor did his daughter, who only learned of the loss of the VC in 1964.

In May 2009, his grand-daughter, Mrs Rhoda Whitehouse, supported by the British Legion, wrote to the Ministry of Defence asking for a replacement Victoria Cross and South Africa Medal. In June 2009 the Ministry of Defence, having considered the case, wrote to Mrs Whitehouse and informed her of a strict code of practice that is applied regarding such medals. The rules preclude the issue of replacements to the family lineage beyond the next of kin; and as the grand-daughter, Mrs Whitehouse fell outside that criterion. The Ministry of Defence proposed that as official replacements were not an option, the Northamptonshire Regiment might like to present a set of replica medals. This was agreed and Mrs Whitehouse very kindly accepted this offer.

On Monday 22 February 2010, Col Peter Worthy, President of the Northamptonshire Regiment Association and Maj Bill O'Driscoll, met Mrs Rhoda Whitehouse, her husband Lou and Brian Davies RBL and made the presentation of the replica set of medals.



Maj Bill O'Driscoll, Col Peter Worthy, Mrs Rhoda Whitehouse and Mr Lou Whitehouse.

### Charity Begins at Home The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Charity 2009/10

*Maj Dick Gould writes:*

This year The Regiment has made record grants to serving and former members of The Regiment. Serving soldiers have benefitted by the total of £10,000 granted to the 1st and 3rd Battalions to support their tours in Afghanistan. These grants were used to help the families of wounded soldiers make visits to Selly Oak, taking wounded soldiers out for a meal and a pint, and towards decompression costs in Cyprus.

Association members have needed much help this year as the recession has continued to hit jobs and relationships. Requests for assistance through SSAFA and the Royal British Legion also reflect the reluctance or inability of Councils to meet their legal obligations towards housing the homeless and providing support for the disabled. The most frequent support given by The Regiment is: Assistance with debt, white goods (fridges, cookers); rent assistance; home adaptations for disabled; electrically powered vehicles; transport costs; disabled armchairs; disabled mattresses; training courses; assistance with funeral costs.

The casework and sums disbursed up to March this year are:

Royal Anglian	147	£50,966	average £346
Royal Lincoln	9	£ 3,429	average £381
Suffolk	15	£ 5,522	average £368
Northamptons	1	£ 300	average £300
<u>Beds and Herts</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>£ 2,850</u>	<u>average £475</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>£63,067</b>	<b>average £374</b>

The main source of income for the Regimental Benevolent Charity is the Day's Pay Scheme and The Regiment is most grateful to all those officers and soldiers who make their monthly contributions. There have also been a number of money raising events, the principal one being Mrs Christine Bonner raising £44,023.51 for the fund on her *All The 4s* walk; and she plans another one this year. Other fundraising activities and donations have amounted to £45,883. These sums both show a tremendous amount of support for our soldiers and we would ask anyone who is considering raising money for a military charity to consider where charity must sometime begin – at home. So please do your sponsored walk, jog, march, parachute jump or cycle ride for your Regimental Benevolent Charity so that our soldiers and their families can be looked after – forever.

### Mrs Rosayne Jones Retires

*Maj Tony Jones writes:*

Rosayne Jones started work at Warley on a short term casual contract on 12 April 1999. Little did she, or anyone else, know that the short term contract would last some 11 years. Throughout that time Rosayne was employed as the part time typist working for The Royal Anglian Regiment Association, plus the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire and Essex Regiments' Associations.

Rosayne did more than fulfill a part time post. She, along with at times Joan Westover, had to run the whole HQ during the periods when there was no Area Secretary in place. She also took over the full time administrative officer job, pending the appointment of a



RHQ gathers to say farewell to Rosayne Jones.

## Regimental Matters

permanent occupant, on three occasions!

All three associations have much to thank Rosayne for and she will be missed. Not only did she work tirelessly in the office, but she, along with her husband Ian, also went that extra mile by playing a full part in all Association activities. A strong supporter of the Warley Regimental Chapel, she would attend parades, reunions and pilgrimages to Normandy and Ypres. Her support for these events was invariably out of office hours and she and Ian would be the first to offer their assistance should an extra pair of hands be required.

Whilst we wish her well in her retirement, as you would expect from someone whose selfless devotion and dedication have shone through for all her 11 years at Warley, Rosayne will still be seen around; because she has volunteered her services to the Essex Regiment Association as their typist.

Simply saying typist does not do justice to what Rosayne has done for us. She has been a star.

### Deaths

RHQ has been notified of the following deaths since the last edition of *Castle*:

Maj HK Merriam MC	on 11 October 2009*
Capt DEA Michael	on 22 November 2009*
LCpl AP Drane	on 7 December 2009*
Maj 'Jof' Flint DSO MC	on 15 December 2009*
Pte RS Hayes	on 3 January 2010*
Lt Col WF Badcock MBE	on 13 January 2010*
Maj TC Eaton OBE TD DL	on 19 January 2010*
WO2 K (Dilly) Dolan	on 16 February 2010
CSgt G (Shep) Shepherd	on 19 February 2010
Capt MO Driver	on 15 March 2010*
LCpl STM Hardy	on 16 March 2010*
Pte JD Grigg	on 16 March 2010*
Sgt A (Tony) Waqairoba	on 25 March 2010*
Cpl W (Wally) Taylor	on 3 April 2010*

\* See *Obituaries*

### Field of Remembrance

The Field of Remembrance opening ceremony at Westminster Abbey will this year be held on Thursday 11 November 2010. This is a most important event at which The Regiment wishes to be well represented. The facilities of the Farmers' Club (3 Whitehall Court, SW1) will be available to those attending although, as usual, a limit of 50 has to be imposed. Further details will be passed to those serving in the MOD in due course, whilst Regimental Association members wishing to attend should contact RHQ by 22 Oct 2010. Members of former regiments' associations should contact their respective area secretaries.

### The Padre's Pad

*Honorary Chaplain to The Regiment,*

*Father Ken Reeve, writes:*

*And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me";*

**Luke 22.v 19**

These are the words said by the priest as he elevates the bread and wine when he prays the Eucharistic Prayer at the Holy Communion. They form part of the Anamnesis or the recalling/remembrance of Christ's words to his disciples prior to his betrayal, arrest, death on the cross, and his mighty resurrection. In short it is a memorial, a reminder to those who are celebrating the mass of his acts of salvation.

Memorials take many forms and, I would suggest, are all around us. Buildings of national and local importance, road side shrines made up of flowers sadly depicting a fatal accident, pub signs and names that often remind us of our rich history, campaign and personal medals, sporting trophies, all these and many more everyday possessions, deeds, names and places, when we think about them, actually do

make a memorial.

Before me as I write I can see several: there is a bronze sculpture of an infantry soldier lying beside a broken wall, wearing his full kit portrayed in a classic firing position. Next to this is a framed Royal Anglian cap badge. Nearby are treasured photographs of my children and grandchildren and behind the computer is the text of a prayer given to me by my first Church CO, Bishop David Connor. All of these are memorials simply because when I look at them I am reminded of so many things, but perhaps more than anything else, I remember that in these few 'memorials' there is so much that has helped to shape and form the person that is me.

This year is a special year of memorials for The Regiment. On 12 September we have The Royal Anglian Memorial Dedication at Duxford. This memorial will commemorate all members of the East Anglian Regiments, formed in 1959 and The Royal Anglian Regiment, formed in 1964, who have died on duty. At present the memorial will carry 78 names; names that will be known to many of us, not simply as names, but of real people; old comrades; mates. Their names, for many of us, need not be carved in stone, for those whom we served with and who lost their lives are never very far from our minds. However, we need this memorial to be a perpetual memory, not only to honour them, but to ensure that future generations who stand before it may be reminded that these are among many who, if you like, carry the Regimental genes; they remain a part of who we are today, tomorrow, and always.

The same goes for the second of our memorial services, when a memorial to The Royal Norfolk, The Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Regiments, that form just three of our honoured parent regiments, is to be dedicated at the National Arboretum in September. This memorial is richly deserved and again I hope that it too will serve to honour and remind those who visit it that here is yet more of our genetic history, a memorial going back to 1685.

The best memorial that Christians make for Christ is to endeavour to live his risen life, a life of service that seeks to care for all who are in need, to promote justice, righteousness and peace. Perhaps the very best memorial we can make to those we will especially remember this year, particularly those who have made the supreme sacrifice, is to actually honour them through our own behaviour within the Royal Anglian ethos. I look forward to seeing many of you at Duxford, when once again we will make our Anamnesis – of recall, remembrance and memorial, with glasses elevated in what is also real and lasting communion. Holy? Yes, I am sure it is.

### Email Communications

Please keep RHQ informed of your email address and RHQ will keep you informed of Regimental gossip and events, as and when they occur.

### Next Edition of *Castle*

Contributions for the Dec 2010 issue of *Castle* should reach the Editor by no later than 22 October 2010. Contributions should be in the following format:

Text should be submitted in Word on a CD or floppy disk. Each article should be in a separate folder with an accurate caption; photos linked to that article should not be embedded in the Word documents, rather they should be supplied as separate jpg file, with appropriate captions, and then placed in the same folder.

Photo files can be in Greyscale, RGB or CMYK format. In general, the jpg needs to be 300 dots per inch at the size it is to be printed. If hard copy photos are being supplied, do not write on the back of them. Instead, write the caption on a Post-it note and attach to the back. Do not supply inkjet prints of jpg photos as the quality will not suffice.

If text is supplied as hard copy, it is to be printed double line spaced, in a simple font and single column.

The Editor works on the assumption that all contributions have been edited and approved by the CO/ OC/Senior Person. So please do your best to ensure that content/grammar/spelling/accuracy are of a high quality. He would be particularly keen to receive good quality photographs, including one of this edition of *Castle* being read in an unusual or exotic location.

## Mainly About People

The Regiment congratulates: **Maj Gen Phil Jones** on his promotion and appointment as Director Force Reintegration HQ ISAF, Afghanistan, with effect from May 2010; **Brig Simon Porter** on his appointment as Supreme Allied Commander Transformation Representative Europe in the rank of Major General in December 2010; **Col Alasdair Wild** on being selected for promotion to Brigadier in a DA Post in January 2011; **Lt Cols Simon Browne** and **James Woodham** for being selected for promotion to Colonel; and **Majs Dom Biddick** and **Alex Hawley** for both being selected for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel.

The Regiment also congratulates **2Lts George Waterfield, Will Hoy, Jamie Powell, Richard Weston** and **Mark Garner** on being commissioned from RMA Sandhurst in December 2009; and **2Lts Tom Green, Michael Goodman** and **James Walters** on being commissioned in April 2010. We also wish them the very best of luck in what will no doubt be testing times.

Thanks to **Tim Young** who sent in this recent photo of the 'Gamekeeper Syndicate'. Tim sent it hard copy and apologised that: '...I have no computer so cannot submit this as you request on p24 of the current edition of *Castle!*'



**The Gamekeeper Syndicate: From left: Col Richard Haes, Brig Peregrine Rawlins, Maj Tim Young, Col Mike Chambers, Capt Lance Gerrard-Wright and Col John Tadman.**

Thanks also to **Brig Charles Barnes** who wrote: 'The enclosed picture (bottom of page), taken 35 years ago, shows the then Colonel of the Regiment, **Lt Gen Sir Ian Freeland**, inspecting the Quarter Guard during a visit to the Poachers in Münster. You will have been somewhere – training for the coming NI tour in Belfast!'

Summer 2010 sees the departure from Salisbury Plain and the Army of **Lt Col Mike Beard** and **WO1 Graham Goodchild**. Mike, despite hailing from Suffolk, was commissioned into the Royal Military Police, but saw the error of his ways after an attachment to the Poachers; and after travelling the world ended up as Commander Defence Estate Salisbury Plain.

Graham was also born in Suffolk and became a Pompadour, with **Maj Dick Gould** as his first platoon commander. Like Mike he enjoyed a secondment to The Bermuda Regiment and he started his long association with Salisbury Plain on being appointed RSM of the Support Weapons School at Netheravon. He has become known to many soldiers of all ranks during his 14 years as a Training Area Marshal on the Plain.



**Lt Col Mike Beard and WO1 Graham Goodchild – off to Civvy Street.**



**35 Years Ago in Münster: CO, Lt Col Charles Barnes, and Adjutant, Capt Peregrine Rawlings; RSM David Greenfield is mainly hidden. Escorting Lt Gen Sir Ian Freeland.**

## Mainly About People



**Capt Iain Greenwood presents his generous cheque to Maj Dick Gould at RHQ.**

Well done and thank you to **Capt Iain Greenwood**, 3rd Battalion, who popped into RHQ to hand over the proceeds of his Dartmoor Challenge sponsored walk, an account of which appeared in the last edition of *Castle*. Iain raised a total of £2,500, half of which he chose to present to The Royal Anglian Regiment Memorial Fund.

Congratulations to **CSgt Tim Heale** who married **Rowena** at the The Guards Chapel, Birdcage Walk, Westminster, on Saturday 10 April. His best man was former **Sgt Steve Meekoms** and former



**The happy couple - CSgt Tim and Rowena Heale in the Guards Chapel.**

**CSgt Alan Nichols** was also present; they had both served with Tim in the 2nd Battalion. Guests kindly donated £650 to The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Charity. Tim is currently serving as a Welfare Officer with Nijmegen Company, Grenadier Guards based at Woolwich.

Thank you to **Andy 'Tommo' Thomas** (2nd Bn 93-99) for sending in a photo of 8 Platoon, C Company, the Poachers, taken whilst on exercise on Yardley Chase.



**Tommo and 8 Platoon C Company the Poachers strike a pose.**

On a recent return visit to Western Australia where he had been ADC to the Governor in 1970-71 (the Governor then being **Maj Gen Sir Douglas Kendrew KCMG CB CBE DSO**, the last Colonel The Royal Leicestershire Regiment), **Col Michael Goldschmidt**, accompanied by his wife, **Margaret**, met up with **Col John** and **Christine Hart**, who live at Australind, 100 miles south of Perth, and who are much enjoying retirement and the lifestyle 'down under'.



**Down Under: From left: John Hart, Michael Goldschmidt, Christine Hart, Margaret Goldschmidt.**

**Maj Gen John Sutherell** and **Col Pat Shervington** represented The Regiment at the presentation of the Elizabeth Cross to **Mrs Joanna Burnet**, widow of **Maj Peter Taunton**, who died on 26 October 1970 whilst commanding B Company, 2nd Battalion, in West Belfast. The presentation was made by the **Lord Lieutenant of Greater London** who said: 'Mrs Burnet, wear this Elizabeth Cross with pride and pass it on to future generations, whom I am pleased to see present today, so that they too might know the price that has been paid for their freedom and way of life'.

A belated but huge thank you to the Master of the Four Seasons Masonic Lodge in Norfolk, **Mr Ted Woods** and his wife **Julie**, for raising £660 for The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Charity at

## Mainly About People

their Ladies Festival last August. It is traditional for Masonic Lodges to raise money for local charities and the Ladies Festival allows the Master's Lady to select the charity to benefit that night. They both subsequently travelled to RHQ and on behalf of their Lodge, presented the Regimental Secretary with the cheque.



**Ted and Julie Woods present the cheque to our own charity.**

Walt and Jill Day of Raunds, Northants, called in at RHQ to hand over information on **JDmr Ian William Skinner**, Junior Soldiers Wing, Blenheim Camp, who died in the West Suffolk Hospital after an incident while swimming in Colchester Garrison swimming pool on 20 October 1966. Walt and Jill have cared for his grave in Bury St Edmunds' Borough Cemetery and have asked that it be remembered by The Regiment on Remembrance Sunday. JDmr Skinner's name will be on the Regimental Memorial, but as yet, RHQ are not in contact with his family. His parents were **William** and **Jeannie Skinner** of 2 Long Lane, Strumpshaw, Norfolk, and he had a brother **Stewart**. He was born in Dilson, Northumberland.



**Walt and Jill Day tending the grave of JDmr Ian Skinner in Bury St Edmunds.**

The Warrant Officers Past and Present Dinner was held at Wretham Camp STANTA on 15 May with **Brig Tony Calder** as the guest of honour. **Lt Col Tony Powell** kindly sent in a selection of pictures (right) just before the *Castle* deadline and the Editor's Warrant Officer recognition has since failed. So readers will have to figure them out themselves (or ring Tony!)



**Warrant Officers Past and Present at their Annual Dinner,**

And finally, thank you to **Brian Potter** (father of **Maj Simon Potter** who served alongside our soldiers this year in Afghanistan) who sent in these words:

### *The Final Mile*

*When I return you will not see my face  
nor hold my hand  
but weep and silent stand  
And when they ask, how was it when I died?  
Tell them it was with honour and with pride  
Stand proud, and with a smile  
Tell them how I held my head up high  
as I walked that final mile*

*And I shall rest in peace in the long grass of the greenest hue  
But remember that when I died, I died for you and you and you.*

## Letters to the Editor



From left: Ian Andrews, David Jelley, Paul Halfnight, Gary Whittaker, Stuart Day, Charlie Suter, David Drew, Richard Macan-Lind, Cpl Stu Parker – in Regimental tie!

### Game for a Shoot?

Dear Editor,

I am pleased to say that Cpl Stu Parker came and spent the day with us last Saturday, and as you will see from the photographs he had a productive time.

Cpl Parker managed to shoot his first pheasant on the first drive of the day, missing slightly behind at first, slightly in front after that, but very soon he was amongst them and managed to take two birds well in front with clean full pattern shots. The following drives of the day gave him the same result, often to the applause of his fellow guns down the line. Stu's personal bag equated to 15 well shot and carefully selected birds out of a total bag of 107.



Stu fitted in perfectly and was an excellent guest and candidate; also, his sense of humour, anecdotes and willingness to join in the banter made him a very popular addition to our party. On speaking with him during the day he gave me a greater insight into the work of your Regiment and also the tasks you have in hand caring for those deployed and also those returning with terrible injuries. Stu Parker is a truly remarkable and likeable man who is an asset to the work you undertake and the perfect ambassador for the Regiment; thank you for nominating him to join in our day.

Lastly, thanks to you too for making the necessary arrangements at your end; hopefully all things going well and if I am able, I would like to approach you next year to extend the same invitation once again.

Yours etc  
Richard A Macan-Lind

### Asking for Trouble



Dear Editor,

This picture shows Pte Rudd, C (Essex) Company, after he was shot in the leg on 17 November 2009 in Nad-e Ali. He is on a stretcher in Patrol Base Silab awaiting helicopter CASEVAC.

A week prior to the picture Pte Rudd had stated to his pals that 'This doesn't feel like a war yet because I haven't been shot'.

Pte Rudd is happy to appear in the *Castle*.

Yours etc  
Chris Davies  
OC C(Essex) Company

## Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am writing to ask your permission to carry out a charity event in June to raise funds for The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Charity. My plan is to have another tea party but bigger and raise more money. I have - fingers crossed - asked Simon Parkes who is a Radio 4 presenter (*Parks and Gardens* etc) and also a former food critic for *Vogue* to come along as a guest speaker and it is looking promising.

I will, as before, try to make all the food myself - lots of cake testing this spring! - along with my housekeeper and I am hoping to invite around 40 ladies (plus hats). I will try to keep costs to the minimum so that we can send as much money as possible.

I do hope this meets with your approval. Last year you mentioned that you could send someone along to speak and I wondered if it would be at all possible to send a couple of men along just to meet people and of course to have tea and cake. I know that the Regiment has been away and have been so sad to learn of the losses recently.

Yours etc  
Vivienne Pyatt  
Arkesden, Essex

### Felsted School CCF

Dear Editor,

You will be aware that on 4 March 2010 the Felsted School Combined Cadet Force (CCF) ran an exercise, the purpose of which was to raise money for Help for Heroes and that you kindly arranged for us to be supported in our efforts by the presence of LCpl Andrew Ferguson and Pte Gareth Bonham.

In putting the exercise together I had much support from school staff, however our aim would have been less successful without the presence of soldiers with first-hand experience of combat, injury and the excellent support from Help for Heroes. It was a privilege for us all to get the chance to speak to them both and to hear what it was like on the front line. From my own perspective their stories have further strengthened my wish to follow family tradition and join once I have A Levels and a university degree to my name.

The format of our exercise revolved around a series of six main stands lasting 45 minutes and six smaller stands lasting 15 minutes.

Movement between stands was on foot and was effectively a navigation exercise requiring map reading and a degree of fitness for running with kit when required. The purpose of the stands was to place our Cadet NCOs out of their comfort zones and develop a pressured environment for all participants.

Each cadet was asked to raise sponsorship of at least £10. I am pleased to be able to let you know that we considered the event a great success, raising a total of £1,095. We hope that this will contribute to helping the injured who risk so much on behalf of us all.

Thank you for the important support given by LCpl Andrew Ferguson and Pte Gareth Bonham.

Yours etc  
Peter Knox  
Cadet WO2(CSM)

### Help for Veterans

Dear Editor,

There are a number of issues from which I feel the readership of *Castle* would benefit.

Firstly, I should perhaps mention that on Friday 19 March I was interviewed for the position of Chairman for the East Midlands region for the Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee. This has prompted me to submit and impart this knowledge to the readership.

Further reading can be found at <http://www.veterans-uk.info/pensions/afcs.html>. This site will inform the readership of the help which is available to them.

There is also an article on a 'New healthcare package for military veterans', details will not necessarily be known and what better place for this to be published than in the Regimental journal?

Finally, there is a new initiative regarding the launch of the Veterans enterprise scheme and 'Be the Boss'.

If I am successful and am appointed to this new position then, it will be my responsibility to promote these initiatives and I very much look forward to doing so.

Yours etc  
Alan Cole



Peter Knox (3rd from left) with LCpl Ferguson, Pte Bonham, WO2 Riley and Felsted School CCF chums.

## Letters to the Editor



### Afghan Heroes Wootton Bassett

Dear Editor,

I thank you for the Regimental Crest transfers which I was honoured to display on behalf of The Royal Anglian Regiment at Wootton Bassett on 14 March.

It was a great day with over 10,000 bikes attending and I do understand that over £100,000 was raised for the charity. Adults and children alike, old and young, were lining the streets of all villages we routed through, cheering and clapping and even toasting us with their drinks. It resembled scenes from one of the old World War Two films when people were liberated - wow! - what a feeling! All for a good cause too. It just went to prove how highly all the fallen heroes and all of the military personnel serving are held.



It's all too easy for the media to report on petty demonstrations against our soldiers marching through our towns but believe me, this was the real thing. The 'real' people think of you all highly, we admire and respect you. Carry on the good work. I have attached a few pics for you of the day.

I also understand that plans are already underway for next year as it was so successful. Perhaps I may come knocking again.

Yours etc  
Paul Lomath  
III Rivers Chapter  
Harley Owners Group

### 1st Battalion Officers' Mess Reunion 2010: Change of Date

Dear Editor,

Following on from the successful Tidworth 25 Years On reunions held in 2000 and 2005, it is intended to hold the next reunion in 2010. This will be open to all members of the Officers' Mess, their partners and widows of past members, from the formation of the Battalion up to the end of 1985. The date for your diary is Saturday 16 October 2010. This is different from that notified in the last edition of *Castle*, as we have had to change the date. Strangely enough, the location will yet again be London, with apologies to all of you who no longer visit the capital, as we have been generously offered the use of facilities at The Royal Hospital Chelsea by a past member of the Mess!

We shall follow the format that seems to have worked effectively before, by meeting for pre lunch drinks, a finger buffet style meal to allow us to continue to mix and mingle and rounded off by tea and scones, so that much catching up may be achieved. It is anticipated that the cost will be somewhat reduced due to the fabulous location. So because of that we anticipate an especially good turnout, there is no restriction on numbers, parking is freely available and the

delights of London's shops will be sure to attract, particularly in the run up to Christmas.

Given the above it is particularly important that as many members as possible receive notification of this not-to-be-missed reunion. Therefore please do circulate, discuss or communicate these details to all your chums, especially those who have trouble approaching any form of computer. It would also be helpful if you could pre-register your intention to attend, sooner rather than later. You can do so most easily by sending an e-mail to [timwilkes6@googlemail.com](mailto:timwilkes6@googlemail.com). Alternatively you may telephone 07720 288100 or send a snail mail to TR Wilkes, 156 Godfrey Way, Great Dunmow, Essex, CM6 2SQ. Full details and instructions will be circulated in due course.

Yours etc  
Tim Wilkes

### 'They Also Serve...'

Dear Editor,

In the words of John Milton, the poet, 'they also serve... who stand and wait' and it was to this end that Valerie Slaughter, an ex-Army wife herself of some 18 years, decided to write a book as a tribute to all wives, children and families of service personnel everywhere, for she believes they also play their part.

In her book, aptly called '*They Also Serve...*' the author writes about the time of the Falklands Conflict as experienced by her and her children as they waited for their soldier to return.

It was in April 1982, when more than 26,000 service personnel from all branches of the services formed a Task Force, one of the largest ever assembled, and set off to travel 8,000 miles to the Falkland Islands in a successful bid to regain them from the Argentine Forces who had invaded. This was the Falklands Conflict.

Apart from the journey to the islands, battling freezing temperatures, 15 foot waves and long absences from home, many fierce and bloody battles ensued before the final surrender of the Argentine Forces on 14 June 1982.

Back home, thousands of women and families waited anxiously, endeavouring to carry on normally whilst living in fear and dread of what might happen to their loved ones.

Through the anguish and anxiety they fought their own personal battle, for this was their role. It was then and remains so today for those left behind whilst duties are carried out.

This book is a mixed bag of emotions, anxiety and worry, laughter and tears and has been reviewed as 'a good read.' It was written as a tribute to all of those who stand and wait, for they also serve...

'*They Also Serve...*' by Eileen Lake (Valerie writes under this pseudonym) is available from <http://www.authorhouse.co.uk/bookstore> or Amazon, Waterstones and Barnes and Noble websites, price £8.99.

Yours etc  
Valerie Slaughter

### Puzzle from Brussels

Dear Editor,

During a weekend trip with Belinda to Brussels we passed this shop and I noticed the uniform and on closer inspection the Talavera collar badges. Unfortunately, it being Sunday morning, the shop was shut and we were unable to find out anything about it. We intend to return to the city and I will endeavour to discover what the story is behind it.

Yours etc  
Nigel Brown



## The Regimental Museum

*Andy Murkin, Museum Officer, writes:*

The most important event at the Museum since the last issue of *Castle* has been Remembrance Day on 8 November last year. The wreath-laying ceremony took place in the Museum, with wreaths laid by Lt Col Vincent, CO 3rd Battalion, Richard Faulkner of the 1/3 East Anglian Regiment Malaya Veterans Group, and Nigel Cracknell, ex-2nd Battalion, a Museum volunteer. Nigel also read the names from the Roll of Honour.

During the day, veterans from The Regiment were in attendance to speak to members of the public. These included a group from the Malaya Veterans Group, as well as serving soldiers from the 1st Battalion. The event was sufficiently newsworthy to attract the *Anglia TV* cameras, with some of our veterans interviewed and name-checked.

In November, the Museum had a visit from WO2 Doug Farthing of the 3rd Battalion, who is also an artist, dealing much of the time with military themes. He left some of his paintings which we are hoping to display somewhere at Duxford in the course of next year. Although they are not paintings of Royal Anglians, they are paintings in most cases of soldiers in places where The Regiment has recently been, doing the kinds of things The Regiment has been doing, so will be a very interesting addition to our display. In the meantime, Doug's paintings can be viewed on application in the Museum office, whilst some of his other works are on view at Mandell's Gallery in Norwich.

Over the winter period, further work has been done on improving conditions for storing the Museum's reserve collection at RHQ, Bury



**Richard Faulkner (left) and Bill Green (right), show off some of their memorabilia from Malaya.**

St Edmunds. New shelving purchased last year has been assembled and positioned in the second turret room at the Keep. This room doesn't have the same generously thick walls which help to stabilise environmental conditions in the rest of the building, but as soon as this has been sorted out, the room can be used. The floor has already been painted and the windows blocked to keep out harmful ultra-violet sunlight.

Already in 2010 a number of groups have made visits to the Museum exhibition in Duxford. They included two groups from the 1st Battalion, two groups from CCF contingents, and two groups of potential future Royal Anglians. One of the latter groups visited the Museum as part of a new course designed to take place before basic training, to introduce new recruits to the unfamiliar discipline and routine they will encounter at Catterick.

By the time this issue of *Castle* is out, there should be a very interesting new exhibition on view at Duxford. This is *Afghanistan Then and Now*, produced together with the curators of the museums of the Essex Regiment, the Suffolk Regiment and the Royal Norfolk Regiment. The exhibition will show the history of The Regiment in Afghanistan from the 1830s onwards, and will explain something of the circumstances which have brought us there again. The exhibition is being professionally produced and should be an excellent addition to the Museum's displays in the Land Warfare Hall.

One piece of less welcome news, especially for those planning a visit to Duxford later in the year, is that the Land Warfare Hall, which houses our permanent Museum Gallery, is to be closed over the winter. The Imperial War Museum, our host at Duxford, has been forced to do this by mounting financial pressure.

The Museum will, of course, be open for the Memorial Dedication Ceremony in September, and it is also planned to open it on important occasions such as Remembrance Sunday.



**Current members of The Regiment engaging with the public at Duxford. Craig Fisher (left) and Dan Bromham (right). The Museum was also joined during the day by Mark Becala, Adam Loader and Ed Garner.**



**Remembrance Day 2009. Second from left: Lt Col Vincent; third from left: Nigel Cracknell; right: Andy Murkin.**

## Diary Dates 2010

### August

- 1 Minden Day, Bury St Edmunds
- 1 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 2 Royal Lincolnshire (Lincoln Branch), Royal Anglian Band Concert, Sobraon Barracks
- 20 2nd Battalion Flag Change in Cyprus

### September

- 2 Museum Trustees' Meeting
- 5 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 5 Cambridgeshire Association Meeting, Waterbeach
- 11 Regimental Memorial Rugby Match, 1430 hrs, Stowmarket RUFC
- 12 Regimental Memorial Dedication Ceremony, IWM Duxford
- 15 Regimental Golf Autumn Meeting, Stamford
- 25 Norfolk Association Dinner, Norwich
- 25 Royal Tigers' Association, Dedication of Dick Read Square, Berles-au-Bois, France
- 26 Norfolk Association Service, Norwich Cathedral
- 26 Royal Lincolnshire (Lincoln Branch), AGM, Church Service and Formal Lunch, Sobraon Barracks
- 30 Dedication Royal Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Regiments' Memorial, National Arboretum

### October

- 1 3rd Bn Officers' Dinner Club Autumn Lunch, Warley
- 3 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 5 Essex Regiment Association, General Committee Meeting
- 13 Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Regiment Association Management Committee Meeting
- 13 Regimental Benevolent Charity Executive Committee Meeting

- 15-17 Exercise Steelback Cadet, STANTA
- 16 4/5th Battalion The Royal Leicestershire Regiment Officers' Dinner Club, Leicester
- 17 Royal Anglian Association Morning Service and Lunch, Royal Hospital Chelsea
- 19 Regimental Recruiting Steering Committee Meeting, Canary Wharf
- 29 King's Lynn Branch Dinner
- 30 Poachers' Felixstowe Reunion

### November

- 5 Regimental Council Meeting, Army & Navy Club
- 5 Officers' Dinner Club, Army & Navy Club
- 7 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 9 Essex Regiment Cathedral Service and Salamanca Luncheon, Chelmsford
- 11 Field of Remembrance Opening, Westminster Abbey
- 11 Remembrance Service, Memorial Cottages, Norwich
- 14 Remembrance Sunday
- 21 Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Regiment Association Remembrance and Reunion, Kempston
- 21 Norwich Branch Lunch

### December

- 3 Royal Anglian Reunion (Leicestershire) South Wigston Workingmen's Club
- 4 Gorleston and Great Yarmouth Branch Lunch
- 4 Royal Leicestershire Regiment Officers' Lunch, London
- 5 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 16 Fords Carol Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley

## Diary Dates 2011

### January

- 9 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley

### February

- 1 3rd Bn Officers' Dinner Club Meeting, Warley
- 6 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 6/13 (TBC) Royal Lincolnshire (Lincoln Branch), Sobraon Lunch, Sobraon Barracks

### March

- 6 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 26 Poachers' Grimsby Reunion

### April

- 3 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 21 Royal Lincolnshire (Lincoln Branch), AGM, Sobraon Barracks
- 26 Essex Regiment Association General Committee Meeting and AGM

### May

- 1 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 6 Regimental Council Meeting, Canary Wharf
- 8 Almanza Service, Regimental Chapel Norwich Cathedral
- 11 Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Regiment Association Management Committee Meeting and AGM

### June

- 5 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley
- 26 Essex Regiment Association Remembrance Services and Reunion
- TBC 16th Foot Officers' Annual Lunch

### July

- 3 Morning Service, Regimental Chapel, Warley

## Can You Remember?

*Capt Nick Denning, Regimental Careers Officer, writes:*

**40 Years Ago**  
**November - May 1969-70**



'Pay Parade UN style'. Maj L Lunn RAPC paying out in Paphos District.



Lt A Duff doesn't know which way to go...donkey derby on Christmas Day.



A Company complete in BAOR.

## Can You Remember?



Watched by Brig Green, Deputy Colonel, the Colonel of the Regiment examines the new range of combat dress undergoing troop trials by C Company. The wearer is unknown...In the background are Maj John Tadmán, RQMS Bird and CSgt Greenfield.

It was a period of flux for The Regiment, with relocation and re-roling being the order of the day. The 1st Battalion left the mechanised role that it had held since 1976 in favour of the air-portable role for Northern Ireland. Maj Pat MacDonald wrote that one battalion of the Regiment should remain mechanised perpetually to save on costly and lengthy retraining.

The Poachers became the last unit to leave Felixstowe in advance of its closing, before moving to Colchester to become 19 Brigade's Strategic Reserve. In February they conducted a jungle training exercise in Kenya and were based at Nanyuki Showground, just like their successors in the 2nd Battalion last year.

The Pompadours saw the only operational action of the period, heading over to the Limassol Zone of Cyprus for peacekeeping under the UN mandate. There they manned observation posts and patrolled to prevent the resurgence of hostilities between the Greeks and Turks.



LCpl Mick Boddy receives Dmr Allan's bugle on becoming the Commanding Officer's bugler for 1969/70.



B Company members at Gathiuru.

**Can You Remember?**

LCpls Cooper and Owen looking for a tank to kill.

**35 Years Ago**  
**January 1975 - January 1976**



**Volvos en route to Norway.**

The Vikings were in the midst of an exciting year as part of their AMF(L) commitment and trained in Norway, Denmark, Italy and Turkey. Extensive fitness training was undertaken prior to the commitment and the Battalion was well tested in all forms of conventional soldiering.

The Poachers' year was highlighted by another Op Banner tour that started in June 1975 - their third in as many years. They took



**CSgt Ross, 9 Platoon, ski-joring - harder than it looks!**

**Sennybridge**  
**- Pte Gould,**  
**Comd Company...**  
**'It's not the**  
**temperature**  
**that's rising.'**



## Can You Remember?



**Cpl Isom and LCpl Firman taking cover behind a pig on 9 August 1975.**

over the some of the most diverse and 'sporty' patches of West Belfast in ceasefire conditions, although hostilities recommenced after just four days.

The Pompadours finished a tour of the Creggan Estate in March 75 and prepared to move to Catterick from Paderborn. The four-

month tour of Londonderry was noteworthy for the ceasefire that lasted for all but the hectic start of the tour. Keeping a low profile, the Pompadours got involved with some inter-company sport and made arrangements for a visit from their mascot, Miss Beverley Pilkington, the gorgeous Mademoiselle de Pompadour.



**Cpl Smith with Lt Gen Tufte Johnsen, Commander of Southern Norway, CO, OC A Company and Sgt Bear look on.**



**Mademoiselle de Pompadour at the gate with a shy Pte Whitaker.**



**Cpls Vessey and Cheong.**



**Not all the population of Londonderry were hostile towards the Pompadours as Pte Griffin from 6 Platoon demonstrates to two enthusiastic students. Surely this is what it is all about?**

## Can You Remember?

**30 Years Ago**  
**January 1980 - January 1981**



**Minden Day - 'Nice to see you again, Sir.'**



**The moment of triumph for the CO as the officers defeat the sergeants in the Falling Plate.**



**LCpl Good and his section live firing at Sennelager.**

## Can You Remember?



**'You lead and we'll follow'. CSgt Dave Wade and Sgt Alf Todd confirm their plans with a French tank commander during Exercise Concorde.**

The Vikings were hard at work readopting the mechanised role. The Battalion divided itself between exercises in Soltau, Sennelager and Denmark, before reconvening on the Canadian Prairie for Battlegroup level exercises. The Battalion arrived home fit and practised, using live firing, in all phases of war. Many described the training as 'unforgettable'.

In West Berlin, the Poachers underwent exciting training in the form of a combined exercise with the French and then excelled in the Berlin Field Force Inter-Platoon Competition. All nine Poacher platoons entered made the top 12 in the results, hogging the top six positions on the scoreboard! The period was rounded off with some seriously wet-weathered field firing in Sennelager.

The Pompadours returned from Northern Ireland to a hearty reception from the people of Colchester and 28 men were warned off in short order for a deployment on Op Agila, which would see the transition of Rhodesia to Zimbabwe. Exercise Strident Call in Kenya awaited the remainder to begin their role in 7 Field Force. Further training culminated in the 1 (Br) Corps exercise, Spearpoint, on the Rhine.



**Giant viper exploding prematurely on Exercise Talavera in Canada.**



**The Prairie.**



**Sgt Alf Todd and 7 Platoon setting the pace in the Inter-platoon competition.**

## Can You Remember?



**'Soldiers are great' say the banners - a far cry from the Falls Road.**



**Operation Valkyrie - the heliborne assault - gets underway.**

## Can You Remember?

**25 Years Ago**  
**February - August 1985**



**Pte Coles, C Company, in Cyprus.**



**Ptes Hobbs, Newman, Kelth and 2Lt Vincent on patrol.**



**Prior to his retirement, Capt (QM) Tim Slinn, handed the keys of the Quartermaster's Department to Capt (QM) John Rose.**



**Victorious Poachers - EDSAAM 85: 1st D (Sp) Company 2 R Anglian; 2nd MCTC; 3rd C Company 2 R Anglian; 4th B Company 2 R Anglian; 5th A Company 2 R Anglian. Rifle: Best Individual and Class A: Sgt Nunn; Best Class B: Pte Tee; Best Young Soldier: Pte Athroll; GPMG: Best Gun Pair Overall and Class A: Sgts Nunn and Anderson; Best Gun Pair Class B: LCpl Almond and Pte Markham. Regular Army Team - Winners: C Company; Falling Plate Regular Army Team winners: A Company.**

**Can You Remember?**

**Pte Peters and LCpl Deller re-enact the Robin Hood meets Little John legend on the French Commando course.**



**C Company snipers line up with the rest of the Company during the staff colleges demonstration. Left, Pte Hone, right LCpl Knifton.**

The Vikings, under Lt Col Michael Walker, were back in Ulster to face an upsurge in terrorist activity, with direct-fire contacts, hijackings and public order scenarios amongst the many challenges faced.

The Poachers returned to Hyderabad Barracks in Colchester to face sub-zero temperature manoeuvres on Salisbury Plain. Other activities included UKLF Cadet training and a fantastic victory for the Battalion shooting team at EDSAAM at Bisley.

The Pompadours underwent a mixed bag of training and sport, coming second in the 4 Armd Div Boxing Championships in Germany, as well as sending a strong C Company Platoon, under Lt Tony Miles, to the French Commando School. B Company went to Canada as part of 17/21 Lancers Battlegroup for Exercise Medicine Man training.



**The CO, Col Julian Browne, is towed out of camp.**

## Can You Remember?

**20 Years Ago**  
**December 1989 - June 1990**



**'I'll hit him, you grab the money...' - Ptes Riley and Chalkley at Whinney Hill.**



**Tension on the final day of the Poachers' gruelling patrols competition which was won by 1 Platoon, A Company.**



**Sgt Thumwood and Maj Geenhaugh AAC on Exercise Phantom Bugle.**



**Pte Read crosses the Creggan River followed by Ptes Russell and Lomas.**

## Can You Remember?



Sgt Callaghan has second thoughts about hosting Bessbrook Primary School.



The QM(T) demonstrates the new, edible, officers' cane.



Santa Claus, alias Bill Moore from *Soldier* magazine, visits members of 3 Platoon at the R21 hill top site.



LCpl Szynal and LCpl Milligan present the two Miss Vikings with flowers from the Battalion.



Comd 19 Inf Bde meets Pte Wray.

## Can You Remember?

**15 Years Ago**  
**December 1994 - June 1995**



**Pte Simpson occupies his trench at Yakima.**



**Pte McFadden of A Company.**



**LCpl Jackson supervises the removal of a foot from his Warrior's rear idler.**



**LCpl Duffy and Pte Sammons 'beef up' a snap VCP.**

**Can You Remember?****128 years of undetected crime - eight LS and GC recipients.**

For the Vikings, an uneventful Spearhead Lead Element period, ending in December, gave way to a frenzy of sport and adventurous training, before Exercise Trumpet Dance, in the US in the New Year. Superb live firing was conducted there before the Battalion returned to conduct Exercise Gryphon's Lift on STANTA. This Brigade level exercise, a showpiece of air-mobility, rounded off an intense training period.

The Poachers returned from Bosnia and went through the necessary Warrior administration to prepare for leave. They were proud of a job well done and paraded through the streets of Celle on their return. 7 Armd Bde's Brig Andrew Ridgeway spoke of the courage displayed on the tour and remembered Capt Steven Wormald, who died during its opening stages on 29 April 1994.

The Steelbacks won the last ever 54 Brigade Military Skills Competition with a team led by Lt Gary Bullock from 3 Company. Poignantly, this meant that they won the Veal Trophy, named after Maj Mike Veal. The trophy was presented by his wife Diane.

**The CO congratulates LCpl Ballard on passing out first on the PNCO course.****Realistic Operation Grapple 6 training at Sennelager.****No, not Bosnia, but A Company's 'UN base' at Sennelager.**

## Can You Remember?

**10 Years Ago**  
**December 1999 - June 2000**



**The Chief of Staff for BFC, Air Cdre PA Robinson OBE, presents the award for best officer shot to 2Lt Rupert Witham.**

The Vikings experience a surprising level of violence in Northern Ireland with multiple weapons finds triggering renewed patrolling of the Enclave to stem Dissident Republican operational movements. Astonishingly, a bomb lowered over the wall of Ebrington Barracks, Londonderry, failed to kill any of the Battalion's number, although Pte Welsh from B Company was blown off his feet in the guardroom before sounding the alarm.

The Poachers, before moving to Chepstow, looked back at an exciting time in Dhekelia, Cyprus. There they had launched three exercises to Jordan, as well as a company deployment to the Falklands. They would miss the sunshine of Cyprus, but awaited domestic stability and easy access to their recruiting area.



**B (Suffolk) Company public order training.**



**Damage to the old guardroom.**



**Vikings football team celebrates winning the NI Cup.**

**Can You Remember?**

Viking boxers - NI novice boxing winners. Rear row from left: Fus Muirhead, Pte Sayce, Pte Johnson, Pte Wand, Pte Rust, Pte Gill, Pte Lewis, Pte Walker. Centre: WO2 (RQMS) Mackness, LCpl Stewart, Cpl Head, Sgt Riley, Pte Tuppen, Pte Holmes, Capt Stefanetti. Front: Cpl Rix, LCpl Canning, Lt Col Kemp QBE, Lt Gen Sir Hew Pike KCB DSO MBE, Pte Irving, Pte De Melre, Pte Bye.



LCpls Turnell and Seymour contemplating some new Instructions on the PNCO Cadre.

## Can You Remember?

**5 Years Ago**  
**December 2004 - June 2005**



**2 Platoon in another bid to make the *Castle* journal, pretend to be an armoured infantry platoon.**



**Cpl Almond attempts to steal a DANBAT weapon during a familiarisation patrol.**



**Cpl Sheerin overseas the log race.**



**Sgt Head and 2Lt Hudson, the 1 Platoon command crew, or commonly known as 'little and large'.**



**Lt Martin and Sgt Shand,**

## Can You Remember?

The Vikings found themselves in Iraq under Lt Col Eddie Thorne as the mainstay of the Basra Rural South Battlegroup. Here they managed to perform exceptionally, maintaining the situation with only sporadic violence amongst the agricultural and rural centres.

The Poachers found themselves in Northern Ireland for a largely peaceful tour, bar an incendiary campaign near Christmas, in the wake of the latest breakdown in the peace process. Following that, the Battalion went into public order training before the marching season. There was time for sport and adventurous training, with the Poachers showing particular strength in Rugby and Orienteering, in which they became Army Champions.

**Back row:**  
**Ptes McGrath,**  
**Korolbulleka**  
**and Rowe. Front**  
**Ptes Thompson,**  
**Summers and**  
**Fitzgerald.**



**PSNI questioning local troublemakers.**

# 1st Battalion The Vikings

## Introduction by the Commanding Officer

*Lt Col JM Woodham writes:*

I write this foreword at the conclusion of Operation HERRICK 11 which proved to be another arduous tour of Helmand Province in Afghanistan. Having experienced an intense and successful training year in 2009 and covered the high readiness Spearhead task, the Battalion was well placed to respond to the late call for additional troops to join 11 Light Brigade on Operation HERRICK 11.

Following seven weeks excellent special-to-theatre training, the Battalion deployed 400 soldiers to Helmand Province; A (Norfolk) Company to the Household Cavalry Regiment in Musa Qal'eh; C (Essex) Company to the 1st Battalion the Grenadier Guards in Nad-e Ali and D (Cambridgeshire) Company to the Danish Battlegroup in Gereshk. Finally, the Battalion Headquarters deployed in December to Lashkar Gah to take command of the Afghan National Police mentoring effort and the Lashkar Gah area of operations.

The last six months have seen the Vikings at the forefront of a demanding and dangerous counter-insurgency and employed in a wide range of roles. Without exception, and wherever they have served, the officers and soldiers of the 1st Battalion have shown themselves to be consummate professionals who have contributed strongly towards the progress of the campaign.

During the tour the Battalion Headquarters led the training of over 450 policemen and the deployment of over 1,000 Afghan National Civil Order Police as part of Operation MOSHTARAK. Through liaison and partnership with the Afghan police and army and despite a capable insurgency, the Battalion Headquarters delivered a secure environment for the everyday functioning of the Provincial capital and several high profile visits by foreign dignities and heads of state.

In Musa Qal'eh, A (Norfolk) Company tenaciously held a hard fought flank of this previous insurgent stronghold. Behind their protective shield, the town of Musa Qal'eh was able to flourish, schools and clinics operate and residents go about their business without fear of intimidation or oppression. During their tour they conducted a series of brave and bold manoeuvre operations which led to the expansion of the protected community of Musa Qal'eh.

Initially, in Nad-e Ali, C (Essex) Company performed a similar role, fighting hard on a daily basis against a determined insurgency to deliver security to the District Centre some kilometres to their north. This was decidedly attritional and saw platoons operating from isolated and austere locations. Operation MOSHTARAK, in which C Company took part, significantly improved the security situation in Nad-e Ali and led to a much less kinetic approach being possible and for local development to begin.

D (Cambridgeshire) Company in the Gereshk valley inherited a base which was hemmed in by a group of insurgents who dominated the local community. Immediately recognizing the futility of their positions they went about a series of well co-ordinated operations to clear the fields of IEDs and disrupt the insurgents' freedom to move. They quickly changed the security dynamics and gained the trust of the local farmers, creating a much expanded protected community.

The significant progress has not been without human cost and the Vikings have lost five fine young men, with many more injured, some grievously. Their sacrifice must never be forgotten and we will do all in our power to assist those injured to recover and come to terms with their injuries.

It would be wrong not to mention the sterling efforts of those who made up the Battalion's Rear Party – HQ Company and B (Suffolk) Company. Not only did they ably look after the home base and our equipment, but they also trained soldiers to deploy as Battle Casualty Replacements and provided 1st class support to our families in Pirbright and more widely. They received the Battalion's fallen and ensured they were laid to rest with the honour they deserved and that their families were given the assistance they needed to deal with their tragic loss. Finally, they played a critical role in supporting those who were injured on operations and their families. The bottom line is that the Rear Party has been critical to the operational success of the Battalion.

Once again, the support the Vikings have received from the wider Regimental family during this demanding period in our history has been second to none. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have been part of this network – it provides great comfort to those on operations to know that they have people supporting their work and their families back home.

Stabilis

## Battalion Headquarters Afghan National Police Mentoring

*Capt Gavin Hudson, Battalion*

*Operations Officer, writes:*

The ANP Mentor HQ was born in December 2010 out of the Security Sector Reform Cell. Following the murder of five members of 1 GREN GDS BG at Blue 25 in Nad-e Ali, greater emphasis was put on reforming and supporting the ANP, one aspect of which was increased horsepower behind ANP mentoring.

On arrival, the 1 R ANGLIAN BHQ (-) augmented a small team of individual staff officers with the Commanding Officer replacing Lt Col Jasper De Quincey Adams QDG. ANP staff branches were already being mentored and the arrival of our HQ

took forward the work which was already being done.

The organisation under the Commanding Officer was an eclectic mix of Vikings, individual augmentees from all three Services (both TA and Regular), Ministry of Defence Police (MDP), European Union Police (EUPOL) and Dyncorps (a US company with the contract for training ANP). The Commanding Officer mentored the charismatic Col Shirzad, the Provincial Chief of Police (PCoP). As a result, our area of interest was pan-Helmand and fixed on provincial boundaries rather than those of Taskforce Helmand. To that end, we also worked with the US Marines of Taskforce Leatherneck.

A real change in mindset was required across the board. There was an Afghan way of doing things, whether that was the G4 resupply sending request forms (MOI 14s) through their trusted agent (CQMS) to the provincial Quartermaster, or the intricacies of the tashkiel (ORBAT) which did not always reflect those police actually found in a particular district. Trying to impose Western structures or our own operating procedures was not a viable option.

Arguably, the greatest achievement of the tour for the SSR Cell/ANP Mentor HQ was the creation and continued development of the interim Helmand Police Training Centre (iHPTC). Prior to the Blue 25 incident, there was no formal police training in Helmand. Much work had already been done by the SSR cell prior to our arrival and the initial (trial) course started for 100 ANP in December 2010. The iHPTC has expanded in size and capability exponentially; every time one visits, more has been built. There are now three concurrent courses of 150 recruits who complete an eight-week basic training course, which is approved by the Ministry of Interior, before being deployed across Helmand. From each intake of 150 an ANP Company of 100 is formed which is then deployed to a particular AO to be partnered with an ISAF Coy and ANA Coy.

In February, 1 R ANGLIAN BHQ took on ground-holding responsibilities with the creation of Combined Force Lashkar Gah (CFLKG). At initial operating capability our boundary was the Helmand River to the west and north, the Arghandab River to the south and to the east to Kandahar Gate, approx 5km outside Lashkar Gah. We initially had limited force elements, a platoon detached from the Queen's Company 1 GREN GDS led by Lt Mike Dobbin and an OMLT from 2 YORKS under Lt Sean Mason.

When CFLKG was created, plans were in place to increase our boundaries and force elements to full operating capability after Op MOSHTARAK. This coincided with the relief in place with 1 SG. Our boundaries expanded to reflect those of the Lashkar Gah District and we saw a large increase in troop numbers; three sub-units to the west of the River Helmand in Babaji, North Bolan

## The Vikings

and South Bolan, as well as an uplift of a Joint Fires & ISTAR Cell (JFIC) in order to support the sub-units properly.

Working with the ANP has made for an interesting tour. It has been frustrating at times but ultimately rewarding and each staff branch has felt that they have made progress during their tenure. The future of security in Afghanistan will lie with the ANA and ANP. Only by thoroughly investing in their development can ISAF hope to leave a legacy of stability and a force capable of protecting its own population when we are gone.

### The iHPTC Experience

*Sgt Dunning, iHPTC Training*

*Sergeant, writes:*

I have been at the Interim Helmand Police Centre (iHPTC) since December 2009 and have been employed as the Training Sergeant during my time. The Training Centre runs an eight-week course to train and develop the skills of the Afghan National Police. Each course is designed to accommodate 150 students with three courses running concurrently, so at any one time we have a 450 student capacity. The training consists of Police (BLUE) subjects, which are taught by the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP); Military (GREEN) subjects which are taught by ISAF Instructors; and Afghan Constitution (Purple) subjects which are taught by Ministry of Interior (Mol) instructors.

The BLUE lessons consist of all aspects of police training and are run very successfully by the MDP. The GREEN lessons cover all tactics, engineering (Op KALA and Op BARMA) and weapon handling which all

the students enjoy and respond to very well. The PURPLE lessons, still in their infancy, have just started and consist of cultural understanding, human rights and the Afghan constitution. All are lessons which need to be taught by Afghan instructors and so far they have been doing a fantastic job in a subject that is of great importance to the students.

Each platoon is run by a Cpl Instructor, with a LCpl mentor, which in most cases was a private soldier. The Battalion had four Vikings - Cpl Finn, LCpls Green and Swales and Pte Vaisey - all were employed as instructors/mentors and have done an outstanding job since arriving. LCpl Swales has been used in pass out parades to translate to the Governor of Helmand Province because of his language skills. LCpl Green has been one of the stars of the Training Team in his time here, his cultural understanding and patience with the students has been an inspiration to the other instructors, although he does have some strange nicknames for them, 'Simple Jack' and 'Mr Potato Head' being two of many.

From arrival to departure the difference in confidence, ability, initiative and respect is measurable. When the students arrive it is an interesting day to say the least. They are searched and forwarded into their platoons, in which we have to separate the Pashtu and Dari speakers. They are then issued all their kit and equipment ready to start the course.

The first three weeks are mainly focused towards weapon handling and getting the students up to the required safety standard to go on the range. The first range period is a scary and eye opening time for all, but we generally get the results we need to let the students progress.

Test Week is a combination of all the

training they have received over the eight-week course. They are tested in Op KALA, Op BARMA (in which they use the EBEX C-IED Detector) compound clearance and pairs fire and manoeuvre on the 100m range. They are also tested in their policing skills by the MOD and Mol instructors.

The iHPTC is rapidly becoming a success story. There was a fundamental belief that what was being achieved would improve the security of Helmand Province. If I didn't believe that, then the blood of our dead was spilt in vain. These policemen have to have the skills to operate in the environment they are to police and fight in. These include weapon training, range practices and tactics lessons, as being naïve to what happens out on the ground will risk life unnecessarily. When they leave here it's straight out on the ground doing the job of the ANP.

Be under no illusions; they are a robust and well trained police force capable of doing the job that now faces them; and they have the confidence, knowledge and a healthy respect for the ISAF uniform. They are focused and can respond accordingly to many of the dangerous situations they will now face. The students that left recently are going into Babaji to be mentored by the Coldstream Guards.

Lt Rob Philip had the following to say: 'I am looking forward to working alongside the students from the training centre; I have been here two weeks now looking in on the training and have been very impressed by what I have seen. The standard of Policing and Tactics training here is second to none; I am looking forward to taking them to their checkpoints and going out on the ground with a well trained and professional police force'.

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## The Vikings

### A (Norfolk) Company Group: Op HERRICK 11

*Maj Stuart Smith, OC A (Norfolk)*

*Company, writes:*

Warned off for a possible Op HERRICK 11 deployment on return from summer leave at the beginning of September 2009, A (Norfolk) Company Group undertook a compressed but exceptionally well tailored pre-deployment training package that left the Company in no doubt that they were well prepared for the next six months.

It was only during the in-theatre training package that the Company's destination was finally confirmed. We would join the HCR BG as the only light role infantry company. The initial force lay down was to occupy Patrol Base WOQAB, in the Green Zone north of Musa Qual'eh District Centre. The Fire Support Group element occupied Roshan Tower, a cliff top observation post, armed with a 105mm light gun, known as the 'Dragon Gun', Javelin and 81mm mortars. Within a few weeks, the FSG was also responsible for another observation post - *Himal OP*.

For the first couple of months the tour was dominated by providing the northern block as part of the District Centre security. This consisted of reassurance patrols that sought to interact with the local nationals. A number of company level operations were conducted that broached the COIN spectrum and there was sporadic kinetic activity which enabled the domination of insurgent activity in the

north of Helmand.

The second half of the tour has been the most defining. The Company pushed several kilometres beyond the area of ISAF influence and established a fully embedded, joint partnered, ANA and Viking patrol base. From PB HABIB, the Company, alongside the ANA and ANP, has vastly improved the security for the local nationals, whilst taking the fight to the insurgent and significantly weakening their previous strongholds. The Company's reach has extended considerably further than initially expected due to the aggressive actions of the platoons. Foot borne reassurance patrols and helicopter operations have seen Vikings and ANA reach out and relay the Government messages to villages that have not previously seen ISAF. Domination patrols into insurgent strongholds have led to kinetic activity that has seen every member of the Company involved in close quarter combat. Although supported by attack helicopters and offensive support, it has been the FSG in Roshan Tower that has been the 'Angel on our shoulder' providing information on ground atmospherics and using the Dragon Gun to devastating effect.

Op HERRICK 11 has been a tour of two halves for A (Norfolk) Company and as a Company we have professionally dealt with all of the challenges that have faced us. Working with the ANA has been a real privilege and they have been a real force multiplier. Many of the young soldiers that deployed to Afghanistan will return as men. There has been a heavy cost to our tour; those fallen Vikings, Capt Martin Driver, LCpl Scott Hardy and Pte James Grigg,



**Pte Harris tackles the mountainous Afghan terrain.**

will never be forgotten and the personal sacrifice they have made and that of Pte Allen will always be remembered. Once again A (Norfolk) Company has continued the historical lineage of our forbearers and we proudly carry forward the name - The Fighting Ninth.



**The Dragon Gun at Roshan Tower overlooking Musa Qual'eh.**

## The Vikings

### Fire Support Group Operations at Roshan Tower

*Capt Ben Howes, OC Fire Support*

*Group A, writes:*

Having completed an intense six-week pre-deployment training package, FSG A, consisting of elements from Machine Gun, Javelin and Mortar Platoons, deployed with a huge amount of trepidation to Afghanistan. We found ourselves ready to conduct operations in the northern sector within the Musa Qal'eh (MSQ) AO and deployed to an observation position (OP) named Roshan Tower (RT).

RT lies on high ground on the western side of the MSQ WADI. The location is originally a mobile phone network mast and sub-station, constructed by the Arab Roshan telecommunications firm, and has been occupied by ISAF since early 2008. RT is a vital observation and fire support location, positioned on dominating ground which provides excellent views of the northern MSQ AO. We flew in, dropped at the base of the hill and were amazed by the dominance the feature provided and the spectacular views!

After a short period of settling in, a large change came about. Due to increasing commitments, FSG A found itself split in two, with a 14-man multiple commanded by Sgt Mercer moving to HIMAL OP. This allowed the opportunity for personnel to be rotated throughout the tour; it was assessed that this would deliver a significant benefit for all support weapon gunners together with a welcome change of role from what was an intensive, testing and insular role.

RT's mission and activity was simple.



**View over MSQ from Roshan Tower.**

We were tasked with the observation and reporting of Insurgent (INS) and Local National (LN) activity, the engagement of INS within ROE, in order to deliver security/protection for LN and both static and mobile ANSF and ISAF forces. We very quickly found that a thorough knowledge of the ground at all levels is what determines the level of success at RT, the two measures being the understanding of INS ground use, determining the likelihood of interdiction, and the knowledge of reference points, determining how quickly weapons can be

laid on targets and safely employed within ROE.

In addition to the established Vikings, RT was fortunate to have supporting assets including an FST forward air controller who could control artillery and mortar fire, command Air/Av /ISTAR assets, and a 105 Lt Gun detachment employed in the direct fire 'sniping role' - in short an extremely violent sniper rifle. The Dragon Gun had been in position since 29 RA Commando's tour in early 2008, where they lifted the Gun, ammunition and stores manually onto the



**View over MSQ from Roshan Tower.**

## The Vikings

hill – an incredible achievement as the total weight was 12 tonnes! This was a vital asset on account of its accuracy and range. As A (Norfolk) Company surged north during the tour, we found ourselves engaging enemy positions regularly at ranges of 4.9km.

Without being sidetracked too far, the ethos of engagement and the implications of an error at RT should be touched upon. RT is at a disadvantage in terms of legitimacy in LN eyes due to the nature of its role; this is exacerbated by the fact that there is little ISAF/ANSF patrolling in the immediate vicinity and that RT has no capability to conduct its own reassurance/community patrolling. All that LNs see of RT is the killing of INS. It is not associated with any improvement in infrastructure, quality of life or other community support activity. Therefore, it is arguably under intense and continual scrutiny by the people it provided security for. Killing an innocent LN in error would have destroyed trust in the coalition forces in the area, against the natural tide of favour that inherently reject INS authority. In particular, an error in the area around PB WOQAB would have had direct implications for A Company Group – fortunately the fire from RT was always accurate and proportional.

RT has had a major impact on operations in the northern MSQ AO, and is the site that creates the most attrition of INS forces in the AO. RT undoubtedly offered significant protection to both LNs and ANSF/ISAF forces. It was a challenging and deeply rewarding command and tour. There were periods of intense enemy activity, followed by inexplicable and frustrating lulls. Ground knowledge is essential to the success of the tower, ensuring that RT interdicts and neutralises hostile INS. Soldiers operating at RT required the capacity to work in close proximity with one another, in basic conditions. Operators needed to be skilled on their systems, and have a thorough understanding of the ROE and weapons release procedures. Ensuring that only INS are killed and that there is no collateral damage inflicted is key to the legitimacy of the tower in the eyes of LNs.



Sgt Mercer partnering with the ANA.

### Operations at Roshan Tower: A Junior Commander's Perspective

*LCpl Mayes, Mortar Platoon D*

*(Cambridgeshire) Company writes:* We deployed to Afghanistan on Op Herrick 11, attached to the Household Cavalry Regiment Battle Group (HCR BG). As with previous tours D Company found itself spread to the four corners of Helmand, with FSG A deployed to support A (Norfolk) Company Group. Our first assignment was Roshan Tower (RT), a fire support location overlooking key areas north of Musa-Qal'eh (MSQ). The role of RT is extremely important; it provided fire support to the troops on the ground and had a demanding task of ensuring good communications with all surrounding call signs. This made RT an integral asset for any operation conducted in the north of MSQ.

Our task at RT was providing an 'Angel on your shoulders', a sense of security to

the men at Patrol Base Woqab, a location directly to our east. We could provide them with an array of heavy weaponry including mortars, Javelin, machine gun and artillery in the direct role provided by our Royal Artillery attachments from 1 RHA and 19 Regt RA. With this arsenal of weaponry at our disposal and our fantastic optics providing ISTAR, we had many opportunities to fire all the weapon systems accurately and report atmospherics and pattern of life to any patrols. Even at times when we were being harassed by sniper fire ourselves, we were able to pinpoint enemy locations and support A Company in their mission.

As well as being 'Big Brother' to PB Woqab, we also needed to provide our own force protection as we were an isolated position. Stagging on, as the lads always put it, required an equal if not greater amount of enthusiasm than engaging the enemy. Stagging on tested everyone's personality at times, but we could always be assured of an up-lifting quote from Pte Scott who



FSG A handover responsibility to the USMC.

## The Vikings

constantly remarked: 'Don't get a bag on, get a mag on and stag on!'; humour which after five months in the same location was greatly needed. But behind the humour was a team of professional men, all with a robust skills set to do their jobs at any notice. From giving A Company fire support when required, to the most tedious of jobs that needed doing around the camp.

To test us further, following a visit from Comd Task Force Helmand, Brig Cowan, we found ourselves split in two, providing support to another important location called Himal OP. Himal OP is located approximately 5km southwest of RT, on a very similar piece of high ground that dominates key routes and villages. Himal OP's role was to provide fire support and overwatch to a life-line route, by patrolling into the nearby villages to reassure the local nationals and ensure the security of the supply route. The tasks at Himal OP were also varied and challenging; whilst the sangars were keeping a careful eye on the route, an eight to 10 man ISAF multiple would be patrolling into the local village alongside an Afghan National Security Force section in order to reassure the local people. We held shuras with the locals to reassure them that we were there to protect them and their families, so they can continue with their lives, free from Taleban influence. This was the most rewarding aspect to the tour.

To keep up with the ever changing situations, we had to remain flexible and professional at all times; and it was because of that we were able to make some very positive arrests of people who were found to be acting suspiciously and endangering lives. Many of the men would say that the split into two locations placed a considerable constraint on manning and what we could achieve, and in truth at times it did. However, due to the professionalism from all ranks, I believe we achieved far more than that which was expected from a force of 28 men.

The confined conditions that we found ourselves in caused us to become extremely close. Our comradeship and respect for one another played a significant part in maintaining our well being and, more importantly, our morale. Pte Procter, an attachment from the 3rd Battalion the Yorkshire Regiment, unintentionally took the lead with many hilarious quotes such as: 'My car is a great runner, but it doesn't start' and 'Any idiot can be warm, and I am really warm' - priceless!

Looking back at this tour of duty, Op Herrick 11 was not only a battle with the enemy, it was also a battle for the hearts and minds of the population of MSQ. The people are the key to the defeat of the Taleban in Afghanistan and maintaining peace in the future. The men of FSG A were proud to have provided security in MSQ and did so with the people of Afghanistan foremost in our minds. With the USMC now taking the lead, we hope the security situation which developed during our tour continues to improve in the future.

### B (Suffolk) Company

*Maj Andy Wilde, OC B (Suffolk)*

*Company, writes:*

Since the last edition of *Castle* went to press B Company has seen huge change. Two platoons were detached to A and C Coy for the tour of Afghanistan and over 150 soldiers have joined the Company. The 150 has been made up of new recruits, soldiers returning from E posts and also those soldiers from the deploying elements of the Battalion who were unable to deploy for a variety of reasons.

With the upheaval and uncertainty that was created in October and November 2009, the Company had its work cut out just to account for all the soldiers and equipment that it had now taken on. This task was made slightly more tricky because Op Solomon (the recruiting surge at ITC Catterick) was still ongoing and as such there were no platoon commanders or platoon sergeants in B Company. After the initial settling in had taken place, the Company was able to get into something close to a normal routine.

The main effort for B Company for the last six months has been maintaining a trained pool of deployable Battle Casualty Replacements (BCRs). This task has seen over 70 soldiers take part in OPTAG and complete a Company run MATT pre-deployment package. With the assistance of the RTMC Chilwell and OPTAG, the BCRs have been fully equipped and ready to deploy as required. Towards the end of February, control of the BCR pool was taken away from the Battalion and held by 3 Div in order to allow BCRs to be even distributed

across 11 Bde. It is a testament to the hard work of a small pool of JNCOs that the BCR pool never fell below 12 deployable soldiers and was always able to supply whatever was required in Afghanistan.

Aside from training BCRs there has been a lot of effort put in keeping up with the huge variety of tasks that came the way of the Battalion; this has included support to Army Cadet Exercises, training assistance to the Bermudan Defence Force and the Ugandan Army and also a wealth of RAAT tasks.

On the non military side of life, B Company formed the core of the Battalion sports team in the recent 12 Bde sports competition – the Boxing team earning special mention for their effort in getting six fighters in the finals of the Brigade competition.

The last six months have been very challenging for B Company. Now we look forward to reforming as a rifle company and getting ready to face whatever the next year has in store.

### Life in B (Suffolk) Company

*Maj Andy Wilde, OC B (Suffolk)*

*Company, writes:*

In the Company overview it was mentioned that training BCRs and making sure they were available as required by the deployed elements of the Battalion was the main effort for the Company over the last six months – and it was; but there were also a lot of other things that had to be done, some were actually fairly exciting, while the same could not be said for most of the other tasks that came B Company's way.

The main training activity that has been



UPDF Contact drills.

## The Vikings

taking place in B Company is the compulsory for deployment elements (MATTs, medical training, rules of engagement, etc) and also that training which would be useful such as GPMG, 50 Cal and GMG training. While it is not a prerequisite to deploy, this training is incredibly useful for new soldiers deploying on their first operational tour, so where it could be squeezed into the build up it was.

Operational training aside, members of B Company have had all sorts of opportunities come their way since October. A small team went to Sweden to talk to the Swedish Military Academy about leadership in the contemporary operating environment; Cpl Pimm went to Bermuda for four weeks to instruct on an NCO Cadre and more recently, Cpl Stow has been selected to go to Saudi Arabia for six weeks to instruct the Saudi Counter Terrorist Police on the use of their new internal security vehicle. These tasks are the more enjoyable ones, but there have of course been the enemy sections on SPTA, the medics and drivers for IBS, along with a myriad of other less glamorous but still important jobs. For the rest of this article I will concentrate on two of the more appealing tasks that came B Company's way.

In January Cpl Pimm deployed to Bermuda for five weeks to assist with the Bermuda Regiment's NCO Cadre and training. On arrival his exact task became clearer – he



**Singo Camp.**

was to be a Subject Matter Expert for the Bermudan instructors and was also going to be required to ensure that each syndicate was being taught the same thing. With Cpl Pimm's SCBC, Recce and JWIC background, this is a task that he took to like a duck to water. By the end of the instructional phase of the course Cpl Pimm

felt that the students had come on well and would be more than able to pass the final assessment phase.

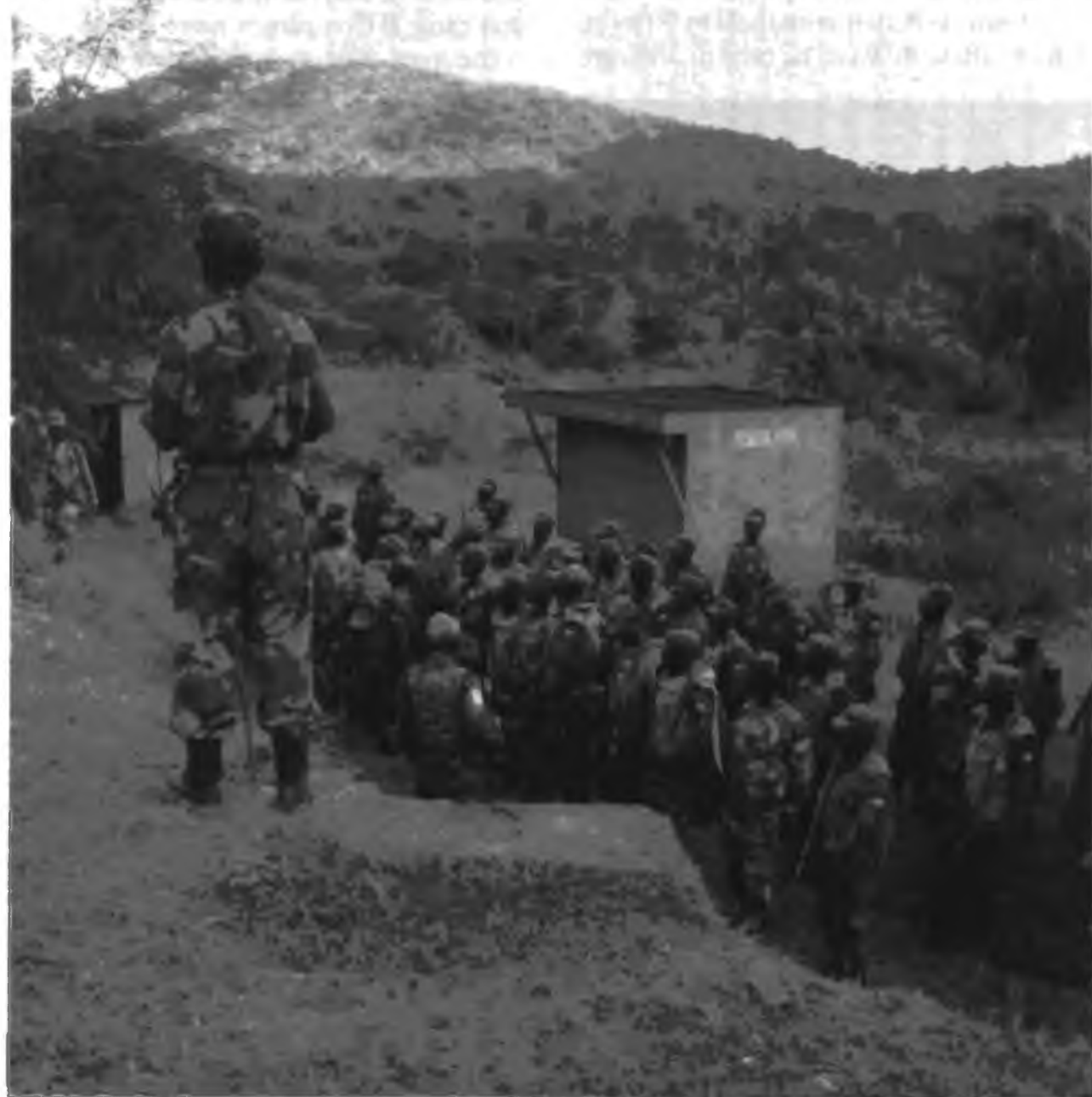
With his part in the exercise now finished, he had a few days off in which to enjoy Bermuda before his return (which was delayed because of the snow in the UK). As an opportunity for a JNCO to get away and experience something different and build on their individual knowledge, it was outstanding. It is not often in the modern Army that opportunities like this come up – when they do it is a great chance that should not be missed.

In late March there was a requirement for an officer to go to Uganda as part of a 2 Royal Welsh Short Term Training Team (STTT). The Ugandan Army has been deploying a Battle Group to Somalia for a number of years and Ugandan Battle Group 6 (UGBG 6) was the next to go. The French Foreign Legion and an American State Department funded training team had been training UGBG 6 since January and the STTT was required to run a mission rehearsal exercise (MRX) so that the Ugandan Chain of Command were happy that they were ready to deploy.

After some initial briefings and visits to the US staff the MRX took shape. The Ugandan Army defined the training objectives and then the STTT put the exercise together.

On a wet Wednesday morning in Singo (the Ugandan Infantry Training Centre) the exercise began. The MRX saw UGBG 6 tested in base security, convoy escort, cordon and search and also IED awareness, with the common thread of use of force and adherence to rules of engagement running throughout. On completion of the three-day MRX, UGBG 6 held a passing out parade after which all the soldiers were given a month's pre-deployment leave.

After some initial problems getting to grips with the way the Ugandans had been taught to do things, the MRX ran very well and it was good to see that they had improved in all



**Team 1 during an AAR**

## The Vikings



Team 1 securing the water pumping station.

aspects of their performance, most notably base security.

The STTT moved to Jinja which is at the source of the Nile, for a couple of days of adventure training before returning to the UK. As with Cpl Pimm and his Bermuda exercise, opportunities to take part in STTT in Africa don't come along that often and should be seen as a good way to spend a couple of weeks.

The two examples in this article highlight two of the more pleasant aspects of B Company life over the last six months. Sadly though, it should not be forgotten that all members of the Company did their duty at funerals, repatriations and visiting friends and fellow Vikings at Selly Oak, the details of which are in other articles.

### C (Essex) Company Op HERRICK 11

*Maj Chris Davies, OC C (Essex)*

*Company, writes:*

No sooner had we wiped the sweat from our brows after TESEX, than rumours of a possible deployment to Afghanistan began to circulate and were eventually confirmed; we were on! Charged with excitement we entered a condensed period of individual and collective pre-deployment training which pulled the Company in different directions across most of the UK.

Of most noteworthiness were the confirmatory exercises on Stanford and Otterburn training areas. These two exercises proved challenging and allowed us to prepare for the environment and tasks that we would most likely face in Afghanistan. The exercise serials were designed to cover the entire spectrum of counter insurgency tasks which, as we were later to find out, would typify our entire tour.

Midway through the training, the much

anticipated news regarding where we were going to be sent, was released. C (Essex) Company was detached to form part of Battlegroup Centre South as part of the 1st Battalion the Grenadier Guards Battle Group in the infamous Nad-e Ali District of Helmand Province. Moreover, we were going to take over responsibility for the most southerly, and hitherto dangerous, patch (NDA(S)).

With our minds completely focused, C (Essex) Company completed the final preparations for what would inevitably be a tough tour. Initially, Company HQ, 9

Platoon and FSG Charlie were located in Patrol Base Silab; 6 Platoon were in Check Point Paraang (at the base of a village called Khowshhal Kalay); and 10 Platoon were in Check Point Haji Alem (next to a village called Noor Mohamed Khan Kalay).

By the end of the tour, having been partnered with Afghan Police and Army, we swelled from three locations to ten and had also been given the opportunity to work alongside the Viking's Recce Platoon on a couple of occasions.

I write this foreword one day after transferring authority to Corunna Company, 1st Battalion the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment. Reflections are a mixture of joy and sadness; the Company has helped transform one of the most dangerous areas of Helmand Province to somewhere where permissive patrolling can take place and the local population are firmly on the road to a better future.

We have unfortunately suffered; LCpl Adam Drane and Pte Robbie Hayes were both killed in action and the Company Group suffered a significant number of battle casualties. In the harshest of conditions, every man remained focused and proud, reflecting their hugely resilient, professional and compassionate nature – they made it happen!

### Closing With the People

*Maj Chris Davies, OC C (Essex)*

*Company, writes:*

After an intense first week in NDA(S), it was clear that the most important and potentially most elusive prize on offer over the forthcoming six months was going to be the people. It could never be just about



Contact, wait out.....pre-Op MOSTARAK,

## The Vikings

the Taliban, no matter how many times they tried to seduce us with their constant engagements and tantalising presence. Throughout the tour, the NDA(S) Ground Holding Company was spread along what was commonly known as the 'Southern FLET'. Until Op MOSTARAK (meaning 'together' in pashtu) began in mid February 2010, C Company was isolated from the rest of the 1 GREN GDS BG in terms of ground lines of communication and did not have any partnered Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). During Op MOSTARAK the Company was reinforced with both Afghan Army and police which improved the situation.

Realising the importance of constant local engagement, regardless of the tactical situation, and the communities' perceived interest in what we stood for or indeed had to say, the Company embarked on a 'people centric' strategy. The tour is best viewed in three distinct phases, reflecting the 'state of the people'. The first phase was prior to Op MOSTARAK (oppressed), the second and third post Op MOSTARAK (jubilation and expectation).

### The Oppressed Community

For the first few months of the tour, the insurgents enjoyed complete freedom of movement and it was extremely hard to reach the people, let alone influence them. In an attempt to make a difference, we concentrated on two areas. Firstly, we had to defeat the insurgents on our terms and, if that wasn't possible, 'hand them off' and concentrate on the people. This prevented the enemy from exploiting their tactical advantages against us, exposed them as impotent, and demonstrated to the people that our primary focus was on them. The boys did well, approximately 265 Taliban were killed and over 165 injured in four



**Pte Hood guides another satisfied child after receiving notebooks and pens for his new school.**

months. Secondly, the Company remained permanently focused on engaging with and influencing the locals on four levels: individual, family, community and cross-community. As the weeks passed by, we began to achieve consent from the population; barriers were broken, human terrain mapping became possible and we

became more than just a target (post Op MOSTARAK an adolescent male admitted that he thought ISAF were robots and not human beings). Relationships were formed across the AO which paid dividends later in the tour. Messages were broadcast on a regular basis, giving people hope, undermining the insurgents and pointing to the benefits experienced by other communities – the Taliban detested this as they couldn't block people's ears; so small arms fire, counter messaging and threats to the locals were their normal reactions.

### The Liberated Community

After four months of trying to understand the people, mainly through dogged determination, we understood about 10 per cent. One week post Op MOSTARAK, we knew about 40 per cent. We were flooded with information and, whilst keen to maximise every opportunity to speak to the locals, it quickly became apparent that we needed to empower the elders and assist them reforming their communities. Whilst it was still important to engage with everyone, we adjusted our efforts in order to pitch problems at the right level. Social structures within our key population centre, Khowshhal Kalay, reformed quickly and R&D work started immediately, against a priority list submitted by the elders. After two weeks we started to conduct influence expansion operations into smaller hamlets in order to understand their needs, reach



**OC C Coy presents a Viking plaque to Col Pawani, head of ANCOP Battalion.**

## The Vikings

the people and prevent the insurgents from cultivating new and sympathetic hubs of support.

### The Expectant Community

Once our patch was secure, and the post-liberation jubilation began to fade, locals expected to see immediate changes to their lives. By implementing a range of initiatives we did not disappoint. However, in order to avoid the locals' expectations rising above our capacity to engineer change, every avenue was exploited to maintain momentum and remain in the people's imagination. The ultimate challenge was generating a cross-community spirit, such that the population no longer looked to ISAF but instead to their elders and to the district council. At this stage we were happy not to be the centre of attention; this was the preserve of the district governor. Rather, we were busy networking in the background. We put the people of Nad-e Ali South and their communities on the map and found levers to bring them with us; cash for works projects, weekly security and development shuras, high profile visits and regular district governor outreach shuras.

### Summary

Locals within NDA(S) seemed to be most concerned with religion, their families, security and water for their crops and personal consumption. Hugely sociable, their 'word of mouth' networks are vast and powerful; we worked hard to make sure we

were part of their discussions for the right reasons. Although tempting, all ranks tried not to become disheartened by those that let us down. Most are extremely poor and are simply trying it on, and in many ways it is difficult to blame them; a 'feast of famine' mentality prevails but in time hopefully they will learn to make long term plans and develop sustainable growth. Everyone realised that it was pointless trying to operate in black or white; much of the work was in grey because that is how progress was often achieved. Overall, Op HERRICK 11 was a fascinating experience and hugely rewarding. Given the correct resources and the right mindset, we won the people and transformed a large area from being darkened and oppressed by the Taliban to being positive, secure and orientated towards a better future.

### Living In Afghan Compounds

*2Lt Greg Napier, OC 9 Platoon,*

*writes:*

A regular occurrence throughout 9 Platoon's tour was occupying vacated compounds for various amounts of time. This was recognised early on as being an excellent way of holding a piece of ground, whilst having a secure location to live in and patrol from. However, clearing compounds is fraught with risk as they represent prime real estate for the insurgents to place IEDs, especially if they have been used as a previous firing point (which basically

included every compound, occupied or not, in our area). This often meant that the platoon had to enter and exit over walls in order to avoid the vulnerable points, such as doorways. I'm sure on a few occasions we were sharing a compound with one or more of the devices that we simply marked and avoided due to the counter IED team being unavailable.

Once in a compound the lads were always keen to get in to some form of routine and therefore worked incredibly hard to establish hasty defence. Improvisation was the key, with murder holes, rooftop sangars, sandbagging, trip flares and claymores all being used to gain decent arcs and achieve protection. The main limitation was the fact that each man had to carry enough food, water and ammunition to last a number of days, so bergens of up to 60kg were not uncommon.

Once established, the compounds were used as mini patrol bases and the lads quickly felt at home, apart from LCpl Perkins who, after a few hours would begin pacing around the walls like a caged tiger, muttering about gyms and weights under his breath.

On most occasions the intent was to punch through the Forward Line of Enemy Troops (stepping out of the front door!), then establish and maintain a buffer zone around the compound in order to allow us to conduct influence ops with the locals, which would ordinarily be very difficult. With this done the locals at first were generally wary of interacting with us, due to their



The author and LCpl Murphy awaiting orders.

## The Vikings



**Cpl Adlington and LCpl Perkins prove that anything is possible.**

fear of insurgent reprisals; however once compensation was mentioned they generally relaxed somewhat!

The insurgent reaction was usually to conduct their own influence ops on the people. This involved tactics such as persuading the locals that the troops could see their women washing etc, which would in turn create pressure for us to move. Once they realised this would not work, they would quickly start probing our defences with small arms fire. Usually, a firm reaction would deter any major attack. On one occasion we were engaged with one burst from a firing point, but unfortunately for the insurgents they were positively identified and what could only be described as an impressive firepower demo ensued. On our ICOM scanner we heard: 'Why did you fire at them?...they're shooting back lots now!'

Living and fighting from compounds gave the platoon a way of achieving our mission, but broke up the routine of patrol base life in a single location, with some of 9 Platoon's fondest memories of the tour pinned against these operations.

### Freedom and Sacrifice

*2Lt Dan Benstead, OC 6 Platoon*

*(The Mighty VI), writes:*

It's hard to believe that as I write we are nearing the end of our time in Afghanistan. We've been here just under six months and in that time there have been some major highs, but also some incredibly difficult lows.

The rollercoaster ride started back in October when the shroud of uncertainty surrounding our deployment on Op HERRICK 11 was finally lifted. The news that we were heading to Helmand was met with excitement and the frantic preparations began. For the majority of 6 Platoon (The Mighty VI), this was our first operational

tour and, despite feeling ready for whatever was to be thrown at us, I'm not sure that anything could have prepared us for what we actually came up against.

The Mighty VI deployed to Check Point (CP) Paraang, a platoon location and the Southernmost ISAF Patrol Base in Helmand Province. CP Paraang sits on the southern edge of a village known as Khowshhal Kalay or 'KK', translated in pashtu as 'Happy Village'. We were to find out very quickly that the village was anything but happy. To the south of CP Paraang are open fields dotted with compounds which act as ideal

locations for the Taliban to use as firing points, which is exactly what they did. Our task was to secure the population of KK by persistently reassuring them that ISAF were a force for good, but initially this was an almost impossible task. The Taliban had complete freedom of movement around us and they pretty much owned KK. Any encounters we had with the villagers were frantic and brief as they feared for their lives if they were seen talking to us. So, for the first four months of the tour our attention was very much focused on the south in order to restrict the insurgent's freedom of movement and create some space in order to reach the people. Anyway, enough of the COIN lecture, what was it actually like?

We pretty much spent those initial four months fighting. Our first few patrols were met with inaccurate small arms fire to the point where we would just continue patrolling. The insurgents' front line was only 300m from our door and they were extremely predictable in their use of firing points. However, one day we patrolled south and it very quickly became clear that things had changed. The rounds were extremely accurate and we were now being engaged from five or six firing points rather than just one or two. The fight to secure the people was most definitely on. Gradually we began to push their front line back through a number of platoon deliberate operations which meant we could start talking to the villagers. However, patrolling in KK changed dynamics and we suddenly faced a series of new threats, the key ones being grenade attacks and Command Wire or Command Pull IEDs. We had grenades thrown at us on numerous occasions, sometimes by children. It was clear that winning these people over was going to take time.



**Success!**

## The Vikings

Tragically in the fight to help the village we lost two extremely popular characters in the platoon, LCpl Adam 'Ads' Drane and Pte Robbie 'Head' Hayes. Their loss was heavily felt by us all and there is no doubt that morale took a serious dip. We also had a relentless spate of casualties with six very seriously injured in a short space of time. Maintaining morale was key to our success and keeping ourselves occupied in the austere conditions of CP Paraang was achieved through quiz nights, pizza cooking and even an Olympic Games with tent poles as javelins and ammo tins for the hammer throw!

In early February the news came that KK was to be cleared as one of the opening moves of Op MOSTARAK. The operation began, the village was cleared and new check points were built in order to create a 'gated community' around the people. The Afghan National Civil Order Police, who represent the best trained and most capable police force in Afghanistan, arrived in number and we began working closely with them. The insurgent routes into the village had been severed and finally we could focus on securing the people.

Now, as I write, we are just a few days from returning home and the change in our environment has been huge. Shops have reopened, schools are being built and, most importantly, the people aren't scared to be seen with us. Those early threats inevitably still exist, but we can return home proud of the tangible difference we have made. For all the hard work and for all the losses we have suffered, we can take comfort that none of it has been in vain.

### Changing Faces and Training Places

*Pte A Kilbon, 2 Section, 6 Platoon*

*(The Mighty VI), writes:*

As the expectations of a possible Op HERRICK 11 deployment for the Vikings began to rise, the Battalion shifted into the fastest pace we had ever experienced. Alongside the usual OPTAG weekend, the Battlegroup had set up a packed six-week training package that moved from the ranges in Pirbright to the blustery hills of Otterburn. Even at short notice, the Battlegroup had secured us access to STANTA and the purpose built Afghanistan training complex. Alongside numerous all arms assets, the final live firing package demonstrated everything that would be available to us once in theatre.

At full throttle, 6 Platoon, its roots firmly set in B Company, was switched across to join 9 and 10 Platoon in C Company. We would be heading into the southernmost Check Point (CP) in Helmand Province, CP Paraang. When we arrived at Paraang in late October, blistering heat was still the order of the day, but the temperatures soon started to plummet and almost overnight we began to experience temperatures well below freezing. Helmand had started to look like a certain northern training area after all!

In the coming months we would become

part of the hostile terrain, laying up in the grass and giving the Taliban something to worry about every sunrise. Frequent small arms contacts became the Taliban's method of harassment. Ambushes, bait patrols and Javelin became ours. It very quickly became clear that winning the fire fights with platoon weapon systems was of more benefit than any aerial asset or IDF as these were often refused due to the need to keep the population on side.

At first, it was very difficult to convince the locals to trust in the security we offered. They had been under 'Taliban terrorisation' for years and fighting the insurgents outside their back gardens did nothing to encourage the locals to come on side. It eventually took three large IRG moves to give them confidence that ISAF are here to stay. The deadly moves involved all arms and took soldiers from all trades to complete Snipers, IEDs and small arms contacts throughout turned these IRGs into something more equal to 'Black Hawk Down' than a route clearance and convoy.

At Paraang we had become the guardians of KK and its liberation came with a determination to clear the enemy and give the locals back their freedom and opportunity to make a living. As the lush, rich greenery now returns to the area, crops that were once untended are now flourishing. Former Taliban firing points are now home to returning families and the rapport we now have with them is providing a constant stream of information on insurgents and their movements. On one occasion this information resulted in the capture of a wounded Taliban fighter

who was convalescing in the village. As the locals' confidence continues to grow, and families rebuild their lives, it is testament to the Platoon's hard fought battles with the insurgents that the Afghan people of KK can return to their homes and be granted security in what was once one of the deadliest places in Helmand.

### Fire Support Group Charlie

*Sgt 'Oddball' Roberts, Commander*

*Fire Support Group Charlie, writes:*

Having arrived in Helmand fully trained on Jackal all terrain vehicles, we were told that we were in fact going to be using Mastiff vehicles and, after a short conversion package, were good to go. On arrival at Patrol Base Silab we took over a fleet of Mastiff 1 variants, as opposed to the shiny new Mastiff 2s. Shortly afterwards we embarked on a nice ten-day operation designed to clear compounds nearby and encourage the locals to move back in from the desert, having left the area 12 months previously due to heavy fighting. By about day five of the operation my Barma team had discovered two IEDs which were destroyed by ATO. Then, on about day seven, during a routine re-supply by another Mastiff callsign, we were opened up on by the enemy from an area affectionately known as the 'Snake's Head' and Pte Rudd was unfortunately shot in the leg. Pte Rudd was evacuated by an American medical helicopter, referred to as 'Pedro' within 30 minutes and in the meantime the rest of my FSG and 9 Platoon engaged with the enemy. Sgt 'Ash' Hill later told me that Pte Rudd had said to him on



Alas, my first wagon - after a 100Kg device.

## The Vikings



Providing intimate support during a remote shura.

the previous day, 'this will feel like a real war when I get shot' – hmmm!

As the tour progressed, we continued doing various tasks including round trips to Camp Bastion and supporting patrols (mounted and dismounted). It is hard to forget our first attempt to move along the routes within our patch which, even after being cleared by specialist mine clearance teams, were never 100 per cent and always cause for concern. On a link up operation between PB Silab and CP Paraang it was my turn to get blown up as I decided to test the strength of the armour on my car by driving into a mini nuke (estimated at 100kg of explosives). The good news is that it worked well and that my driver and I sustained only very minor injuries, but were slightly nervous for two days. Apparently I was talking gibberish on the Company net for a minute or so but settled down after a 'Lucky Strike' cigarette!

During the build up to Op MOSTARAK we deployed to the high ground opposite PB Silab and had great success using a Javelin missile against a rather irritating sniper who took a number of very accurate shots against our turrets, in particular Cpl Silvey, who in retaliation deployed 'The McKelvie' with his Javelin system. However, he soon became a target of the enemy sniper but finally managed to get a 'lock on' and fired. On the same day Pte McCabe also used Javelin to good effect by destroying an enemy fire team. It was then back to Pte McKelvie who used another missile to destroy the main enemy bunker.

During the remainder of the tour the Mastiffs were hit by a further three IEDs. We started with seven and quickly dropped to four which made life very busy and the maintenance of them hard work, especially as the roads were eventually cleared across the AO and the vehicles were used more often. It was good to get the roads open but it also meant that playing on our callsign M54, '545454 cabs' now came into action 24/7. Sgts 'Ash' Hill and 'Vic' Vickery thought this was very amusing, especially as we had

all enjoyed the last tour from the turrets of CVRT in Recce Platoon together; and they were now likening me to the RLC soldiers depicted in the TV series called *Road Warriors*, which I found quite offensive.

To make it worse, I also saw some of my other old comrades from time to time as the Recce Platoon spent some time detached to C Company and this made me dream of being back in my old recce car. So much so that they felt sorry for me and let me sit in one for a bit. Overall, everyone in the FSG was glad that we were in Mastiffs, given the IED threat, and all the extra work made the last two months go extremely quickly. Now it's time to drink some wine and eat some cheese and remember 'I can't fix them, I only ride them baby!'

### D (Cambridgeshire) Company

Maj Olly Brown, OC D

*(Cambridgeshire) Company, writes:* As I write this note in the Upper Gereshk Valley, I reflect on the last seven months and can scarcely believe how fast the time has gone and quite how much D (Cambridgeshire) Company has achieved since the last edition of *Castle*. As the Company stood down for a well-earned period of summer leave following TESEX, we had been warned that one company from the Battalion would train for a potential deployment to Afghanistan. Within days an update was issued, stating that two companies and the entire Fire Support Company were to prepare for operations – fantastic news, the whole of D Company was likely to deploy to Afghanistan.

In September, the Company commenced a fast-paced pre-deployment training package. Our time was split between essential individual training, including vital skills to combat the IED threat, specialist weapons and vehicle training, and collective training focused on the tactical employment of

Fire Support Groups, Mortars and Recce in Afghanistan. Prior to deployment, the Company split into three separate elements. Fire Support Group Alpha, which included a mortar section, was commanded by Capt Ben Howes. They joined A Company in Musa Qal'eh and were based at Roshan Tower. Fire Support Group Charlie, commanded by Capt James Perring, joined C Company in Nad-e-Ali and was based at PB Silab. The bulk of the Company, including Company HQ, Recce Platoon, a mortar section and two Fire Support Group sections deployed to the Upper Gereshk Valley (East) (UGV (E)) working for the Danish BG (Combined Force Nahr-E-Seraj North) where we were based at FOB Keenan, which would later become known as FOB Khar Nikah. At Khar Nikah, Vikings were joined by a platoon from 3 RIFLES, an OMLT group from 2 YORKS and a host of combat support and CSS personnel to deliver a total Company Group of some 140 personnel.

After only a short period, an opportunity was identified for Recce Platoon to return to mounted operations in support of the task force's main effort in Nad-e-Ali. By mid November 2009, Capt Graham Goodey and his team had redeployed in a mixed CVR(T) and Jackal fleet of vehicles to join C Company's fight in Nad-e-Ali. Recce platoon returned some four and a half months later, at the end of March 2010. In the interim, Recce was replaced by Mortar platoon from the Grenadier Guards who joined us as a rifle platoon.

On operations, D Company assumed responsibility for the delivery of security in the Upper Gereshk Valley (East). We inherited a dominated 'bubble' of influence of only 200 metres squared which was the product of a dense IED belt that completely surrounded the FOB during the latter stages of Op HERRICK 10. A combination of influence activity, persistent security presence and focused strike operations enabled the Company to establish a protected community which stretched from the edge of the desert to the River Helmand, spanning some 5km squared.

Throughout, the Company fought a cunning and determined enemy. The Taliban were equally tenacious in defence of terrain they viewed as their own as they were audacious in their attempts to attack us. Their preferred methods of attack were ambush and IEDs. Over the course of the tour, the Company experienced over 120 separate IED incidents, including a significant number of deadly low-metal content devices which are almost impossible to detect. We suffered nine contact IED events, resulting in 2 ISAF soldiers suffering horrific injury and 4 ANA warriors KIA. The bulk of the remaining incidents were IED finds, most of which were identified by the Vallon-men within the Company and then subsequently disposed of by IED Disposal Teams.

During his final visit to UGV (E) in late March 10, Commander Task Force Helmand described the Company's performance as

## The Vikings

being the 'exemplar model' of full spectrum counterinsurgency at subunit level. Op HERRICK II has been a quite outstanding operational deployment for the men of D Company – one in which the finest traditions and reputation of the Cambridgeshire Regiment and The Royal Anglian Regiment have been upheld with flying colours.

### Operations in the Upper Gereshk Valley

*Maj Olly Brown, OCD*

*(Cambridgeshire) Company, writes:* At the start of Op HERRICK II, FOB Keenan (later known as Khar Nikah) was isolated and verged upon being completely ineffective. The Company Group inherited a very small dominated 'bubble' of influence around the FOB, having been contained by a dense IED belt which inflicted 3 ISAF and 3 ANA KIA during the latter stages of Op HERRICK IO. The security situation was challenging to say the least with the Insurgents pressing hard to force the closure of Keenan and relations with the local community were tenuous at best.

The principal challenge facing the Company was to effect a break out from the Keenan 'bubble' in order to confront the insurgents and to bring security to the local community, thereby enhancing support for and confidence in the government of Afghanistan and the Combined Force of ISAF/ANSF. Influence focused framework operations and targeted IED clearance operations enabled the Company to develop a close and trusting relationship with local nationals. This approach precipitated a significant improvement in atmospherics, which manifested itself in a surge of information from local nationals about insurgent activity.

Seizing the opportunity to exploit this



IED clearance operations in action.

positive mood, we established a Security Council (Neighbourhood Watch) with key elders. This forum and the open discussion with local leaders about security, and indeed all other issues, which it enabled, was the most significant development in the AO. Empowering locals, through the

Security Council, with the responsibility for working with Combined Forces to improve security in partnership, set the conditions for the establishment of a sizeable protected community within the AO, spanning the width of the Green Zone from the River Helmand to the desert. The



The author engaging local leaders in a shura during Op Tujaan Seer.

## The Vikings

transformation was quite astounding - for the last three months of our tour, locals were able to live and farm peacefully, free from the persistent intimidation and threat of attack from the enemy which existed in October 2009. As the community prospered, we worked continually to expand the size of this protected area further marginalising Insurgent influence as we went.

Influence operations were complemented by aggressive patrolling and specific operations to shape the battlespace, strike at the insurgents and deny their freedom of manoeuvre. Two specific operations in January 2010 delivered a seismic shift in the security situation. A night time raid infiltrated an insurgent stronghold to demolish Nalur Bridge which had been used as a major line of communication by the insurgents for the movement of fighters, IEDs and weapons. Subsequently, a company air assault operation was mounted to seize and establish a new patrol base which dominates routes along the banks of the River Helmand. Overnight, the security situation was transformed as the insurgents were denied the ability to move freely within the AO.

Once the protected community was established, our focus moved to the expansion of influence and security across the AO, seeking to establish an enduring link-up between the FOB Khar Nikah protected community and a remote location, Patrol Base Zumbelay. Recce patrols to villages within the contested area between these locations indicated a positive response from LNs who were eager to experience the benefits of security and developments (delivered through CIMIC) which are enjoyed by nearby villages in the Khar Nikah protected community.

In the last month of the tour, the insurgency



Company Rock Drill on the eve of Operation.

was invigorated in the Upper Gereshk Valley by an influx of 'fresh blood' heralded by the arrival of fighters displaced from Marjeh and Nad-e-Ali by Operation MOSHTARAK. In the face of this determined Insurgent offensive, the Company Groups' efforts over the previous five months paid huge dividend. The strength of our relationship with the local community and the stability they enjoyed as a result of co-operating closely with us led them to shun the Insurgents and, in some cases, take up arms themselves against the Taliban. This wave of public support combined with a series of carefully executed ambush and

strike operations kept the insurgents at bay, effectively breaking their efforts to unstitch the protected community.

At the time of writing, as the Company hands over the AO to a Gurkha Reinforcement Company from 1st Battalion the Mercian Regiment, the men of D (Cambridgeshire) Company have good reason to feel great pride and a sense of huge satisfaction on account of the developments in security and stability delivered in the Upper Gereshk Valley during their tour.

### Reflections on Working with the ANA

*Cpl Wilson (YORKS attached to D Company) writes:*

Before deploying to Afghanistan, I had visions of a very kinetic theatre with plenty of large, drawn-out gun battles, air strikes and close quarter engagements with the enemy, like two years previously on HERRICK 7. It was everything a young JNCO should want from the infantry; what I was to find was a very different story.

I deployed as part of a mentoring team of 10 men, tasked with mentoring an army who believe that god's will - 'inshallah' - is the best protection against enemy bullets and bombs, not body armour and helmets. We trained them how to find mines and IEDs, and how to patrol through the Green Zone effectively. After a lot of lessons, talking, chai and patrols, they still were not entirely confident in leading. Mentoring soldiers who are not willing to work hard can be frustrating, leaving the lads and I wondering why we bothered on occasions.

The Khar Nikah AO had a reputation of been surrounded by a ring of IEDs. The Taliban had encircled the camp, initially restricting our freedom of movement, but as our confidence in our training, equipment



Mini-shura with locals on the banks of the River Helmand.

## The Vikings



**Training newly arrived ANA in Counter-IED.**

and each other grew, we kept pushing further on each patrol. Never solely focusing on the enemy, we sat and talked to locals about the Taliban, bridges, wells and destroyed fields and drank more chai. At first, we felt this wasn't achieving anything, but soon it became apparent that this was working in securing the area. Locals would tell us where the enemy were, where they had planted IEDs and the area became more secure as the tour went on.

During the six months we had both contacts with the enemy and some IED strikes. Unfortunately, one of our team (Pte Rose) was injured - a double amputee. We quickly cleared to him, treated his injuries and then extracted him back to safety. Some of the finest soldering I've seen happened that day. Everyone reacted brilliantly and we

saved our mate's life; the ultimate reward. We patrolled the next day, undeterred and willing to keep pushing that bit further into Taliban controlled areas.

As I write this waiting to go home, the past six months have been a difficult, yet rewarding and interesting, time with some good laughs with the close bond we've formed as a team. We came expecting to see bombs drop and have big fights, but we realised over time that this was not the best way of achieving success. Patrolling to the local shop 200m from camp, slowly developed into patrolling the banks of the Helmand River. The lads have all learned a lot and eventually we realised that flattening villages isn't the answer. Who would have thought a glass of chai with the locals could defeat the Taliban easier than a 500lb bomb?

### Fire Support Group Operations: A JNCO's Impression

*Cpl Owusu, FSG D Section*

*Commander, writes:*

We arrived at FOB Keenan in the Upper Gereshk Valley east of Helmand (UGV) E with a mission to deliver security to the people. The complexity of the local atmospherics, set against the background of the locals' mentality about the West and ISAF as a whole, coupled with the fact that the furthestmost IED belt was only 200 metres from the FOB, made the mission seem very daunting. It was evident that patience, a careful approach, judgement and above all establishing a strong rapport with the locals, would be key if we were to make any headway in our efforts to deliver the much needed security to the peace loving local nationals.

Although we trained as FSG during pre-deployment training, we were also warned to stay flexible so as to enable us to deploy as rifle sections if the situation required us to do so. In our case, the latter is what we did for almost the entire duration of the tour, except on one occasion when we deployed to the desert in FSG role. We conducted a series of IED clearance operations called Op GHUMBESA over a period of three months to remove the threat of IED from the local villages. Afghans believe in action rather than words and were delighted, almost jubilant in some instances, when watching our progress. It was frustrating, slow and dangerous work. In most cases we had to engage the Taliban in fierce fire fights in order to make progress. On Christmas Day we were clearing IEDs rather than eating turkey! There were long freezing winter days and sometimes we had to stag on IEDs overnight to deter the Taliban



**Joint patrol engaging with the local community.**

## The Vikings

removing them for use elsewhere. When we handed over, the closest IEDs were at least 1.5km from the FOB – this was a major achievement in the face of an enemy who were determined to re-seed IEDs almost everywhere to kill and maim us and the local people.

The success story of the Company is a classic example of the popular saying 'you get as much as you give'. Our fire power is second to none; however, if not carefully and cautiously employed it could strain our relationship with the locals. We therefore avoided unnecessary engagements and fire fights to best protect the entire local community whenever possible. There is no doubt we are well trained and well equipped but, the Taliban have time on their side to pick and choose the place to attack. The difference between the sides in Helmand is getting the locals' support which we managed brilliantly. The extent of Taliban repression and intimidation over the years was too evident to ignore. The locals are petrified by the mention of them and as a result, talking to ISAF was a momentous decision. Only a few locals dared to risk the wrath of the Taliban by speaking to us at the start of our tour. Nevertheless, as time went by the locals felt safer and trusted us with their security. We dominated the area by increasing patrol activities by both day and especially at night to reassure the local community of our commitment to protecting them.

I am proud to say that the security situation in the AO has changed remarkably during our tour. The relationship with locals has also improved significantly - one point worth noting and mentioning is that in the last two months we have seen a lot of female



**FSG Mounted Operations - (from right) Pte Burnell, Pte Armstrong and LCpl Goodship.**

kids, some as old as thirteen, approaching our patrols asking for sweets, biscuits, chocolate, pens, etc which hitherto was unthinkable. A lot more work is needed to be done: development of the ANA is still work in progress and the ANP requires considerable work. Other areas such as infrastructure, education and above all

governance, also need more time to develop.

If there is one thing to remember about this tour, it will be the fact that we arrived at a place with no hope or future but prior to departure we had delivered security, restored hope and given the people a future to live for, as well as changing their widely held view about ISAF and the West as a whole.



**FSG Dismounted patrolling along River Helmand.**

## The Vikings

### The Reconnaissance Platoon on Op HERRICK 11:

**'So what did Recce do?'**

*Capt Graham Goodey, OC Recce*

*Platoon, writes:*

When someone politely asks, as they do: 'So what did Recce do on Herrick 11?' ... I tend to feel some sympathy for the inquisitor – they have unwittingly walked into a trap and blocked off at least the next 20 minutes of their day.

The short answer is 'a bit of everything'. The long answer goes along the lines of: Started with D Company as a dismounted platoon for three weeks; became an Airborne Reserve Force for a Task Force Op for two weeks; took over and trained on a fleet of CVRT and Jackal in four days; filled in as the Danish Battle Group armoured platoon for two weeks; worked dismounted with C Company in Southern Nad-e-Ali for two weeks; Op TOR SHAP'AH clearance of Nad-e-Ali north with the Grenadier Guards Battle Group; made a PB at 'Yellow 10' and held the Northern FLET following TOR SHAP'AH for three weeks; Op MOSHTARAK Shaping Ops for three weeks; Op MOSHTARAK clearance of Abdul Wahid Kalay; back to C Company in southern Nad-e-Ali for one week; worked with the HCR in the Bolan Desert for one week; handed back vehicles in three days; before returning to D Company for the final three weeks.

So you see for an article like this it's difficult



**ATO clears an IED at Yellow 10 given cover from Cpl Eggleton's CVRT.**

to concisely sum up HERRICK 11 for the Recce Platoon. Perhaps most importantly, and without the usual hyperbole, I can honestly say that a young platoon worked hard and produced some excellent results. Cpl Kennedy and his dismounted section covertly ambushed an unsuspecting enemy on numerous occasions, as well as capturing two senior insurgent commanders, one of which was an SF target on the Joint Personal Effects List. Cpl Eggleton managed the

quickest operational handover of vehicles in recent years and his CVRT Section with Pte Kayser accounted for more enemy casualties on Op MOSHTARAK than the entire R WELSH Battle Group. LCpls Knowles and Cooper were all round workhorses for the platoon and trusted hands in all things, as well as keeping morale high. LCpls Theobald and Murray grew exponentially as CVRT commanders, especially considering they are both younger



**Pte Etheridge and co in contact in Nad-e-Ali.**

## The Vikings



Green Zone CVRT at sunset, Op TOR SHAP'AH.

than any of their HERRICK 6 counterparts, culminating in the successful removal of an experienced IED layer by means of a well executed ambush. The snipers, Ptes Boyle and Smith 58, carefully picked up quite a tally, including an IED layer, numerous commanders and one wealthy Arab donor who fancied a go on the front line. The unsung heroes, the regular Vallon men, LCpl Hughes (REME) and Pte Rowley cleared every metre of ground in areas where the threat of IEDs was ever present, a task which requires a special courage day after day.

Mention must also go to Pte 'Grub' Webster who was our all important 'man at Bastion' punching well above his weight – time and again I heard 'don't worry, Grub will sort it out' and he always did. And behind all of this has been the experienced guiding hand of WO2 Goodman who has combined being Recce 2IC, CQMS and Platoon Sergeant and generally made it all happen in the best tradition of the Vikings.

Perhaps the Platoon's biggest challenge came in the form of the Shaping Phase for Op MOSHTARAK, when it was entrusted with 'breaking the insurgent defence' around the Brigade's primary objective, whilst at the same time ensuring that the local population remained in place and pro-ISAF. For six weeks the Platoon probed forward, on foot and in CVRT, gathering information and engaging the enemy in almost daily contacts, often catching them off guard with covertly placed ambushes to remove key commanders. When D-Day finally came the Royal Welsh Battle Group cleared through the area to be welcomed by a friendly population – not a single shot was fired and not a single complaint was made. The Commanding Officer in Nad-e-Ali later commented that 'although they will never admit it, and although you will find no mention of it in the press, the Royal Welsh had an easy ride for the efforts of the Viking Recce Platoon' – a nice touch at the end of a hard tour.

### A View of Change on Operations in Afghanistan

*LCpl Knowles, Recce Platoon, writes:* As one of the many Vikings in the Battalion who has experienced both Op HERRICK 6 in 2007 and more lately Op HERRICK 11, I was asked to briefly contrast the two from a soldier's perspective. In terms of the way we operate on the ground it will come as no surprise that the big difference has resulted from the rise in the use of improvised explosive devices.

Pressure plates, trip wires, command wires, command pull and radio controlled devices have all been used by the insurgents and have forced us to drastically change the way we operate. Within the vast majority of areas you simply don't step foot anywhere that has not been cleared first with a Vallon metal detector and consequently the only

section formation used is single file – or the 'Afghan Snake'. In turn, this means that under contact your room for manoeuvre is confined to a narrow lane; there is no 'dash to the nearest cover' as the risk of devices being placed in anticipation of your move is simply too high. So even if it means being caught in the open, your only options are to stay where you are in the cleared lane or to painstakingly and slowly clear your way to cover.

All of this has meant that on HERRICK 11, even more than on HERRICK 6, route selection was everything. Having a good idea of where the enemy is likely to have placed IEDs and where they are likely to engage you in a small arms contact and balancing the two threats is what every commander has to do all of the time. And often this means coming up with routes that traditionally and in a military sense, you would never take. For example in many areas when the IED risk is high the preferred route is to use the open ground where you're not channelled, rather than linear features such as tree lines or ditches which were the mainstay of HERRICK 6. All of this of course 'feels wrong' as a soldier and goes against all of your conventional training but generally, because of the IED threat targeting the military, if it feels wrong, it's probably right.

In terms of small arms contacts, there is no doubt that those experienced during HERRICK 6 were on average more intense. However, during HERRICK 11 there were plenty of contacts on a par with 2007 and the restrictions on the use of air and artillery assets meant that the emphasis falls even more on the troops on the ground to deal with the threat and take the fight to the enemy. Whilst during HERRICK 6, clearing through enemy positions under fire was the norm, now the IED risk means that following the enemy up with any speed is simply not possible. Consequently the use of more



An operation in NDA combining CVRT and Recce dismounts.

## The Vikings



**Pte Smith putting his .338 to best effect.**

ambushes and search and arrest operations has become the best means of exerting offensive pressure.

In terms of our interactions with the civilian population, perhaps contrary to what others may say, I do not think there has been a great change at the soldier's level. In 2007, just as in 2010, I think we recognised the importance of popular perception. On the ground we spoke to the locals with the same friendly approach on both HERRICKS 6 and 11 and looked to deliver reconstruction and security wherever possible. If anything, the main difference is that where before the dramatic fire fights with the enemy drew the headlines, now, quite rightly, reconstruction and the ANSF take the attention.

So overall much has changed between HERRICKS 6 and 11, but much has stayed the same. Many of the new drills go against what conventionally we are taught, but the British soldier is nothing if not flexible and this has helped us to effectively adapt to the various changes.

### Headquarter Company

*Maj Chelsea Hall,*

*OC HQ Company, writes:*

Much has happened since I last wrote a Coy update in autumn 2009, and a separate article on the activities of the Unit Rear Party (or should I say 1 R ANGLIAN Rear Ops now?) will appear elsewhere in the Journal.

Within HQ Coy, the constant turnover of personnel continues unabated. We have said goodbye to Major Phil Blanchfield who has handed over as QM to Major Tim Jones; Phil leaves us for the FTG(UK) on Salisbury Plain as SO2 Logistics. Major Andy Tredget, our Doctor, has departed for Brunei and service with the RGR – it's a hard life! The AGC Detachment Commander, Lt

Verity Morris, has left on promotion to do a tour with 47 Regt RA and we wish her luck with that. In her stead, we welcome Capt Steph Baylis for a short while.

Other notable changes are the ASM, WO1 James Southall, who will not be replaced due to the downscaling of our LAD from over 50 to around a dozen soldiers. We wish him well in his new job and thank him for his splendid work over the last 3 ½ years, in particular the disposal of the Bulldog fleet when a fifth of his workforce were deployed on operations. WO2 Keith Nieves-Y-Gordo has moved to ITC(C) as CSM Somme Coy and the RCMO's office also loses Cpl 'Jonah' Jones who has moved on to be a recruiting Sgt. In turn we welcome back Sgt Shropshire and the Drum Major, CSgt Si Panter, to assist the much pressured Captain Adey Penn. The last person I wish to mention as having left is SSgt Danny Wright from the LAD. We lose him as part of the ongoing restructuring of our REME contingent. He has proved to be an excellent Viking and is thanked for his time as one of the CVOs to the family of Captain Martin Driver. Soon to leave us is the Padre, Father Alex Strachan, who has been with us now since early 2007. He moves home to a posting in Scotland with 3 Rifles. You go with our blessing Father and our grateful thanks for all you have done. Later this year, Major Chris Barry, the Battalion 2IC, departs on promotion for a 9 month tour of the Yemen, where I'm sure he will crack the whip just as ruthlessly as he does here. There are, of course, many others who have come and gone, but for fear of causing offence by not getting them all down, I will leave it there and conclude by saying that each one of them has played their part in ensuring the Battalion ticks over and their contribution has been most welcome.

### Rear Operations

*Maj Chelsea Hall,*

*CO Rear Ops, writes:*

This has been a long and difficult winter. It all began with a telephone call while I sat on a beach in Cornwall last August, when Maj Chris Barry called to tell me of the emergency Command Group to be held that coming Bank Holiday Monday.

The headline was the short notice deployment of the three companies and the permission to train a Headquarters and an Echelon. I asked him with a sense of foreboding what job I would be doing: he confirmed my worst fear - 'Rear Party'. Having done part of the last tour under Maj Stef Stefanetti, I had learned a lot of valuable lessons. The most immediate thing to address was the training of Casualty Visiting Officers (CVOs). Despite the short notice, we managed to get 30 trained up, only to lose half on subsequent deployments as jobs were found to get as many people out to theatre as we could.

Those remaining did a fantastic job when called upon and the benefits to the families of having someone from the Battalion calling round in support at such stressful times cannot be measured. In all, I called on 12 members of the Rear Party from all capbadges to perform this delicate task. An article from one of them is included in these notes.

The other requirement identified early was for more than one bearer party. It was felt inappropriate to practice in front of the troops before they deployed, but with the sad death of LCpl Joe Rix just prior to deploying, we had to prepare pretty sharply. Initially, most of the troops came from B Company because I wanted to use Vikings to carry Vikings and didn't want to use under 18s

## The Vikings

however, we were governed more by the availability of a dwindling stock of old No 2 Dress than by willing volunteers of which, from a rear party of 379, I had no shortage. As the tour progressed more emphasis was placed on the old and bold from HQ Company as the soldiers in B Company deployed as Battle Casualty Reserves.

We had fine support from WO1 (RSM) Granfield and WO1 (RSM) Jay at the repatriations to keep it a truly Regimental affair. With Pte Robbie Hayes' Repatriation being carried out on a small runway, cleared of a foot of snow, the much maligned RAF not only got him home, but also managed to allow us room to carry out the ceremony with due dignity and respect, for which we are grateful and relieved. At the time of writing, we are about to carry out two funerals for fallen comrades and, at the same time, the first troops are returning. There is light at the end of the tunnel but no-one is willing to blink just yet.

It hasn't all been sad work; we have had a very successful Combined Inspection Week and the orienteering has continued apace with plenty of young talent coming through to maintain the annual strong performance from the Vikings in this sport.

Other tasks have included military aid to the civil community, such as rescuing doctors and nurses from Frimley Park Hospital during the worst of the snow; and a variety of RAAT tasks from respirator trials to a few medics, all of which have been carried out to the highest of standards.

The new Brigade Commander, Brig Justin Maciejewski, summed up Rear Party nicely during his visit on 12 January when he said: 'No-one wants to be here when your mates are fighting in the field; you have all the grief and disappointments with none of the satisfaction of taking the fight to the enemy'.

Here, here!

### Duties of a Casualty Visiting Officer

*CSgt Chris Penny writes:*

With the Battalion away on Op HERRICK 11, there was undoubtedly a need for Casualty Visiting Officers (CVOs), especially after the last tour to Afghanistan during which the Battalion lost nine soldiers killed and suffered numerous casualties. So, after attending a specific CVO Course, I was ready to be deployed, should the need arise. Up to the end of November, life in the Battalion was ticking over as it should, with various preparations for the forthcoming Logistic Support Inspection. To be honest, this was the calm before the storm.

On 7 December, my worst fear was realised when stood at my door was the Families Officer, Capt Ian Robinson. I knew as soon as I saw him that it was the worst news - a soldier from our Battalion had tragically died - it was LCpl Adam Drane. From there, Padre Alex Strachan and I were sent to Bury St Edmunds to meet Mr and Mrs Drane. Nothing I have ever done or experienced

could ever prepare me for that first meeting with the Drane family. My main effort though was to put aside any of my feelings, or indeed the Padre's feelings, and between us to support and try and comfort Des and Jackie Drane in any way we could.

The first problem we had was that as Adam was the 100th fatality in 2009, his death caused huge media attention. It was therefore urgent to secure some kind of statement and fitting photograph of the family's choice. This small act would give the family their much needed breathing space in which to start to come to terms with the tragic news.

The next issue was the repatriation at RAF Lyneham and the presentation of the Elizabeth Cross to Mrs Drane. This presentation was conducted the night before the repatriation by Gen John McColl, who drove all the way from Belgium earlier that day and returned the same night. The family were truly bowled over by this and it gave them much needed strength for the repatriation the next day. The repatriation ceremony was an extremely emotional event and the close family received a lot of support from other family members and the friends of Adam, both civilian and military, who attended. The ceremony went without a hitch as everyone involved takes huge pride in ensuring it does.

From there it was home to Bury and the task of preparing for Adam's funeral. Once we had appointed an undertaker, the planning became quite straightforward. Sgt Wayne Ward, 3 R ANGLIAN, became a stalwart at this stage. I was not previously aware that Wayne was Adam's fiancée's uncle. So, as I have known Wayne for 20 years or so, I knew he would help out in lots of different ways. As an example, we were having difficulty arranging a suitable venue for the wake at which point he turned around and said he would ring the Mayor's Secretary. After saying 'yeah, alright mate', the next thing I know is that we were briefing Jenny Bradin, the Mayor's Secretary, on exactly what we needed for the wake and the funeral itself; and she was fantastic. After setting up a huge meeting with all the local heads of parking, council and the Chief Constable, we came up with a plan that would give Adam the send off he so rightfully deserved.

The funeral itself was a service in St Mary's Church at Bury, which was attended by over 1,000 people. This was followed by a private family committal service at St Nicholas' Church in Adam's home village of Staningfield, just outside Bury. On the day of Adam's funeral, half of the town centre was closed down for us by Bury police. This was a huge issue as it was 23 December and a market day. The last time anything this big had been organised was when the Queen had visited Bury St Edmunds. Due to everyone's help and pride to make this the best send-off possible, everything went without hitch and, most importantly, the family could now grieve, knowing that Adam had been laid to rest in a proper and fitting manner. The next week or so gave the family a little bit of time

to try and put what had just happened into perspective and to start to come to terms with their tragic loss.

The last task as CVO was to finalise Adam's finances and ensure that everything possible was done for the family. With that complete, all that supposedly remains of my duty is to periodically phone to make sure everything is OK and, in time, to extract from the family. I have found this part of the CVO duty impossible to carry out, as I'm now part of the Drane family and always will be. You can't go through such raw emotion when a family are in distress and then say 'OK, goodbye now, I'm finished'. I have talked to other CVOs and find that they are still in regular contact with their families three years after they were first tasked.

Without doubt, this duty given to me on 7 December 2009 was not only a great privilege, but also an honour as well.

*Editor's note: This article has appeared with the prior knowledge and kind approval of Mr and Mrs Drane.*

### Funerals

*Capt Bob Wicks, MTO, writes:*

Undoubtedly the saddest part of Rear Party has been conducting six military funerals. These were four funerals of Vikings killed in action, one for an officer who died of his wounds in Selly Oak and one for a soldier killed just days before he was due to deploy. The funeral parties were formed from a small band of Rear Party soldiers and command alternated between Capt Wicks and Capt Penn. Even though it was a large Rear Party, the number of those available for funeral duty was dictated by those that had No 2 Dress, which was a small percentage of those left behind. The size of the grouping slowly decreased as the tour went on, as many of the soldiers were deployed to theatre as BCRs. However, this meant that we were left with a core of experienced soldiers who were able to carry out their duties with extreme dignity and professionalism.

The funerals were conducted, like most military operations, after thorough reconnaissance and rehearsals. Detailed planning was essential and the plan had to be robust enough to survive contact with the civilian population who, at times, had little understanding of military precision. The Battalion can be extremely proud of all those who acted as bearers, firing party members, trestle bearers and ushers, and the way that they performed their duties ensuring that each Viking was given a dignified send-off, befitting a fallen soldier.

However, it was not just a Battalion effort. The funerals would not have been possible without the valued assistance of RHQ, in particular the Regimental Secretary. Also, 3 R ANGLIAN provided essential support in allowing the use of their TA Centres as an admin base for each funeral. The funerals truly were a Regimental effort. Lastly, but by no means least, thanks must go to all the Standard Bearers, in particular the Regimental Association Standard Bearers.

## The Vikings

Peter Ward and his team have put on a fine display at each funeral and the Battalion is extremely grateful for their participation. It has been humbling to see so many other Standard Bearers on parade at each funeral. The Royal British Legion is, of course, always well represented, but many others have paraded to honour fallen soldiers. This is even more impressive when you consider the extreme weather conditions and the fact that seldom do these old servicemen get a seat inside the church.

It has been inspiring to the younger soldiers to see these elderly, sometimes frail, people on parade, in the snow, standing tall and proud. For example, an elderly lady carrying a Royal Naval Association Standard at Burwell, who stood outside the church singing her heart out for a soldier that she never knew. Her example made those serving soldiers, also stood outside, stand proud and forget the biting cold. She truly set a fine example and showed us all that whoever they are, wherever they fall – we will remember them.

### Welfare Office

*Capt Ian Robinson, Unit Welfare Officer, writes:*

#### Looking after the Viking Families

The welfare team has been able to plan and run a number of functions over the past six months and would like to take this opportunity to thank some of the people who have been involved in making these events go smoothly for our families. We would like to say a big thank-you to Phil and Gillian Orme, who have opened the Sandes Cafe every Thursday afternoon throughout the tour so our wives and children were able to go along to have a meal and relax. They have also laid on Sunday lunches on alternate weekends which have also been very well received.

The welfare team would also like to say a special thank you to Phillip Pride for organising the Christmas Party. It was a great success, being held at Frensham Pond Hotel with a guest appearance from Santa, live music and entertainment, and a fantastic fireworks display to end the evening. The event was supported well by our families and everyone that attended enjoyed themselves.

We have also been able to run a number of wives' nights out, ranging from parties in the Sergeants' Mess to a trip to see 'Wicked' at the theatre in London and, more recently, a medieval night in London. The children haven't missed out either with trips to the cinema, doughnutting and bowling. The welfare team are all looking forward to the companies' return to Pirbright and have a further major event planned for Sunday 9 May.

#### Looking after our Casualties and their Families

The Battalion sustained significant casualties during Op HERRICK 11. The Welfare Office

is responsible for ensuring both the soldiers themselves and their families are well looked after throughout their treatment. For minor casualties, this might consist of a phone call from the Unit Welfare Officer (UWO) to parents and girlfriend or wife and a lift from Brize Norton to home for the soldier. A lot more is involved for the more serious casualties.

The Battalion supplies its own Casualty Visiting Officers (CVOs); in some cases these men are members of the REME or RLC attached to the Battalion who work with the UWO. It is their job to ensure the families have as much information as possible about the condition of their Viking and to arrange transport and accommodation at Selly Oak for the duration of their Viking's time in hospital. If the soldier is on the critical care ward, the CVO will stay with the family, supporting them in whatever way he can – from providing a friendly face to going shopping, it is all within the CVO's role. As the soldier recovers, the Welfare Office provide transport from the soldier's home to and from Headley Court and hospital appointments and continues to support the soldier and his family as they come to terms with his injuries and the changes they bring to the family's life.

The Welfare Office is supported by many people and organisations, most notably Selly Oak, which is quite outstanding. I would like, however, to highlight the fact that although all essential expenses are covered by the MOD, it is the the Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Fund that provides for the extras. For example, the Welfare Officer taking the soldiers at Headley Court out for a meal and a pint or, in one case, funding a flight for an aunt to come from Dubai to the UK and support a family whose Viking was on critical care for a month. So, if any of you are looking to raise funds for a charity, look close to home and pick our own Regimental Benevolent Fund. The current crop of wounded soldiers will tell you it is well worth it.

*Editor's note: The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Fund placed £7,500 at the disposal of the Vikings for Op HERRICK 11; and £2,500 at the disposal of the Steelbacks to support 11 and 12 Platoons during their recent tour.*

### The Quartermaster's Platoon

*Capt Harry Hinnall, QM (T) writes:*

As I only arrived in December 2009, and am looking at what the Quartermaster Platoon has achieved over the last year, it sounds like a logistical nightmare for anyone! TESEX, PDT and Op ENTIRETY (re-rolling from Mech to a Light Role organisation) which included handing back the Bulldog and CVR(T) fleets and garages but still having to keep the Mech flame alive! In total, the Battalion had 12 different types of vehicles that exceeded 300 prime movers, not forgetting the CES and servicing for

each vehicle. On top of this, the Battalion received a huge upscale of new equipments for the short notice operational tour, which demanded a vast amount of accounting and management.

In the background to all this activity, the Battalion would receive its Combined Inspection Week, including ECI and LSI in February 2010. This inspection is designed to ensure that Battalions are complying with all regulations; it is the biggest inspection of the year and one during which your name can be won or lost. The inspection covers vehicles, weapons, comms, accommodation, the cookhouse, all accounts – the list goes on! Achieving a Green report was a great result, achieved through hard effort on the part of all account holders, the MT and the LAD. It's not easy controlling all these assets and getting a culture of Equipment Care to continue in the Battalion, so big credit must go to my predecessor.

We will continue to keep this culture going and look forward to the companies returning, getting their equipment regenerated and ready for our Board of Officers in June. The Platoon reshuffles early this year and says farewell to both RQMSs, who have been promoted, which is not surprising as they have contributed massively and are most deserving of their advancement. As we look to the future, we will continue to keep equipment husbandry to the forefront of the Battalion's mind whilst fully supporting the companies, as we eye the unit move to Bulford.

### Orienteering

*WO2 (RQMS(T)) Kevin Main writes:* With the Battalion on a six-month tour of HERRICK and the average age of the present squad at 45, the main focus for this year was to introduce new blood from the Battalion to orienteering. The aim was to draw more young soldiers, officers and SNCOs to the sport so they are able to take the lead for the next 10 to 15 years.

Getting numbers of soldiers to run on a Wednesday has always been relatively easy, as most units can muster 10 different people who are often later witnessed wandering around the woods, wearing hoodies and day sacks, completely lost. To avoid this, we concentrated on Wednesday coaching and individual de-briefing, instead of just competing for points. To complement this strategy, we also conducted technical training on Friday mornings and managed to get over 20 soldiers away on orienteering skills courses.

If the training mentality continues, the Battalion should be able to maintain its record within the Infantry and the Army. At the time of writing, the results are beginning to bear this out as the Battalion is currently placed third in the 4th Division League, which mirrors last year's results, with a fully manned team. In addition, the U-25 team was recently placed third in the 4th Division competition.

## 2nd Battalion The Poachers

### Introduction by the Commanding Officer

*Lt Col RW Wooddisse writes:*

Since the last edition of *Castle* the 2nd Battalion has recovered from Kenya and started the long but vital preparation for operations later in the year. We have thrown ourselves into the myriad of courses required to function effectively in Afghanistan and by the summer will have trained 110 drivers for six different vehicles, over 400 medics and 60 GPMG gunners; learnt to operate six weapons peculiar to the Afghan theatre; and 30 soldiers will have developed a varying degree of proficiency in Pashtu. It has been a slightly disjointed period with up to 300 soldiers away on courses at any one time and plenty of nights spent away from Celle, but the Battalion is very much on track for our deployment in September.

You will see that many of the articles that follow deal with the aftermath of Exercise Grand Prix. The adventure training that followed this highly demanding exercise was as varied as it was enjoyable, ranging from white water rafting, scaling Mount Kenya, mountain biking around volcanoes in the East African Rift Valley and immersing oneself in Masai culture, some of which will be explained in more detail by those who were there. It rounded off a year rich in variety and professional challenge from which we have learnt much.

But perhaps the most noteworthy activity of the last few months has been the progress of the Battalion's boxing team who have finished the season as Germany Champions and runners' up in the Army Finals. The team started full time training in September last year and since then have defeated 5 RIFLES, 1 PWRR, 35 Engr Regt and 2 PARA. In the final the Battalion lost 6-3 to 3 PARA in a close fought contest well supported by Poachers both old and new. While the result was a disappointment, the team acquitted themselves extremely well against the reigning Army Champions and can be proud of their performance, not only in the final but throughout a demanding season. You will find a more detailed account later in the Battalion's contribution. I must add that the Battalion squash team have had an equally successful season, also finishing as Germany Champions and runners up in the Army Major Unit Finals. They have also competed in the Swiss Open, a civilian event held in Geneva, where Sgt McQuilkin finished as the individual winner.

In sum, this has been a period of foundation building in preparation for our training later in the year. The next few months will see the companies deploy to Sennelager to conduct field firing and then move back to the UK for an intensive period of Battalion training in Thetford, Otterburn and on Salisbury Plain. Simultaneously, we will start the move to Cyprus with our advance

party (and Cyprus luggage) moving in June. We return to Germany in mid July to march through the streets of Celle to exercise the Freedom of the Stadt and say farewell to the Oberbürgermeister and others who have helped to make a success of our most recent posting to northern Germany. We hope that both the Colonel-in-Chief and Colonel of the Regiment will be able to join us for what should be a fitting farewell. By the next edition of *Castle* we will be well established in Cyprus with elements at least in Afghanistan.

### A (Lincolnshire) Company Update

*Lt Will Otridge writes:*

After Kenya, the Company has been somewhat disjointed. Training courses have taken place almost every week and the entire Company has not been together on parade since November. But we now have elements trained in Tactical Questioning, Compound Clearance, Heavy Weapon Systems, Patrol Search, Basic Pashtu Language, UOR weapons, Advanced Close Quarter Marksmanship, TRIM (Trauma Risk Management), various communication systems, assault pioneering, 60mm and 81mm mortars, quad driving, Mastiff driving, Regimental Medic and unarmed combat (at weekends).

But the last few months have also allowed us to do some collective training. We ran an urban skills exercise in January at the disused hospital complex in Hohne. Walking through the gates on a foggy January morning with snow on the ground was pretty eerie,

not unlike a scene from a horror movie. The blokes had a lot of fun exploring the mortuary slabs during their breaks. The first few days were spent on a round robin - learning Op BARMA and KALA drills (Counter IED Drills), Patrol Search and Advanced Close Quarter Battle. The final day was spent attacking the various houses and complexes in the compound.

Capt James Quince ran a GPMG (Lt Role) cadre on Hohne Ranges. Firers spent 2 weeks becoming highly proficient on both drills and firing on the weapon. They also had fun shooting snowmen, which they produced during background activity. The week culminated with an APWT and a gun run back to Celle.

Where possible, we have squeezed in Afghanistan specific training such as Counter IED, Aerial Photo Navigation and Psychological Operations, along with the mandatory weapon handling tests and MATTs.

Ptes Young, Knight, O'Shea, West, Green, Goulding, Lawrence, Stamp, Wills and Holland all completed the FTCC in Brecon, with four of them finishing in the Top 10 students of the Queen's Division. They have since been promoted to LCpl and will start cascading their Low Level Tactical Op Herrick training to the Company after Easter leave.

Both the OC and CSM have moved onto new jobs. Maj Lawrence Ives has been attached to 1 US Marine Expeditionary Force in Afghanistan and will spend the next year mentoring the ANA. WO2 Fred Oldenburg has been posted to Bermuda where he will be overseeing the training of the Bermuda Regiment. Replacements Maj Rupert Whitham and WO2 Danny



Pte O'Shea and Pte Knight giving direction on the FTCC.

## The Poachers



**Pte Lawrence on the FTCC.**

Morgan both arrive after Easter to formally commence Cascade and Pre-Deployment training.

Capt Quince will be posted to Catterick soon. I am moving on to Bn Intelligence Officer, Sergeant Rawdon to Sandhurst (provided he passes the rigorous selection in May) and A/CSgt Hume has now replaced CSgt Greenhill as CQMS. This only leaves Sgt Taylor, Sgt Mactavish and 2Lt Barron! The changeover comes at an ideal period of time as they have time to work together on all the pre-deployment exercises.

### A Company Adventure Training in Kenya

*Li Will Otridge writes:*

Following Exercise Grand Prix 3, A Company and some attachments from B Company deployed back into the bush for adventure training. Whilst the other companies swanned off to popular tourist resorts such as Mombasa and Lake Nevasha, we went to Al Gaboli Lodge in Nanyuki District. This lodge was situated just off the training area and from the top of the hill we could see Simba Rock (from where the FSG

conducted their live shoots).

The journey was quite cramped, but after four hours and a bout of deep vein thrombosis, the van/minibuses got us to a river. Due to the heavy amount of rain, mostly experienced when we were out training on the area, the river was deep and fast flowing. But we had to get all of our kit and ourselves across the muddy river, so little inflatable boats ferried us across and a rope pulley system was used for our kit. Some decided to swim and were dragged downstream 30 metres, from where they managed to get out.

The accommodation was basic, but homely. The straw huts were filled with bunk beds, a non functioning shower system and toilet. We had to use river water for washing until the pump got fixed. The lodge is the type of place I imagine celebrities would go to get in touch with their 'inner self', whatever that might mean. This situation was not ideal considering we had been on exercise for over a month! It was better than Turaco Farm though...

Food was pretty basic too. The locals cooked us up sausage and boiled eggs in the morning, goat mince and salad for lunch,

then goat meat and rice for dinner. This was the same everyday, but it was what the locals ate so we didn't complain. Unfortunately the novelty of goat wore off, even after LCpl Riley personally slaughtered one for consumption.

The Company was split into four groups. The first activity for my group was the Samburu Village visit. We weaved through the bush, looking at animal footprints and poo and learnt about the local fauna. At the village we had a cringing dance with the local women, but it was enjoyable nonetheless. We learnt about how and why villages were constructed, which some of the blokes found hard to comprehend. A man with lots of goats and cows can trade some of them in for a woman to make his wife. The wife then moves into his compound, made of prickly branches to keep the predators out, and constructs her own house. These are traditional mud huts with cow dung roofs. They supplement the cow dung with plastic sheeting in the rainy seasons. We managed to squeeze eight lads into one of the huts. LCpl West almost sat on a baby and a cat, but this was understandable given the dark and smoky conditions. We went outside and bargained for some local produce or 'tat' as it is known locally. Most of the blokes bought bush knives which were later confiscated by the friendly customs man at Hannover Airport.

Our next day was spent mountain biking, which was more like hill touring. It was good exercise though and we explored parts of Kenya we had not seen before. Punctures were common given the amount of prickly bushes. The best crash was awarded to Pte Ndzeshe for coming off the bike even before we left camp.

The third day was spent climbing on one of the many rocky outcrops on the training area (not dissimilar to one of our deliberate attacks). The climbing was challenging and fun and everyone managed to get to the top, aided by a bit of rope pulling. Even LCpl 'The Cat' King managed to reach the top. However, he froze and it took us 30 minutes



**Lt Roden doing the Masail Macarena.**



**One of the local taxis stops for a snack.**

## The Poachers



**A Company soldiers enjoy a camel ride through the bush.**

to coax him down from the top.

The final day was spent on a camel safari. Most of the lads took this as an opportunity to sunbathe and therefore came back exceedingly red. Getting off and on the camels was the hardest part and on one occasion my camel went crazy and I found myself doing a buckaroo while holding on with only one hand. We did not see any notable animals apart from camels, and the highlight of the day was watching a local tribesman fail to light a fire with two sticks. Remedial training needed.

The best activity was not programmed and was slightly reckless in retrospect, but it was made safer by the mandatory wearing of life jackets and shoes. LCpl West went for a swim down the river and coined the activity 'river rapid swimming'. It left you with a few bruises but was a good adrenaline rush, especially when you got dragged under the water. Table tennis was played constantly and most evenings were spent drinking limited and expensive Tuska beer.

On the whole, it was a good exposure to the way the Massai warriors live and gave us a chance to relax in a picturesque environment. The climbing and rapid swimming injected our weekly dose of adrenaline. After a long week the blokes were looking forward to getting back to Germany and going on leave with their loved ones.

### **B (Leicestershire) Company Update**

*Capt Garside writes:*

The most important change for B Company has been the handover from Maj Pete Smith to Maj Mark Nicholas. Maj Smith has been with B Company since 2007 and has seen the Company deploy on exercises in Poland, Africa, Germany and the UK, but most importantly to Iraq on Op TELIC 12. He has commanded the Company through a number of tough times but has always been an example on which all members of the Company have relied. He will be greatly

missed and we wish him the best of luck in Jerusalem.

The year so far has seen B Company dispersed across a large number of courses, ranging from UOR weapons to the Compound Clearance Course. It's fair to say that we as a Company have been fairly disjointed; but come the cascade training we will be back at full strength and our new skills sets utilised, with the T3 instructors having their work cut out to provide realistic training.

We have still found time to send soldiers away on skiing and parachuting courses; plus Lt Roden has planned and organised sailing expeditions, qualifying members of the Battalion ready for our time in Cyprus.

The Company will benefit from having a well established team from our time on Exercise Grand Prix. We are fortunate in that we only have a couple of changes prior to our deployment; I've stepped up to Company 2IC and we look forward to the arrival of Maj Mark Nicholas, Lt Powell as OC 4 Platoon and Capt McGinley as our FSG Comd.

Our minds are firmly set on Afghanistan and the TRB commitment. We are aware of the difficulty of a Company Group within this role and are preparing to meet any requirement before us. All training is encompassed within a COIN context and in the coming months the Company will be able to train and develop a robust platform from which to launch into the CFX this June.

### **Compound Clearance Course**

*Lt Tom Roden writes:*

With snow still on the ground back in Celle and the initial All Ranks Brief of the Pre Deployment Training package complete, myself, Sgt Seaton Norton and Sgt Shiels found ourselves in Thetford for the week-long, T3 (Train The Trainer) Compound Clearance Course (CCC). The desired end state being that we could then return to the Battalion and disseminate the skills and drills taught to all of the JNCOs and other

ranks within B Coy during the six weeks of cascade training planned for April and May.

General McCrystal describes how that only by securing the local population in Afghanistan, Embedded Partnering with the ANSF at every opportunity and minimizing civilian casualties, can we hope to progress in finding a positive solution for the Government of Afghanistan. At Company level this highlights the need for every soldier to show "Courageous Restraint" when out in theatre; a task which I fear is easier said than done.

The CCC course is run by OPTAG staff and builds on how we can best go about maintaining all of the key factors mentioned above, yet still achieve mission success. It breaks the actual clearance itself into two simple scenarios, compound 'Green' and compound 'Red'. Put simply, the first is for when there is a need to enter a compound in which no insurgents have been identified, and the second is for when one, or more, has. The course went on to describe the cultural issues that we may encounter and more importantly how, by the use of interpreters and the ANSF, we can best use the assets we have available to us, making up for our western lack in cultural understanding.

The use of Simunition rounds on the CCC helped, if nothing else, to identify that Platoon Sergeants will take every opportunity they have to take pot shots at the (very outnumbered) Platoon Commanders! But they are a great training asset in an environment such as this.

And so the look forward to... with the Battalion Boxing Finals and a little bit of leave ahead, we will return to Celle mid April, with six weeks to get the platoons ready for the Battalion MRX. The end state being individuals who are operationally fit, equipped with the necessary skills and who have confidence in their own abilities.

### **A view of the Poachers from the eyes of a CHRS**

*Cpl Colin Sampson writes:*

My name is Cpl Colin Sampson (AGC SPS). I arrived at The Poachers in Celle from 2 R Signal Regiment in York on 22 August 2009. I had to quickly settle into the fast pace of life as I arrived just prior to the unit deployment for two months on Exercise Grand Prix 3 in Kenya. I was placed in B (Leicestershire) Company as its Senior CHRS (Combat Human Resources Specialist) and the Company has about 100 personnel. I had to ensure that they had all completed the relevant documentations to ensure that the MCCP went efficiently and the move from Celle to Kenya smoothly. It did.

On 2 October I deployed on Exercise Grand Prix. There I was based at NSG (Nanyuki Show Ground) along with most of the other CHRSSs. It was a fast pace of life contrary to what everyone else might have thought. While most of my Company was at the cutting edge on the front line of Exercise Grand Prix 3, I was at the rear but my role was just as important. I worked

## The Poachers



The Author feeling a little parched out in the Kenya bush.

in a busy admin office where we had to OPLOC soldiers moving from one location to another on a regular basis, do pay parades and pay runs to different locations; I was also heavily involved in the Noticias and Casualty reporting for all units on the exercise. It was a well organised exercise and I was happy I played my role. Nearing the end, I got a chance to go out and see some of the wildlife and went on adventurous training to Lake Nevasha - an experience that was great and one which I will never forget. I returned from Kenya on 7 November, had a week's leave which was good, followed by a busy run up to the Christmas leave period.

Since the turn of the year the unit main effort is to ensure that we do the necessary training, G1 and G4 administration for the unit move from Celle to Cyprus at the end of August for the TRB commitment. There are a lot of personnel currently going on courses, OPTAG briefings and cascade training, which will lead into a busy PDT period in the coming months. Furthermore, as a CHRS I have to carry out the regular administration of the soldiers and ensure that I do the necessary training for the deployment. So there is always something to do and no rest for the wicked. In the Company it is not just all work; we will have a Company function soon to replace the Christmas function that we didn't have due to a lot of personnel being away. And we have also found the time to open up the Company bar so that we can all interact socially.

All in all I have made a good start at 2 R Anglian, where the pace of life is so busy. It is a very family orientated unit and you feel part of that family, regardless of cap badge. Now it is back to work and hopefully a safe move to Cyprus in August and, more importantly, a safer tour of Afghanistan.

### B Company Adventure Training in Mombasa

*CSgt Tony Penrose writes:*

It was coming toward the end of Exercise Grand Prix in Kenya and, as my G4 crew

and I had worked extremely hard keeping Bravo Company well administrated and replenished, we were looking forward to our well-earned adventure training (R&R).

As the only Company in the Battalion that had shown any interest in going to Mombasa, we had been looking forward to it for quite some time. The other companies would much rather climb Mount Kenya or go and live with the local tribes in mud huts. The reminder of the Company had flown from Nairobi to Mombasa a few days prior to me and Cpl Morgan. This was due to us having to handover our kit to the incoming Battalion, 2 PARA. We were also told, many times, that the reason we had to miss a couple of days in Mombasa was a perk of being CQMS. This I couldn't see. So we travelled down to Nairobi after our handover and were made to feel very welcome by CSgt King who, after spending eight weeks in the camp there, had got to know his way around very well.

After a short flight out, myself and Cpl Morgan managed to catch up with the rest of the Company who by this time had become well accustomed with the routine in Mombasa. We were staying in a three star hotel by the beach; however, after spending eight weeks out in the bush it felt like a six star hotel.

The Company was broken down into a number of groups which would take part in various different activities. These were kayaking, windsurfing, diving, sea fishing, and mountain biking; or you could just chill by the pool with the gym princess that is Sgt



The MTO, Capt Andy Rainey, gets his head down.

## The Poachers



CSgt Penrose, Lt Aspinall, Cpl Morgan and Lt Garside living the dream in Mombasa.

McQuilkin. The nights were taken up with getting out of the hotel and checking out the Tusker beer in the local bars. This gave Sgt Shields a chance to put on his best civilian clothing and blend in. I swear by the look of him he'd robbed the thrift shop before we deployed. WO2 George only managed one night, as due to his bad admin he became ill with D and V. This caused him to lock himself away in his room for the majority of our time there.

All the members of B Company who had put their name down to go to Mombasa enjoyed their time there and got a lot out of all the activities - even Pte Soulsby who decided to write off a jet ski by hitting a wave at Mach 10. So after a good five days we started back on the long journey to Celle, via Nairobi. It took some longer than others due to the RAF playing their normal trick of seeing how long they could delay the flights for. But overall it was a very good adventure training package.

### Exercise Snow Warrior

*Pte Bosworth writes:*

Exercise Snow Warrior is an adventurous training package run by the infantry, with only limited spaces available to the Battalion, so you are very fortunate to get offered a place. For me to be given this opportunity was a great surprise and definitely something that I was not going to turn down! For those who have never been skiing before, like me, you undertake the BSP Course (Basic Skiing Proficiency) which, at the end of the week, gives you a certificate to say you are capable of the basic skiing skills. For more advanced people there is the ASP Course (Advanced Skiing Proficiency) and then for those who have done a lot of skiing there is the Instructors' Course.

The course itself is two weeks long and based in Bavaria in the south of Germany, a really lovely place and, at that time of



Author skiing off-piste.

year, with snow everywhere. Probably the only bad thing about the trip was the seven-hour coach journey, but once there we were accommodated in the military lodges of which there are two. We stopped in Drei Muhlen, which in my eyes was the better of the two - the accommodation and the people there were really nice. That same night we were issued our boots and skis which were fitted to make sure you ski to the best of your ability. All the kit was supplied and paid for by the Army and I thought it was all in a very good condition. The skiing itself was amazing; when you first start you never believe you're going to be able to stand up straight, let alone come down some of the hills that you see. But you are amazed at how quickly you grasp the essentials and you eventually go down hills you never thought you would. After a



Looking down the Red Slope for approx 1200 meters.

## The Poachers



A view of the lifts coming up from the ski resort.

week I guarantee anybody that goes will absolutely love it. I was so thankful I got on this adventurous training package; it was by far one of the best things I've ever done and I would recommend it for everyone to try it at least once.

If given the chance I would love to go back and complete my ASP. There is even the chance of going skiing in Cyprus which could be good fun.

### Joint Service Parachuting Course

*Pte Barratt writes:*

The Joint Service Parachuting Course, aka JSPC, is an adventurous training course run by the Army down in Sennelager which lasts for ten days. When I heard about this course I put my name down for it straight away as I wanted to overcome my fear of heights.

We set off from Trenchard Barracks on a coach for a two-hour drive on the Sunday night, so that we were ready for the early 0730hrs start the following morning. The first day we arrived at the JSPC centre and were issued our jumping kit. This included a bright orange jump suit, life jacket, helmet, altimeter and, the most important bit of equipment, our parachute! Once this had been issued we were briefed on what the 10-day course would include. We then spent the rest of the day and half of the next learning the skills and drills of controlling and checking the parachute while flying, how to pack the parachute and the most important thing, safety.

At the end of the second day we got the chance to know what fear feels like by jumping out of a plane at 3,500ft - it was the best but scariest thing I have ever done. I suppose being the first of 30 students to jump out of the plane did not help!

The first jump that we did was a static line jump. This is where you jump out of the plane but your parachute is attached to the plane, so that it automatically pulls out your chute. Once you show the instructor



Students on the course descend to the ground.

two good static line jumps, you progress to the dummy pulls jump, which means you go through the motions of actually pulling the



Pte Barratt and Pte Webster- keen for the next jump!

## The Poachers



**Parachuting Poachers.** Top row from left: Pte Robinson, Pte Meehan, Pte Smith 13, CSgt King, Pte McCarthy and Pte Barrat. Bottom row from left: Pte Selby, Pte Richardson, Pte Waring, Pte Webster and Pte Smith.

parachute yourself. After three good dummy pulls you would progress to free-fall. This is the one which everyone went on the course to do. Free-fall is where you jump out of the plane and pull your own parachute; doing this you can spend up to 15 seconds just flying through the air.

Overall I really enjoyed the 10 days and the course was a huge success. Even the lads that did not enjoy it still managed to overcome their fears and complete at least one jump. A few of us who really enjoyed it are planning on going back for a weekend sometime soon so that we can carry on jumping. That means that when we get to Cyprus we can go to the Parachuting centre there and do our freefall jumps straight away.



**Pte Waring packs his parachute.**

## C (Northamptonshire) Company

### Update

*Maj Ian Chance writes:*

Since the last edition of *Castle*, the Company has gone through a significant period of Company and Platoon HQ personnel flux; the arrival of Lt Andrew Emerson to command 9 Platoon and the departure of Capt Willdridge to command the Machine Gun Platoon; the departure of Sgt Johnson from 9 Platoon to ATR (Pirbright), replaced by the newly promoted Sgt Hartshorne; the arrival of newly promoted Sgt Thomas to 8 Platoon vice Sgt Spray who has been promoted to the position of C Company CQMS; and CSgt Sweeney moves to the Officers' Mess! Last but I hope not least, I depart at the end of March to be replaced by Maj Bev Allen, a talented operator who will do this fine Company justice during the testing Theatre Reserve Battalion (TRB) commitment ahead.

All of these changes are necessary for the natural growth of talent and to ensure the new team are in place to tackle the TRB Pre-Deployment Training package, to optimise our preparation time before deployment to Afghanistan. I should state this 'positioning' of personnel is being replicated across the Battalion at present.

The articles the men have written for this publication reflects the disparate nature of the first period of PDT - for us the period of January to April 2010 where the soldiers undertake individual courses before we commence platoon, company and battalion

level training. We have soldiers spread to the four winds, both in Germany and the UK. While this can be frustrating for commanders who no longer have the ability to 'play with their train sets', actually the breadth of courses now available to all levels across the Company is staggering and is proving to be exceptionally stimulating for all.

The one man charged with the huge task of co-ordinating the soldiers' courses, movements and updating qualifications/competences is CSM Graham. Without his structured approach to controlling this multitude of moving parts we would have been all at sea. As a reward for his efforts he is himself away on the Tactical Questioning Course this week!

As I am about to leave I would like to say a public thank you to Maj Bill O'Driscoll, Area Secretary Northampton, who has been instrumental in C (Northamptonshire & Rutland) Company maintaining its links with the activities of the comrades and members at the county level. This has been a tough challenge and will no doubt be more so in the forthcoming years with a unit move to Cyprus and the deployments to Afghanistan.

A final note of thanks to the soldiers in the C Company family; commanding has been a huge privilege and certainly the highlight of my career. Stay safe.

## C Company PNCO Training: December 2009 - January 2010

*Lt Robinson writes:*

After a week of well-deserved leave following Exercise Grand Prix 3, the

## The Poachers

Company's focus moved on to preparing for PDT. One of the key elements was to get C Company soldiers through their career and weapons courses prior to PDT hitting full swing in April.

Kenya had given all the Company staff an excellent opportunity to have a look at potential JNCOs in a tough training environment and, by the time we moved onto the adventure training package, we all had a good idea of who we thought could do the business on the Queen's Division Fire Team Commanders Course (QD FTCC) in January.

With Lt Mackness on his JOTAC course and 2Lt Emerson still on PCD, the OC's gaze fell on me to come up with a plan for a couple of weeks of PNCO training. I started off by getting together the Company JNCOs that had been newly promoted following the last FTCC course. LCpls Parker and Coryat gave me a clear and detailed insight into what the soldiers should be preparing for to ensure success in Sennybridge; so we established with no surprise that the emphasis had to be on the basics, from weapon handling and navigation to battle fitness.

The first week of training took place just before Christmas leave and a mixture of classroom and practical lessons. With the experience of the PNCOs varying from two months in the Battalion to several years, everything needed to be covered, with the mantra of back to basics. The PNCOs were practiced and tested on the LMG and GPMG under Cpl Price and completed a PFA, a five-miler and a CFT. In addition to this they also covered map reading and navigation, military knowledge, leadership, duties of a 2IC and an introduction to the orders process.

Following Christmas leave and with only a few days before the Battalion run Final Confirmation Week, the PNCOs needed a short, sharp re-introduction to soldiering following their Christmas frivolities. I thought the best way to do this was a day of section attacks on the local area to shake out the cobwebs and give the guys a chance to get a bit of command experience. The added bonus of doing these attacks in about -5C with a foot of snow on the ground ensured the PNCOs got out of their comfort zone pretty sharply! After a day of fun in the snow I knew the lads would be keen for more and I didn't want to disappoint them. The next day was spent out on the area undertaking a short NAVEX to ensure the previously taught map reading and navigation lessons had sunk in and that their confidence was high.

The PNCOs seemed to get a lot out of the training and enjoyed the lessons and practical soldiering. Although intense at times, it was conducted in a fairly relaxed way with JNCOs assisting and mentoring constantly. Cpls Price, Davies and Coryat, with the new addition of Cpl, now Sgt, Thomas, were key in explaining to the PNCOs what would be expected of them as JNCOs. Cpl Price and Davies in particular did the business by displaying the standard needed by leading a textbook assault with

the PNCOs as the climax to the section attack exercise.

A great training activity, with the focus on core skills, has since translated into a high success rate on the QD FTCC.

### Fire Team Commander's Course Brecon

*Pte Brazel writes:*

Five members of C Company arrived at Sennybridge in January ready for the Queen's Division Fire Team Commanders Course (FTCC). We felt well prepared after our Battalion run pre-course, all passing the PFT well on the first day, although it was made all the more difficult by the harsh winter conditions. There was no let up on the second day when we smashed straight into a cheeky CFT - very different to the flat course in Germany.

The second week was navigation week which started off with a teaching period. It was a progressive week which led to us navigating by day and night round the Black Mountains. Our development filled us with a sense of confidence for the forthcoming challenges. The week culminated in the 'Junior Fan', a tab over the famous Pen-Y-Fan Mountain. This is where we started to lose people through injury.

The third week was attack week. During this week we learnt the mechanics of a section attack and practised what we had learnt. We conducted attack after attack and it proved to be a challenging week, especially with the bad weather conditions, coupled with being physical and mentally tired.

Attack week led into patrol week which followed the same format, as we learnt the mechanics of patrols before practising what we had learned. The final exercise brought

together everything we had learnt so far and we all got 'smashed' on command appointments.

To finish the exercise we had to complete the 'senior fan' which was emotional, but a great achievement. On the whole the course was run really well and the directing staff were exceptional. I feel I learnt a great deal and I look forward to plying my trade as a section 2IC as we prepare to deploy to Afghanistan on the TRB commitment.

### GPMG Light Role Cadre

*Pte O'Leary writes:*

The GPMG Light Role Cadre was a two-week course designed to teach young soldiers how to fire and maintain the General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG), affectionately known as the 'Gimpy', in the light role. The course was staged over two weeks, with the first week being in the classroom in Trenchard Barracks and the second week in Hohne on the ranges.

Week one consisted of learning the characteristics of the weapon system and completing the weapon handling test. It was vital to pass the weapon handling test so we could continue the course and be allowed to fire on the ranges the following week. It was good to see everyone screwed the nut and passed the test first time.

The second week was conducted on the ranges and the weather conditions were very cold after a heavy snowfall at the weekend. Our first task was to balance the guns to make sure they were firing at the correct rate. I was surprised at how little kick back the weapon gave when fired. We fired at various ranges up to 500m using the prone position and in the boggy fire trenches! We



The Author enjoying a tab.

## The Poachers



**C Company GPMG Light-Role Cadre.**

also conducted advance-to-contact shoots which were made all the more difficult by the thick layer of snow on the ground. By the end of the second week we had all passed our APWA and we ended the week with a five-mile tab, carrying the weapon systems and 26lb on our backs to simulate carrying the weapon on operations. I understand the weight carried by the FSGs in Kenya was considerably more – so I take my hat off to them.

I really enjoyed the course. I think the GPMG is a great weapon system which is fun to fire. All in all it was good to complete and a great introduction to the Battalion.

### Static Camera Surveillance Course

*Pte Powdrill writes:*

The Static Camera Course was a week long course in the UK designed to give us a basic understanding of using cameras on operations to gather evidence and intelligence.

On day one we started off with PowerPoint presentations introducing us to the camera, explaining how it worked, naming the parts and looking at different lenses. They explained the different sizes of lenses you could get from 17 to 35mm, 80 to 200mm

and 600mm and we saw how good the picture turned out. I was impressed by the quality of picture you could get with these lenses which will be crucial to delivering operational effect in Afghanistan.

On the second day we got out on the ground and started taking pictures. We learned how to take pictures of moving vehicles and reviewed them in the classroom on the big screen. We then practised taking pictures covertly from cover and wood lines to see what sort of quality of picture we could come up with. I also enjoyed taking pictures at night as we were able to come up with some spooky effects by experimenting with different shutter speeds.

By Wednesday we started preparing for our end of course assessment which consisted of us having to produce certain pieces of photography.

On the Thursday we travelled to Wolverhampton where a criminal act was acted out in a scenario which we had to covertly photograph. I found this part of the course very exciting as it whetted my appetite for doing this sort of operation for real. Overall, I found the course very interesting and I look forward to using my newly acquired photographic skills on operations.

### All Arms Physical Training Instructors Course at Army School of Physical Training (Germany)

*Pte Jackson writes:*

The AAPT course at the Army School of Physical Training (Germany) (ASPT(G)) is a 10-week intensive practical and theory course aimed to qualify you to be able to plan and lead PT sessions. This is critical if the Company is to execute its



**Not much further to go - nearing camp.**

## The Poachers

### Pashtun Language Course

*Pte Smith writes:*

The Pashtun Introduction Course was a week long effort with the main aim being to bring a few of us up to a very basic level of Pashtun. It was billed as patrol level, meaning that once out on the ground in Afghanistan we might be able to exchange pleasantries with the locals and have some sort of interaction with them without the use of an interpreter. This could enable us to pick up snippets of intelligence which we could then exploit – such as changes to the pattern of life or perhaps the locations of IEDs.

The first rules that we had to get our heads round were the different ways in which sentences can be structured. For example, 'I am Smith' becomes 'I Smith am' and 'is this your rifle' becomes 'this your rifle is' – sounds a bit like Yoda! We also had to learn how different nouns and verbs have different endings. For example, 'I have a rifle' ends in 'Laram,' 'you have a rifle' ends in 'Laree.' Then on top of that the 'Lar' part of the word changes to 'awar' when you imply that 'you want' a rifle. After taking all this into consideration I decided that an eight-mile tab isn't such a bad alternative after all.

I guess the trickiest part of the course wasn't the level that we needed to achieve, but the amount of time we had (or lack of) to get there. Four days, we found out, was not a lot of time! The course culminated in an exam we had to sit. We all managed to pass, some better than others. But I think this was a credit to Lt Morris who I feel pitched the lessons at just the right level. So all in all we ended the week a happy class. 'Za Smith yam, za d'Britannia askar yam' (my name is Smith and I am a British soldier.)



**Learning how to run a circuit in the gym.**

own PT programmes before we deploy to Afghanistan.

In the first week you must pass a CFT, a military swim test and a PFA – all after a considerable 'warm-up' by the APTC instructors. As the course started in January and the track was covered in snow, we were forced to do the Multi Stage Fitness Test (Bleep Test) instead of the PFA. Once you have passed the minimum requirements your place on the course is secure.

In week four the flag competitions begin. The Flag Competition dates back to 1917. Every Friday the sections of budding instructors compete against each other in seven physically demanding events - ie the obstacle course, to decide the flag section and be presented the flag on the passing off parade. The event I found the hardest, but most rewarding, was the endurance event. This consisted of a 2.8km best effort boot run, straight into a 2.8km log run, followed by a 2.8km stretcher run and finally a second 2.8km best effort boot run; after this we doubled back to the ASPT(G) gymnasium to be given the results. This turned out to be a painful event, but was very satisfying to complete.

The passing out parade is based around Combat PT. For our pass off we had an improvised circuit, some log exercises and combat conditioning. It was a fitting end to an intensive course and I felt very proud to

be awarded my crossed swords and to be in a position to drive forward the Company's PT preparations. All in all enjoyable, but a beast!



**Practicing Pashtu in the classroom.**

## The Poachers

### D (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) Support Company

*Maj Paul Muncey writes:*

Fire Support Company's exploits in the Falkland Islands are now a long distant memory and, since returning, the Company has taken part in a Battalion Field Training Exercise, received a reinforcement of soldiers and new recruits, converted to and trained as Fire Support Groups (FSGs), deployed to Kenya on Exercise Grand Prix and, following Christmas leave, conducted cadres and dispatched its soldiers all over the UK to conduct a myriad of individual courses. All of which were designed to prepare for the Battalion's Mission Specific Training (MST) and subsequent deployment to Afghanistan, from Cyprus.

On return from his visit to the Company in the Falkland Islands, the CO realised that his Fire Support Company needed some careful investment to turn it into an organisation capable of preparing for high intensity operations in Afghanistan. The first part of this investment was to provide a large reinforcement of 40 soldiers immediately following summer leave. The second part was to take a bit of risk and give D Company all 14 of the Battalion's Queen's Division Fire Team Commanders Course (FTCC) places. Thirdly the Company was given a larger slice of places on key courses at Brecon. The results were astounding. The Company suddenly grew larger than it had been in many years, with traditionally weak platoons bulging. In addition, 13 new lance corporals suddenly appeared in the ranks following a highly successful FTCC. This alone demonstrated that Fire Support Company is more than capable of generating its own quality JNCOs.

Following this successful investment the Company could now focus its efforts on creating three FSGs and fully functioning Mortar and Recce Platoons. The FSGs needed to be capable of providing devastating fire, with a wide range of weapon systems, at the right place and at the right time. The place where this fledgling capability was most tested was in Kenya where the FSGs were expected to provide fire support in the light role. Here the men were required to demonstrate high levels of determination, physical fitness and sound weapon handling. A few were found wanting, but the majority pulled it off. LCpl Watson will later explain this in greater detail.

The return from Kenya saw the Company embark on a continuation of its fitness campaign, interspersed with Bowman training and then a well-earned Christmas leave. It also saw Sniper Platoon embark on a trip of a lifetime – a three-month weapons trial to far flung places around the World. Cpl Abbott will provide you with a greater insight.

The return from Christmas leave saw the completion of a number of specialist cadres.

Capt Will Willdridge and Sgt Lang, among others, will elaborate. The remainder of the Company was split to the four winds on various individual courses. One of the key priorities has become driver training in order to provide the large number of HGV drivers required to use the in-theatre vehicle fleet. This, coupled with specialist weapons courses, has kept the Company particularly busy and taken us to the formal start of our operational preparations – the All Ranks Briefing Day in early March.

### FSG: A JNCO's Perspective

*LCpl Watson writes:*

Moving into a FSG was somewhat unfamiliar for me, as I am a qualified Machine Gun Section Commander and that is what I know and love. So moving to a Platoon where I

would have to work with a wide spectrum of support weapons was somewhat daunting. The transition was made smoother however, by the fact I would be working closely with my friends from the other support platoons of Javelin and Snipers. I quickly realised that knowing my job as a machine gunner was useful, but now I had to think of how to apply different weapon systems within my gun line.

We began to get together during pre-Kenya training and we started by learning what each other could bring to the party. Fitness was a big goal for us so we started doing more and more weighted marches with all the kit we would carry. This also gave the soldiers a chance to handle the other weapon systems that they were not used to. Not only were we getting used to working together, but we



Under instruction on FSG weapons in camp.

## The Poachers



Under instruction on FSG weapons in camp.



Capt Willdridge and Pte Walker take a break during FSG training.

also learned how to work with the Company we were attached to. This involved learning the OC's intent and also allowing him to see what we could offer his Company.

We were soon deployed to Kenya on Exercise Grand Prix 3 and found ourselves on company operations almost instantly. As a section commander this gave me a chance to test both my section and myself in the field. It was a steep learning curve, with the added dimension of the heat, but I was pleased to see my section pull together and work as a team. And I quickly learnt that most tasks we were given would include the words: 'once you are at the top of that hill...'

After we were put through various scenarios, it was clear to me that if an FSG is used correctly it can be a very effective asset. It does have its limitations in terms of speed due to the kit that needs to be carried, but good training can mitigate this.

Overall Exercise Grand Prix 3 was a great eye opener for my section and me. It taught me to think 'outside the box' and appreciate all the assets at a company commander's disposal. My leadership skills were also tested by working closely with new soldiers who were not used to me.

As I look at the pre-deployment training that is looming, I am excited to be a part of an FSG again and to ultimately make a difference in Afghanistan. I am sure that as the younger soldiers continue in their careers the experience of being in an FSG will always serve them well.

### Javelin Platoon

*Sgt Lang writes:*

After a successful Exercise Grand Prix, the troops had earned a rest. The adventure training wheel was set in motion with the

rifle companies branching off to different locations. Some of the soldiers seemed to have drawn the short straw with a trip up Mount Kenya and the desperate cry of: 'not another mountain'. For C Company FSG, time was spent leisurely chilling by the pool, hippo watching, volcano walking and a Tour de Africa Mountain Bike Ride providing enough saddle soreness to last a life time.

With the batteries charged and the panic tans topped up, the blokes were ready to be reunited with their loved ones back in Germany. Donning warm kit was the order of the day. Back in barracks post exercise admin continued with the FSGs moving back to D Company to regroup and prepare for the many functions prior to going on Christmas leave.

The weather conditions over the Christmas period in Germany steadily deteriorated and provided some challenges for the Javelin Cadre at the beginning of January, through to February. The Cadre trained new and current members of the Platoon. The Cadre was also open to other platoons within D Company, incorporating elements from Recce, Drums and Sniper platoons, plus the 9/12th Lancers based in Hohne.

The first week was a treat for the students as they absorbed the information in a nice warm classroom. LCpl Cusick and LCpl Daly pounced on the student's feedback on the characteristics and named parts of the CLU and the missile system. AFV and progress tests were served up daily to ensure students were up to speed and on track with the training objectives. A number of navigational exercises were set around the Celle Training Area with the snow and ice providing some fun elements.

The part of the course that provided a lot of interest was the IDT (indoor trainer). This provides computer generated programmes designed to simulate the different terrains and environments Javelin operators are likely to function in. The students, who had never used the system before, with a little practice adapted to the firing positions - sitting, standing, kneeling and the prone position - and were surprised at how easy it was to fire the system. After a number of practice exercises, with varying degrees of difficulty, the students were put through their gunner's skills test. The students found the IDT very useable as it has an uncanny similarity to gaming platforms currently on the market.

The students were looking forward to the final exercise on Hohne Training Area in sub zero conditions. The exercise focused on operating in a COIN environment in preparation for the forthcoming pre deployment training exercises. The detachments were assessed on a number of areas ranging from cam and concealment, logging and reporting, supply and replen of OP positions, reaction to IED teams, rules of engagement, contacts, casevac and extraction drills. With the temperature down to minus six degrees at night, it did not dampen the spirits of the students, as they are

## The Poachers



Cpl Crafer, LCpl Daly, Pte Kempson and LCpl Byron pose in Kenya after the completion of Exercise Grand Prix.

aware the training is vital for preparation for the upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

**A Pte Soldier's Perspective by Pte Hunter**  
I found the course insightful. The lessons were conducted in a way that made it easy to take in, with not too much information at once. The course covered aspects such as map reading and vehicle recognition. We found the Javelin was not only useful for destroying targets, but the Command Launch Unit provides an excellent 24hrs surveillance capability, which is very impressive. The most interesting part of the course was the IDT. It helped us practice and test our skills in realistic scenarios, with time limitations, misfire drills, multiple target engagements and various other testing exercises which we had to get right.

### A Pte Soldier's Perspective by Pte Kempson

After a good Christmas leave it was inevitable that we would all return back to work. The Javelin cadre was a kick start to the New Year, designed to shed the obligatory over indulgence of the festive period. Physical fitness every morning for the duration of the three-week course soon got our minds focused. The course was diverse with 9/12th Lancers, Recce and Drums platoon members.

The first couple of days were death by PowerPoint. The teaching then moved to the outdoor drills. I got the hang of holding the Javelin in all the different firing positions; the prone position was a tricky one to adopt. I concentrated on honing the skills required as the tests got progressively harder.

The final exercise was cold and emotional; so was the digging in of OP positions for hours. Once in routine we had to be ever vigilant as there was continuous enemy activity in the area.

## Mortar Platoon

*Capt Andy Hopper writes:*

Those who read the last Mortars update will recall that the emphasis on the Platoon had rapidly snowballed...since then it has continued to grow at a pace. This is, of course, no bad thing and we are reaping the benefits of the investments made in the Platoon in terms of manpower and resources.

The final quarter of 2009 saw the Platoon deploy as part of Exercise Grand Prix to Kenya. For the first three weeks, however, Mortars found ourselves working largely independently, some 100km north of the Battlegroup, on the Archers Post Training Area. OC Mortars found out pretty quickly why they nickname it Archers 'Roast' when it took less than 36 hours for his nose to melt and turn a tactical shade of red for the remaining six weeks!

During our time live firing at Archers Post, the Platoon continued to build upon the solid foundations which had been established in the Falklands. Moving from simple fire missions to complex multi-target engagements, the Platoon worked hard to produce some pretty impressive results, with rounds on target within 60 seconds for the vast majority of engagements.

The live firing culminated in support of the Battlegroup Compound Assault. For many this was the first time of conducting a shoot with rounds landing relatively close to assaulting troops. This provided not only effect on target, but also battle inoculation for the younger riflemen. In fact the only better demonstration of inoculation came with Sgt Terry Fawcett finding himself locked inside his Land Rover, hiding from a pack of Hyena (or so he says). However, with his brother in arms, the steadfast Pte Sid Cutter, coming to his aid, Sgt Fawcett was never in any real danger!

Fast forwarding to 2010, the Platoon is gearing up for a busy time on pre deployment training. The next few months will see Mortars deploying on Exercises Mountain Dragon, Flying Rhino, Pashtun Sabre, Crimson Eagle, CALFEX and FTX, whilst also squeezing in a numbers cadre, executive cadre and mandated mission specific training.

Perhaps the most important challenge we are now embracing is the emergence of Joint Fires integration with other weapon systems, ISTAR platforms and aviation assets, to name but a few.

The need for MFCs to understand battle space management and coordination with other third dimension assets is more important than ever; however we are rising to the challenge.

## Recce to Fire Support Group

*LCpl Foley writes:*

Recce Platoon has historically trained for conventional warfare, but in the build up to our TRB role things have had to change. During the Battalion's time in Germany our pre-deployment training schedule has changed many times, due to the uncertainty of the role we will undertake in Afghanistan. At this point in time we are training to fill the role of an independent Fire Support Group (FSG).

This means that the men in Recce have to learn all the support weapons and most of the vehicles that the Battalion will use on operations, as we will be operating on our own. Making sure the men are getting on courses and the general running of the Platoon is handled by CSgt Reeder. This is because the Pl Comd, Capt Bennet-Madge, is away on the Recce Commander's Course.

The organisation is still tough, as soldiers have to be trained on everything, so juggling the courses about has been one of the major problems for CSgt Reeder. The constant course alterations and cancellations have seen many a schedule torn up in frustration and rewritten, sometime 2-3 times a day.

Driving courses have been the main priority for the Platoon, unfortunately it has also been the main cause of difficulties, not just for us, but for every platoon in the Company. The two main vehicles that Recce needs to be trained on are the Mastiff and Jackal, both vehicles require a Category C license because of their weight, and getting the guys their licences is a long drawn out process which requires them to go to another camp and train under another MT platoon.

For Recce to be an independent unit we have had to send our own guys away to attempt to pass the Sniper Cadre, as opposed to having snipers attached to us. Everyone in the Platoon has undergone some form of signals training over the past couple of months; however Pte Mathews has spent a few weeks doing signal training in depth. Unfortunately for him, signals courses are not the most exciting the Infantry has to offer and generally mean sitting in a classroom for hours on end.

## The Poachers

This, however, should not detract from how vital communications are; and Pte Mathews will be the one responsible for maintaining our communication while on operations. There have also been a couple of places on language courses and Pte Smith and Hudson will be going away in the near future to learn the local language, so as to better communicate with the people in Afghanistan.

I am down at Aldershot for six months doing the Regimental Combat Medical Technician (RCMT) course. This will bring me up to the level of a Company Medic and enable me to ensure the men are patched up in minor incidents and stabilize them if the worst should happen, until some form of help arrives. There is a lot to learn, everything from dealing with dehydration to catastrophic haemorrhaging and loss of limbs is drilled into us every day. The work load is fairly heavy and we spend most nights with our noses in text books, or doing homework for the following day. Although tough at times, I am quite confident that I will learn what I need to, in order to deal with most situations as effectively as possible.

The last few months have been fast paced and frustrating, but also exciting. As we get closer to deployment and the pace of life quickens, there is a definite buzz amongst the men. Operations is what being an Infantry soldier is all about, and in preparing for operations there are many opportunities to improve yourself as a soldier, with the various courses the Infantry provides. Although the Recce Platoon's future in Afghanistan is still undecided, Recce will do what it always does, train hard and be prepared for any eventuality.

### Snipers ITDU Weapons Trial, Canada, January 2010

*Cpl Abbott writes:*

This adventure started with a week in Warminster where we first saw the weapons that we were going to trial. The weapons ranged from a very small M4 Micro, which only has a six inch barrel, to a very large .50 Calibre semi gun. Straight away the troops wanted to get their hands on the big boys' toys - but we had a short wait.

After a short week in camp conducting lessons and weapon handling tests, it was time to fly out to Canada, which was an effort in itself. It turns out that trying to get 24 different weapons through a civilian airport, mid afternoon on a Saturday, is not the easiest thing to do. Once in Canada the temperature was reaching -20C and we deployed the warm kit rather rapidly. We arrived at Val Cartier Camp late at night and given accommodation which looked like a mole hill. Living in Canada for three weeks like moles reminded me of the old Northern Ireland subs.

The following couple of days were taken up with briefs and getting used to surroundings that were covered in three feet of snow. The first day on the range consisted of getting the ammo sorted and



**Pte Wall overseeing firing.**

the range how we wanted it, then trying to work out how to zero all the weapons. Each weapon system had a slightly different method for doing this, but we managed to work it all out in the end. The firing began

well, but checking the targets turned out to be a problem because of the snow. When 6ft 6in LCpl Parker disappeared, then we knew the rest of us did not stand a chance! The Canadian hospitality was second to none and



**The author with Cpl Asbridge.**

## The Poachers

we even got steak for lunch on the range, followed by Oreo cookies and coffee. This does not normally happen on a British range!

The firing continued and we soon discovered that some weapons were not quite up to the task, with the soldiers spending more time sorting out stoppages than actually firing the weapons; but this was the point of us being there. The rifles we were testing were some of the smallest the soldiers had ever fired and, due to the size of the barrels, it became quite a test to achieve the groups that were required. However being snipers our competitive edge took over and this led to some really enjoyable range days.

I would hate you to think it was all work - so we spent the first weekend in Quebec. This is a very interesting city and was where the Quebec Conferences of 1943 and 1944 were held between Winston Churchill and Franklin D Roosevelt to discuss strategy for World War Two. We were also reliably informed about the nightlife and this turned out to be very good.

The next week continued apace and we all enjoyed firing the weapon that fired 600 rounds per minute. This was a lot harder than we first thought but we kept at it. The real problem was picking up all the brass afterwards. The next weekend came around quickly and it was off to the ski slopes. The best sight was LCpl Munden who decided the best way down the slope was to go as fast as his skis would take him in a straight line. As you can imagine this did not end well and he attracted quite a crowd of onlookers.

We went back to the ranges to finish off the tests and have some final competitions. All in all it was a great experience and everyone enjoyed it immensely. It is now on to the next stage of our World Tour in Brunei.

### Light Role GPMG Cadre: Jan – Feb 2010

*Capt Will Willdrige writes:*

Having taken over the Machine Gun Platoon after Christmas leave, my first task was to run three GPMG Light Role cadres. These were sponsored by Machine Gun Platoon, but the companies produced the manpower in terms of qualified NCOs and students. This provided the opportunity for D Company to get 60 to 80 soldiers from the Battalion qualified.

The cadres consisted of a week of lessons culminating with the Weapon Handling Test; then a week on the ranges in Hohne to qualify each soldier on the Annual Weapons Assessment (AWA). The first company through was B Company who had luck with the weather and, during their first week, were able to leave camp to do fitness both with and without the guns. Unfortunately, after them the ice became too dangerous to run on and the PT schedule was limited to indoor circuits. The following week we went on the ranges and the weather really closed in.

On arrival the Range Warden told us his thermometer was reading -16C and there was no reason to doubt him. This meant

that the young soldiers had to work hard to remain switched on and concentrate on passing each shoot. If they managed to do this, then they would remain off the ground for longer periods in between shoots!

By the end of the week all soldiers had passed their Annual Weapons Assessment and we then continued to fire practice shoots in order to allow them to build up their skills and confidence. One of the highlights was when LCpl Rai and Pte Jones, both HQ Company chefs, were placed in the top three shots, both showing a natural ability with the gun.

Over the next four weeks the other two companies filtered through the Cadre and each company achieved what was asked of them. The snow and ice remained but the temperature did increase to a reasonable OC by the end. It was pleasing to see the soldiers' skills and drills improving throughout the two-week period and their competitive edge shine through by competing for best shot.

It is now for the companies to continue with further training to ensure that their gunners remain current and competent on the weapon system.

### Headquarter Company

*Maj Mick Abbs writes:*

You will all have heard the expression 'one size fits all' in your time, but I wonder how many of you have stopped to think how this saying fits in with life in the modern day infantry battalion? No longer are we just the suppliers, the drivers, the caterers and the communicators. We now have to be all of the aforementioned, but also use many different types of vehicles, radios and weaponry.

Each man in the Company can now expect to be called upon to fire a heavy caliber machine gun, or communicate with digital communications, or conduct combat logistical patrols, on operations. In the past few months Headquarter Company has been called upon to participate far more closely with preparation for deployment than it has for some while. The plethora of courses that require HQ Company soldiers to attend, then be able to pass on the training to its' soldiers, cause our soldiers, who thought they had done their soldiering, to get back out there and retrain!

So, what else have we been up to lately? Following our return from Exercise Grand Prix in Kenya, the Company ran headlong into the Christmas festivities which saw the HQ departments pull out the stops to see that the Battalion enjoys its traditional Christmas festivities, before enjoying some well earned leave. At the forefront of this support, as always, was the Catering Platoon, who served up a truly delicious Soldiers' Christmas lunch. So tasty was the meal that the soldiers had none left for the food fight! Either that or the fact that the Quartermaster and RSM, backed up by the Provo staff, ensured all round discipline was maintained.

Shortly after, the officers played the Sergeants' Mess in the traditional football match. After a tight and very tense first

half where the honours were even, the squad size of the Sergeants' Mess began to tell; and the sergeants ran out comfortable winners. Later, at the post match drinks in the Officers' Mess, the CO presented OC HQ Company with a framed memento, to celebrate 25 years of Officers' Mess v Sergeants' Mess representation, having first represented the Sergeants' Mess in 1984.

Following some well-deserved leave, the Company got back into the groove and, when not supporting the training, was busy taking part in individual training courses. These courses ranged from driver training and heavy weapons to language. As an insight for ex MT personnel that might be reading this, no longer do we deploy with just Land Rover and Bedford. Today's fleet of operational vehicles reaches into double figures, with driver, commander and gunner courses in some cases.

The first quarter of this year has been dominated by individual training which has seen training in Brunei on the Ground Sign Awareness course, Counter IED lanes, range periods and formal conversion to upgrade our Bowman training. On the physical training front, the constant requirement to improve and maintain core fitness has seen thrice weekly fitness for a large part of the Company, including the CO's Test fitness each Friday, for which, even in HQ Company, there is no escape!

Recces to Cyprus were conducted by several members of the Battalion earlier this year, who will be involved in the planning and conduct of the Unit Move to Cyprus in August. While the Battalion 2IC and his staff produced the plan to get the Battalion moved overseas from Celle to Cyprus, the Unit Welfare Officer, Capt Eck Stewart, had the unenviable task of married quarter allocations on the sunny holiday isle. Air conditioning, views over the Mediterranean or sunny terrace – some tough choices to be made! No wonder he's leaving a month early for the Island, to recuperate.

In sport, the Battalion won the Army Germany Inter Unit Squash competition, represented by CSgt Sweeney, Sgt Hart and Sgt McQuilkin APTC. In the very successful Battalion Boxing team, CSgt Groom and Sgt Batty can be congratulated for their efforts in the training of the team. WO2 (CSM) Farrell, was also been heavily involved in the coaching and skills aspects.

So for the next few months the Company looks forward to some Easter leave and will return to conduct the collective training phase. This will involve trips to the UK to train with 16 Air Assault Brigade at all the large training areas across the country.

We very much look forward to the challenges that this training will inevitably present to us

### Returning to the Battalion and MT

*Sgt Marc Ireland writes:*

After returning to the Battalion in July 2009, I was hoping to take over MT Platoon

## The Poachers



Sgt Ireland on snorkelling trip at Diani, Mombasa, Kenya.

immediately. However, as I had been away for three years recruiting, it made sense that I showed what I've got and be tested on Ex GRAND PRIX in Kenya. So there was just enough time to find my kit in my MFO boxes, take off my slippers, put my boots on and do some soldiering. I ended up having a really good exercise and it was a pleasure working with such a good bunch of lads.

So just before Christmas I had the joy of becoming the youngest MT Sgt 2 Royal Anglian has had in years, who is not downgraded or fat, but I am going grey thanks to the hard fish round I had as a youngster in Grimsby! I also took over again from Sgt Mark 'Happy' Bradley; it seems I'm taking over every one of his jobs as our careers progress - as long as I don't get to take over as Family's Office SNCO from him, I'll be happy!

My direction for the Platoon is to be battle fit and ready for the mammoth tasks ahead, which are the move to Cyprus and Op HERRICK. What's next? Well, we've got a very busy period with cascade training BG CFX at STANTA, followed by BG CALFEX and then BG FTX. If that wasn't enough, we have an ECI and Board of Officers prior to the move to Cyprus (dry your eyes Marc and get on with it).

The highlight of being MT Sgt so far has been my brother coming back to the Battalion, to my Platoon and from the same recruiting team as myself. Within the first week of coming back we sent him on the Fire Team Commander's course and hopefully, as I write this, he will be successfully completing the course, giving me another LCpl (so drinks are on me Wes). Hopefully, we'll also be able to get a few of my stars on the next FTCC.

With one of the smallest platoons and the biggest commitments, if I'm not bald by the end of the year then I'll be totally grey! My saving grace is the MTO (Capt Rainey

MC), who I've learnt a lot from - ranging from management through to party games! I can't help but look up to him as he is seven feet tall!

### Poachers Boxing Season 2009/10

*Maj Danny Mackness writes:*

In mid September 2009, a hopeful group of potential boxers formed up in the gym at Trenchard Barracks for trials for the Battalion boxing team. Under the experienced and critical eyes of the coaches - WO2 'Faz' Farrell, CSgt Paul Groom and Sgt 'Bats' Batty - they demonstrated their skills and were gradually whittled down to a working squad of around 20.

The squad varied in standard and experience, from Cpl Mark Rogers, who had been involved in boxing since a child and had boxed at junior and senior level, to Pte Morgan, who had never stepped into a ring before. However, they were all keen, enthusiastic and showed real raw talent. The Boxing Officer, Maj Danny Mackness, informed the CO that we had the beginnings of a decent team, we entered the Army Novice Boxing Competition, and the full time training began in earnest.

The training was long and hard, particularly in the early days, with the coaches being firm believers in the old adage of 'train hard, fight easy'. Gradually, day by day, the boxers got fitter, lost weight and increased their boxing skills. They were tempered with many hours pounding the streets and fields around Celle and countless rounds sparring in the ring. The highlight of their training was undoubtedly in Kenya, during Exercise Grand Prix, where they got to know the lung bursting, steep slopes of Mount Kenya intimately well and sparred with each other many times in a makeshift sawdust ring under the blazing African sun, watched by bemused, chattering locals.

While we were in Kenya, the draw was made, and our first round opponents were named as 5 RIFLES, with us getting the home draw. After what seemed an eternity, the night finally arrived in early December. Our team were fired up, as fit as they'd ever been in their lives and couldn't wait to get in the ring to prove their skills. However, 5 RIFLES were tough opponents and the results went first one way, then the other, with the lead changing hands a number of times. After eight fights it was 4-4 and hinged on the final bout of the night - the welterweight.

Pte Bates, a young D Company novice boxer from Leicester, had the weight of



Cpl Rogers on the way to another win at middleweight.

## The Poachers



Cpl Issacs on the way to winning by a knock out.



Pte Morgan tries to get double points by using both hands.

expectation of the entire Battalion on his shoulders. His experienced opponent tried every trick in the book and never stopped coming forward, but Bates gave as good as he got, going toe-to-toe with his opponent for much of the fight. The result was as close as it could possibly be with Pte Bates getting the majority points decision to give the Poachers a 5-4 victory and sending the Poacher's supporters wild.

In an all Queen's Division clash, the next round saw us fighting 1 PWRR, again at Celle. The weigh-in was memorable, with the 1 PWRR boxers holding a secret 'who dares wear the loudest underpants' competition. Their middleweight, with leopard skin print and gold borders won, in my opinion, but I was trying not to look too closely! It was another evening of tough and skilful novice boxing from both teams, with the Poachers eventually winning 6-3, putting us into the Germany Final.

Our opponents in the Germany Final were 35 Regt RE, this time away at Barker Barracks, Paderborn. 35 Regt RE are regarded as the sporting regiment of the RE; all the best sportsmen in the RE are posted there, and they'd won their last fight 8-1, so we knew it wasn't going to be easy. At the interval it was 3-1 to them and a few watching Poachers were starting to get nervous. However, the next four Poachers all won, two of them by knockout and, despite our welterweight losing in an extremely close points decision, we won as Germany Champions 5-4. Despite it being minus 15C, snowing heavily and one of the worst winters for many a year, it was a happy convoy of Poachers that travelled back up the autobahn to Celle that night!

That result earned us a place in the Army Semi-Finals against 2 PARA and again we were fortunate enough to get a home draw. Our opponents had won their last fight 8-1 and they brought 250 spectators over from the UK. In an electrifying atmosphere every

boxer gave 100 per cent and at the interval it was 2-2. One of our best boxers, Cpl Rogers, was then knocked out in the middleweight clash and 2 PARA sensed their victory was imminent. However, the next three Poacher boxers - Pte Reeves (C Company), Pte Morgan (A Company) and Cpl Issacs (D Company) all fought the best fights of their short careers, with all three winning by knockout, instantly silencing the noisy 2 PARA crowd and sending the watching Poachers wild with delight. The final result was 5-4 and we were in the Army Final.

The Army Final was held at Aldershot in April and our opponents were 3 PARA. They were the current Army Champions and had been Champions four times out of the last five years. This was going to be no picnic! The date was during our Easter Leave so the Battalion organised coaches to bring our supporters from Celle, Grimsby, Scunthorpe, Lincoln, Leicester, Northampton, Luton and Bedford and we were supported in force by over 300 Poachers. Our supporters were fantastic throughout the whole season and without them we probably wouldn't have done as well as we did.

In a packed Maida Gym and watched by the Army Boxing Team and a large number of VIPs, the Poachers' boxing team gave their all. At the interval it was 2-2, but our spies had told us that 3 PARA were better in the heavier weights. They were right and we lost the next four bouts to very strong opponents. Cpl Issacs (D Company) fought for pride only in the final bout of the night, the heavyweight, and knocked out his strong opponent to end the night on a high for our fantastic supporters. The final result was 6-3 to 3 PARA who retained their trophy. However, the team did incredibly well against a very strong side and can hold their heads high as Germany Champions and Army Runners-Up.

In our first season after an absence of 12 years, the Poachers defied all critics

to reach the Army Final and gained some invaluable experience. With deployment to Afghanistan looming, it's doubtful that we will be available to enter next year, but the Battalion has now got a thirst again for boxing and the future for boxing in the Battalion looks bright.

### Boxing with the Poachers: A Novice Boxer's Point of View

*Pte Dickson writes:*

I joined the Poachers from training in October 2009. I had boxed a little prior to joining up and this must have been on my record, because within my first couple of weeks in the Battalion I was invited up to the gym so the boxing coaches could have a look at me. The team had been together for almost two months and had just come back from Kenya. I felt nervous as I was new to the Battalion and didn't know any of the team. I need not have worried as the team and coaches were all friendly and went out of their way to make me feel at home. I trained with the team and quickly realised that they were a lot fitter than me and all were pretty good boxers.

Sgt Maj Farrell, the coach, put me into the ring to spar. Watched by Maj Mackness, the Battalion Boxing Officer, and the rest of the boxing team, I felt pretty nervous but wanted to prove myself and show them what I could do. The bout started and my opponent came forward and started throwing punches. He was quick, hard to hit and never stopped throwing punches. I initially held my own, but his superior fitness soon began to tell and it was all I could do just to keep my guard up. However, I must have done better than I thought, because the coach decided that he wanted me in the squad. I was overjoyed - it was what I'd wanted since I started recruit training.

The training was harder than anything I'd ever done before and made recruit training seem very easy by comparison. Everyday

## The Poachers

was a non-stop round of endurance and stamina runs, bag work, pad work, shadow boxing, skills training, strength training and sparring. I got fitter and fitter and couldn't wait to get in the ring for my first fight. I wasn't selected for the first three rounds of the competition - against 5 RIFLES, 1 PWRR and 35 Regt RE, but the coach told me to keep trying, keep improving and that I'd get my chance.

My chance came in the Army Semi-Final against 2 PARA. The atmosphere was incredible, with our supporters singing non stop. It really lifted me as I entered the ring. I was still very nervous but felt so proud when the RSM announced 'Representing the 2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment - Pte Dickson!' My opponent was very strong, but I got some good shots in. I gave it my best shot and the coach told me it was very close. Waiting for the result I thought I'd won and was disappointed when the result went to 2 PARA. No-one criticised me for losing and everyone encouraged me by saying I'd do better next time. The Battalion won 5-4 so we were through to the Army Final, despite me losing.

I was determined to do even better and really wanted to fight in the final, so I tried as hard as I could in training. On the day of the final, when the team was announced, I was overjoyed when I was picked and vowed to do my very best. That night, as I stepped into the ring, I was more confident than before and with 300 Poachers chanting my name I was buzzing! My opponent from 3 PARA was very strong and very fit, but I tried to put into practise everything that the coaches had taught me. I think my opponent knew he was losing because in the final round he came out like a madman and was obviously trying to knock me out. However, CSgt Groom, in my corner, had said this would happen and told me to sidestep, jab myself out of trouble and come back once he'd expended himself, which I did. It worked and I won the fight on points! It was fantastic to be receiving my winner's medal, in the Army Final, from the CO and to see all the Poacher cheering as I walked back to the changing room. I'll never forget it.

It was disappointing that we lost 6-3, but I know all the lads on the team gave it their all. We'll come back next year and we'll be stronger, fitter and better. For me, walking around Trenchard Barracks with experienced soldiers and NCOs knowing my name and patting me on the back, saying 'Well done Dicko!' is something that I couldn't have dreamed of. Joining the Battalion boxing team was one of the best things that's ever happened to me and I'm loving every minute of life in the Battalion.

### Regimental Sergeant Major Handover

*WO1 (RSM) LA Waghorn writes:*

Although it seems a lifetime since I took over the appointment of RSM 2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment, from Capt Bartlett

in March 2009, in reality it has only been a short 14 months or so, give or take a few days and grey hairs.

It is always the pinnacle of a soldier's career to reach the appointment of Regimental Sergeant Major, so I was extremely proud to have followed the footsteps of individuals like Dave Goude MBE, Felix Ralph MBE and Rich Bredin MBE in this appointment; they were all soldiers I immensely admired and have tried to emulate where possible, although I have been careful not to copy RSM Goude's legendary cricket bat appearances.

Saying that, I have tried to be my own man and bring some of the more outdated traditions into the modern world; but surprisingly, all the old values and standards that the grey haired fraternity were brought up with, are all still as relevant today in a modern, well disciplined and professional Infantry Battalion, as they ever have been. The focus since taking over has always been towards deploying on operations, trying to make even the most laborious tasks somehow related and spun with operational overtones. This, I think, has focused the Battalion in its preparation for deploying on operations later on in the year when we assume our role as the Theatre Reserve Battalion.

I know the Battalion and its soldiers are very much looking forward to the opportunity of deploying on operations in Afghanistan and living up to the high standards set by the 1st Battalion. Officers and soldiers alike always ask me if I am disappointed not to have completed a full 2 year tenure as RSM. The answer is always: 'yes, of course I am disappointed not to deploy on operations as the RSM with the Battalion; and there are of course many things I still want to try and achieve as RSM; but my time has come to move on and, ultimately, I think, a change just before going on operations may not be a bad thing as it will freshen things up a bit'.

The highlights of my tenure have been Exercise GRAND PRIX 03 and being crowned British Army (Germany) Novice Boxing Champions (again) and reaching the Army Boxing Finals against 3 PARA. The Battalion performed magnificently in Kenya on Exercise GRAND PRIX and to be in the privileged position of a Battle Group RSM, for a major overseas exercise, was a complete honour.

Getting back to Infantry basics and seeing young and inexperienced JNCOs leading Fire Teams out into the dark, to face unknown natural threats, was exhilarating and quite frankly made me extremely jealous. When BATUK stated that 2 R ANGLIAN BG had experienced more encounters with the local wildlife than any other previous Battle Group, the CO and I took it as a huge compliment, because it meant the commanders and the patrols they were leading were patrolling tactically and were on several occasions able to get within metres of lions, elephants and other wildlife,

without scaring them off.

On one such encounter, several soldiers patrolled into the middle of an Elephant and Lion standoff, which resulted in LCpl Mander being thrown and stamped on by an angry and scared Elephant, miraculously only breaking a collar bone and causing minor internal bruising. CO BATUK and his staff were hugely complimentary in regards to the Battalions' JNCOs and SNCOs in their After Action Reviews; and also on the general level of professionalism and the 'make it happen' attitude, from the newest private up to the oldest LE Officer (Maj Abbs - not a personal slander attack).

A combination of a testing environment, a series of demanding dry and live firing exercises, spending time together as a unit in the field, living out of a bergan under a poncho, with a good dose of adventure training and R & R, has raised the Battalion's morale and confidence to new levels and has put us in good stead for the Mission Specific Training and operations later on in the year.

So what have I learned in my tenure. Well I would say in my opinion the standard of the new raw recruit we receive in the Battalion from Catterick has never been higher. I think we have benefited from the current recession and, because of full manning and the limited places available for recruits at Catterick, we can be more selective of whom we choose. I have also left with a better understanding and appreciation of what the Regimental family bond is all about.

Relations between the three battalions, in my opinion, has never been closer and more attuned; and in particular the 1st Battalion have been incredibly flexible, forwarding leaning and mature in their decisions in making sure that the two Regular Battalions are both fully manned and ready to face the unknown challenges ahead.

The need to ensure we place quality soldiers out at our E posts has never been more important; because from their dedication and hard work they have produced fantastic results in their recruiting efforts; and because of this 2 Royal Anglian has full rifle sections, a full FSG ORBAT and fully manned echelons, ready to deploy on operations.

I have learned that loyalty goes both ways when dealing with soldiers and I never forget we always ask a lot from our soldiers; so it is only reasonable that they expect the same level of loyalty back when dealing with issues such as leave dates, a sound Forecast Of Events and honesty in regard to current issues and deployments.

I have been blessed with an outstandingly talented Command Team, either above or below me; in particular the warrant officers stand out for particular praise as it is ultimately them, in my experience, that have to pick up the current plan and make it work - which they always have. I wish my successor, WO1 Brian Lewis, the best for the future and a successful tenure as Regimental Sergeant Major of the Poachers. Enjoy it because it will soon be over.

## 3rd Battalion The Steelbacks

### Introduction by the Commanding Officer

*Lt Col DG Vincent MBE writes:*

The first half of 2010 has seen the return of both 11 and 12 Platoons from Afghanistan, plus the additional deployment of a further 18 soldiers and the start of preparations for Op TOSCA (UNFICYP). In addition to these operations, the Battalion has spent its training time on patrol skills and has recently switched to counter insurgency (COIN) training.

The CO and RSM visited 11 Platoon, in their role as HQ ISAF Force Protection, just before Christmas and were given a brief on the seven suicide attacks that had taken place in Kabul. However these were only preludes to the subsequent complex attack which took place in the city centre, which saw 11 Platoon deployed to seal the main square, while the Afghan Forces dealt with the insurgents. In addition to dealing with these various Taliban attacks, they also managed to cope with the complexity of multi-national operations, the demands of a 4 Star Headquarters, working with both the Macedonians and Germans and raising the profile of the Steelbacks among our NATO allies. 11 Platoon arrived back from Kabul on 26 February, with the majority returning to work in mid May, although LCpl Ruffle and Pte Newstead were transferred to 12 Platoon to replace injured soldiers.

12 Platoon continued to patrol in Musa Qalah District Centre and the surrounding area as part of the Household Cavalry BG until their return on 9 April. They proved extremely successful in their role as the Influence Platoon and, when visited by the Colonel of the Regiment, were able to show him the incredible improvement to the life of the locals due to their increased security. In addition, and as the tour progressed, they conducted more patrols in the Green Zone, including visits to A Company of the Vikings, and they also manned Patrol Bases. The Platoon had a heavy contact on 2 March in the area of Talibjan and fired 7,000 rounds, plus indirect supporting fire from 81mm Mortars and 105 mm Light Gun, in order to extract from contact. They handed over to the US Marine Corps in early April and now have POTL until mid June.

In order to recognise the commitment of these 65 Steelbacks, a Medal Parade was held in Bury St Edmunds on Sunday 23 May. The Parade was led by Maj Tim Irwin-Parker, who had been attached to the Grenadier Guards BG during the tour. The medals were presented by Maj Gen Martyn Routledge, GOC 5th Division. The Parade marched onto Angel Hill from Abbey Gardens and, after speeches by the Mayor of Edmundsbury and Gen Routledge, the medals were presented. The Parade then marched to St Mary's Church, which holds the Chapel of The Royal Anglian Regiment, for a 30-minute thanksgiving

service, followed by a VIP reception in the Athenaeum. All in all a fantastic day for the soldiers, their families and employers.

As these soldiers were returning, 11 more Steelbacks deployed with 1 MERCIAN on Op HERRICK 12, taking the total currently in Afghanistan to 18 men, the others being deployed with training teams and as linguists. On 4 January, Cpl Roach and 10 others started training, having volunteered at four days' notice for this deployment in December, when the Battalion was asked to generate a section due to extra TA Infantry being required at short notice. They joined with other TA soldiers, mainly from 2 R IRISH, in forming a new Company within the 1 MERCIAN BG forming up in Catterick. Even as they deployed in April, their role and location was constantly changing and the Battalion look forward to hearing exactly where they end up and what tasks they will perform.

The planning for Op TOSCA is now in full flow, with the CO and Battalion Staff paying a series of visits to other contributing units in the Steelbacks Op TOSCA BG, in order to make sure that their preparation was in hand. They also visited 40 Signals Regiment, the current Op TOSCA TA Unit, both during their training in Northern Ireland in March and in Cyprus in May. The CO's Op TOSCA Training Directive was issued in mid March and the Battalion are now on a steady build up until October, when training starts in earnest with individual courses.

The Battalion survived the austerity measures of late 2009, which saw pay reduced for soldiers to only two training nights a month. In true Steelback fashion, companies continued to parade on two further training nights with no pay and conducted either sports or physical training. In addition, the Battalion conducted no formal weekends between October 2009 and January 2010. There was no funding for Remembrance Day, but despite this the Battalion attended 11 parades, leading on four of them. As of April the Battalion was back to full training, however the budget for 2010/11 is still not fixed, but due to Op TOSCA training should go ahead as planned.

Exercise Steelback Patrol I was an escape and evasion weekend planned for Kent, but moved to the Colchester Training Area owing to heavy snow in the South East in early January. The exercise involved a SERE revision period in Colchester TA Centre, before soldiers were searched, blindfolded and bussed to the Fingeringhoe FIBUA houses for conditioning. Groups of four then escaped and for the next 18 hours or so evaded a hunter force of a mix of MCTC instructors and inmates, military dogs and Battalion SNCOs, while making their way to a series of Agent RVs manned by PSIs. At the end of the evasion they were finally betrayed, caught and underwent Tactical Questioning, by CSgt Terry Taylor. The CO managed to join most groups during

the escape and evasion and can vouch that in addition to the SERE Skills, the exercise brought out good practice in navigation, use of ground and personal admin. Only one group commanded by 2Lt Finbow evaded capture and received an award of much needed chocolate from the CO at the final debrief.

The Patrolling themed training continued with two further training weekends. The first was a Company Level Patrols FTX, which saw A and E Company training together on STANTA and B and C Company training on Yardley Chase. The FTX consisted of the normal patrol tasks, such as recces, OP and ambushes. The patrols period finished with Exercise Steelback Patrol II, which was a field firing exercise on Feldom Ranges. Despite the snow, the training included field firing up to platoon attacks, a night defence shoot, grenade range and GPMG SF Range. The exercise was visited by the Colonel of the Regiment who, having flown north on the Queen's personal plane, spent Saturday visiting the ranges and chatting to the Steelbacks. He also presented the Volunteer Reserve Service Medal to WO2 Beard, with Bars to Maj French and CSgt Starrie.

The final major training event of the Training Year was Exercise Polar Foundation II, a Brigade sponsored, low level skills/MATT weekend. The Battalion was responsible for proving the logistics, Range Teams and a Battle Exercise on the event, which was based at Beckingham. This weekend was also the final part of the Battalion's Combat Signals Cadre, which saw 16 men qualify.

In mid March the majority of the Permanent Staff deployed to Capel Curig Training Camp, for a four-day adventurous training package, organised by WO2 David. On Day 1 everyone climbed Snowdon, by three different routes, depending on ability. The top was covered in snow and was very cold, due to the wind chill. On Day 2 a small group went mountain biking, while the main group climbed the north face of Tryfyn, no mean feat with the amount of snow and ice on the mountain. On Day 3 a large group went mountain biking with a local expert guide and a small group had a gentler hike with the CO. Finally, the whole group went white water rafting at the National White Water Centre, before returning home for a well-deserved long weekend.

For a short period in early April the Battalion focused on the new Army Operational Shooting Policy and conducted the Battalion SAAM, which saw all companies take part in extensive zeroing, the Close Quarter Marksmanship Shoot, Live Firing 11 and the new Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (a revised APWT). The Officers' Mess also celebrated the 1945 Battle of Arnhem, with the annual Arnhem Dinner Night in Lincoln on the Saturday evening. This was the first Steelback Mess function for the new Brigade Commander

## The Steelbacks

and the Mess also dined out Capt Warwick Izzard, OC LAD. On Sunday the Honorary Colonel presented the Shooting Shield to A Company, with Cpl Kelson from E Company achieving the best individual score. He also presented the Champion Company Shield for 2009/10 to C Company at the end of the prizegiving.

The COIN Training Period is now firmly in flow. In late April the Battalion organised a 'train the trainer' weekend for all section commanders and above on STANTA. This training focused on COIN procedures used on Op Herrick 11 and incorporated a talk by Lt Rhys Little, OC 11 Platoon, on his recent experiences in Kabul. It also allowed companies to conduct cascade training in late May, in preparation for the Battalion's deployment to Lydd Ranges in June.

The Battalion has slowly recovered from the austerity measures imposed in late 2009 and is now fully committed to COIN Training, building up to the Brigade Concentration in September. The Battalion remains fully manned and is firmly focused on Op TOSCA, which is now fast approaching, while continuing to support the small cohort deployed on Op HERRICK. Yet again, despite the funding problems, the last six months has been a growth period for the Steelbacks.

### 11 Platoon Kabul (ISAF)

*Lt R Little writes:*

It seems like an age has passed since 11 Platoon boarded a plane from Cyprus and returned to the UK and indeed much has happened between then and now. But now is the time to look back on what we did and did not do as a Platoon; and what we achieved and what we could have done better.

The Platoon received an interesting welcome to HQ ISAF in the form of a VBIED on 15 August. The fine timing of this could not have been missed. The first familiarisation patrol was ready to go out, a nice simple foot patrol around the local area. The CSgt finished his orders and to make sure we were all relaxed informed us: 'This is Kabul, nothing happens here.' There was good reason for him to say this, as nothing really had happened in the HQ ISAF AO. However no more than 10 seconds after ending the sentence, a loud explosion rocked the camp, as a 240kg VBIED exploded at the front gate. The situation was a wake-up call to everyone in HQ ISAF, showing that the threat is always there, and we must always be on our guard. 11 Platoon relished the chance to be used within this incident, as it put our pre-deployment training to good use. It was a chance for us to prove to ourselves that the PDT had been worthwhile, and to prove that we could deal with the situations thrown at us by a counter insurgent operation.

The next day helped reinforce another lesson; that the local police and army are not always on the same page as us. After the first familiarisation patrol was cancelled

abruptly, the second one got off to a good start by actually leaving the camp. However less than five minutes into it the patrol bumped into an Afghan police and army checkpoint, which had no reason to be in existence, and none of our intelligence reports had told us about it. Due to lack of communication between the patrol commander and a local policeman, the meeting escalated from a simple push to the cocking of rifles. For some reason that I can't for the life of me recall, the interpreter was at the rear of the patrol. Thankfully the patrol found one Afghan that could speak broken English and, whilst more Afghan soldiers sped towards the patrol and took up firing positions, our impromptu translator said two words: "Hamid Karzai". That was all we needed and, after thanking him for his help, the patrol continued by another route. But it had highlighted a problem with the AO – that with so many different units operating it was easy for information about one or other to go missing. On that day it was the calm reactions of 11 Platoon that averted a shooting.

The Platoon finally took over its role on 18 August; and with the elections in two days we were all aware that there could be more problems. And six hours into our first day we were reminded again, as the RLC transport element suffered an attack on the road moving ISAF personnel around Kabul. One US person was killed and two British personnel were injured and casevaced to hospital, before being flown home to the UK. They both made full recoveries but again we were reminded that despite the quiet days,

it didn't take much to change things. After this, things thankfully quietened down; there was the occasional rocket attack and odd sporadic gunfire at night, but things became aimed at the local police and army rather than us and our patrols. ISAF settled back into its old ideas; the British patrols came and went, developing a strong lasting bond with the local population; we saw an increase in the level of traffic in the areas we went to; and you could have been forgiven for thinking that Kabul was indeed as safe as people were saying.

This changed on 18 September when an Italian call sign was blown up 500m up the road from the front gate of HQ ISAF. It was again a timely reminder that bad things happen, and not always to bad people. However the difference here was that the local population and police gave a large amount of unsolicited assistance, getting bodies out of vehicles and securing the area. So it was a nice change from our first encounter with them. We were also shown how speedy the local ambulance service could be at removing casualties from the scene. They had removed all Afghan injured within 5 minutes of the blast but sadly they were unable to evacuate the Italian casualties.

The tour continued very much like this - periods with the odd rocket, or intermittent gunfire and every now and then a suicide bomber. This changed on the 18th January, when between 20 – 30 insurgents launched a complex attack in the area of the Serena Hotel. By this point we were closing on our end of tour, when sitting in the QRF



Lt Little and Pte Cox sending a Shot Rep on ANA Hill.

## The Steelbacks



**Sgt Prescott winning hearts and minds.**

room we heard an unassuming message over the radio: "There's been an explosion outside the Serena Hotel." It could have easily been missed; almost as if this sort of thing happened every day; indeed the ops room seemed confused by this report and a concerned American voice replied asking for the message to be sent again. By this time 11 Platoon were kitting up and moving to the vehicles, as the Platoon Commander moved to the Ops Room for a brief. At first there wasn't much to go on. Only the most minor details of what was happening and piecing it together wasn't easy.

The reports were about isolated gun battles and explosions. Using the ISAF blimp we could see that they were all within 300m of each other, with armed men moving around the roof tops firing from windows, with groups of police trying to deal with the situation. By now *Aljazeera* and *Sky* were showing footage from the Serena, as their reporters were already in the City to cover the swearing in of the new Government. 11 Platoon were ready to go, showing that even after all the inactivity we still remembered our PDT; we had back briefed our OC and CO on our plan and only needed authorisation to go. This came from Regional Commander Capital and the Platoon moved towards its forward holding area to get eyes on the ground. Here we ran into our old problem of too many units



**Cpl Mason preparing his map before going on Patrol.**

## The Steelbacks

operating in the same area. The Afghan police had become a little jumpy and decided that no one was allowed to move around the city and so, 200m from our holding area, we were stopped by a roadblock. After six hours the situation was under control and things moved back to normal.

There was one last great hurdle for 11 Platoon - our handover. Knowing how ours had been, there was trepidation that this would be the same. But thankfully it passed without serious incident. Looking back there was more we would have liked to have done; it would have been good to get out to more of the schools and more of the hospitals; but time and other events had limited what we could achieve. But we were please with the way we left Kabul, knowing that in our small way we had helped.

### 12 Platoon on Op HERRICK 11

*Lt IJ Ginns writes:*

In early October 2009, 12 Platoon 3 R ANGLIAN deployed to Helmand Province as part of the Household Cavalry Regiment (HCR) Battle Group. Prior to this there had been much speculation about what role we would be providing in Musa Qaleh for the HCR. However we were being told a great many things and it was clear that until we arrived on the ground we couldn't be sure of what exactly we were going to be doing.

In the end we found ourselves to be the Police Mentoring Team, Influence Platoon, Escort Platoon, Internal Patrols and Security Platoon, Standing Patrols Platoon and the BG Reserve. Not only this, but we had seven police check points to visit weekly along with manning half of the sangars in Musa Qaleh. It was clear we were going to be busy, but with the varied jobs on offer, we were likely to have a very unique tour.

It seemed likely that the most interesting job was going to be mentoring the Afghan National Police (ANP). However I soon learnt that there was no syllabus or lesson plans, nor were there any notes from my predecessors, so as a result I would have to develop my own program. I decided to keep it simple and that the best way would be to

do everything with the ANP. They would accompany us on every patrol and with every tasking we would get. In addition to this we would visit their check points (CPs) and patrol bases (PBs) weekly, sometimes staying overnight. At the CPs and PBs we would mentor them on simple things such as duties of a sentry, arcs, breaking the ground down, health and hygiene, maintenance of weapons and equipment etc. We would also have them into Musa Qaleh DC so that we could deliver more complex lessons to them. These lessons included IEDs, first aid, patrolling techniques, section battle drills and so on. We took the ANP everywhere and anywhere. They accompanied us on 4Cs operations as well as on specific ops. They also accompanied us on more mundane tasks such as visiting the school to hand out books and pens or on our routine visits to the District Health Centre.

Working with the ANP brought lots of different challenges. These included their different culture and language, differences in attitude to women, children, the enemy, hygiene and food. They also had very limited equipment and I soon found myself being constrained by their re-supply problems. They had no day sacks and as a result could not carry warm or wet kit, food and water. They would tire very easily and become thirsty. They would also insist on wearing large coats even in summer and stripping off down to their underwear to cross the swollen wadi. My patrols now took these constraints into account and subsequently would deliberately stop at numerous CPs and PBs to rest the ANP.

Over the tour we became close to a large number of the ANP and they in turn trusted us as friends. They were interested to learn about us and what home was like for us. They would ask about religion, economics, politics, food, and girlfriends and would wonder how things could be so different in our country. They would then tell stories about their days in the Mujahideen, their homes, their views on economics and politics and all of this was done with the accompanying glass of Chi. The ANP were a very generous group of people and would share what little food they had. They were



The author Lt I Ginns.

polite and keen to learn. They could also be childish and on occasion I felt more like a school teacher. They also had a very limited concentration span and the lessons sometimes would be pitched at my Primary School ANP.

Commander Koka on the other hand was an extremely intelligent and sophisticated leader. He was the district police chief and a man not to be under-estimated. He had survived 17 assassination attempts and was no coward. He would not talk about his time in the Mujahideen nor much about what he did when the Taliban came to power. However he could be quite talkative about business and was always keen to learn what I thought about his police. Needless to say I tried dealing with trivial matters myself as all of the ANP feared Commander Koka's discipline.

In addition to working with the ANP we worked with the Afghan National Army (ANA). We would conduct joint patrols with the ANA and they were all together better trained and equipped. Working with them was much more functional and professional, whilst working with the ANP was more of a lottery as they would argue, fight and sometimes strip off. This made working with the ANP more fun as they would often be unpredictable, with humorous



Pte Harding providing cover for Cpl Walker as he crosses a Wadi.



LCpl Catchpole and Pte Chapman providing security for CO HCR BG TAC.

## The Steelbacks



Pte Hogger.



12 Platoon with members of the ANP.

consequences.

I also had US Marines under my command from time to time and again it was interesting working with them as they had a different approach to things. I found the USMC to be very professional and polite and watching the way they interacted with local nationals (LNs) gave an insight into how the Taliban's propaganda was better than ours. They would quickly put messaging out saying that the 'Americans are coming to burn their Korans and kill their women and children'. LNs would believe the messaging and we worked hard taking USMC on patrols to dispel any rumours. This was part of our influence job.

During Op MAR BARCHA III we were tasked to relieve two positions held by 2 R Welsh - FOB MINDEN and CP ZULU. These were both on the FLOT as the HCR BG pushed south to gain vital high ground. Both objectives were secured quickly and OP Hill and CP Kabir were soon established. Our role in Op Mar Barcha III was to last just 48 hours. 27 days later we left CP ZULU after expending a lot of ammunition and after burning everything we could to keep warm. During this time we held shuras with the local farmers to gain their trust and see what we could do to help them. They were soon calling in for tea and biscuits, even after Cpl Ernie Adams nearly knocked one out with a packet of biscuits brown. It was also interesting to get back to the DC after being relieved. Just 13 of us held CP ZULU and we were replaced by 3 x Mastiff with GMG and HMG, 2 x Warrior with 30mm, 2 x 81mm mortar and nearly 40 soldiers. When arriving back at the DC an officer with the HCR commented "Well I'm glad you didn't get over run!"

Looking back on our tour now, I can see that 12 Platoon was very fortunate. We were involved in both pushes North (Op Mar Marcha VII) and South (Op Mar Barcha III); we patrolled the whole AO pushing North to 1 R Anglian in both Woqab and CP Habib (Viking Ridge); East to the ANP in Kunjak and Kariz E Deh; South to Talibjan, Minden and Zulu; West to OP HIMAL and down the other side into DZO and DSO.

We were also involved in the big political game with Mulah Sallam, Governor Mangal

and our own Foreign and Commonwealth Office. We policed the high profile Wheat Seed Distribution Shura which made *Sky News*. This was an attempt by the Afghan government, backed by our own government, to try to persuade farmers to grow wheat rather than poppy. As reference Musa Qaleh poppy is regarded as the best poppy for heroin in the world...allegedly.

We were also incredibly fortunate not to take any casualties. We patrolled daily, often staying overnight in various locations; we narrowly missed a suicide bomber; we had a car drive through our call sign at high speed; we had CSgt Shaw and LCpl catchpole assaulted and we had small arms shoots. But all we had was battle fatigue injuries with bad backs, ankles and shoulders.

Before we left things did take a turn for the worst. The Commander of PB (S), Faizullah Jan, a particularly good PB Commander was killed when the Afghan National Security Forces tried to retake Shar Kariz back from the Taliban. He was very well regarded and I often spent time with him helping him

develop his police. Shortly after this PB (SE) was overrun with four ANP killed. As we left these two incidents played on my mind and it did feel like a job only half done. Many of the ANP approached both me and CSgt Shaw asking us not to leave and to continue the work we had started. They felt that we had really made a difference and felt that we cared about their well being. They were scared what life was going to be like under the USMC after we handed over and needed a lot of reassurance. I reminded them of an Afghan phrase that they often said to me when discussing problems: 'This is Afghanistan, it will find a way'.

### Exercise Steelback Patrol I

Exercise Steelback Patrol I was the culmination of the Survive, Evade, Resist and Extract (SERE) phase of the Battalion patrol training. Its aim was to allow soldiers to exercise their residual skills and those that had been revised in the preceding weeks in a challenging environment. Originally planned for CPTA, the exercise was switched



Sgt Hardy contemplating how many pieces of bread he can eat.

**The Steelbacks****Captured.**

to Colchester at the 11th hour due to appalling weather conditions in the Dover area. While small, Colchester Training Area provides difficult terrain to negotiate while moving tactically. Added to this, a hunter force equipped with dogs, night vision equipment, plus features which naturally channel and create vulnerable points, the odds were against the escapees.

The troops arrived on the Friday evening and were accommodated for initial conditioning at Colchester TAC. Following a very basic breakfast (porridge and bread) the 'runners' were revised on SERE techniques. The tranquillity of the classroom was soon shattered by the vocal charms of CSgt Shand as 'students' were verbally motivated into the hands of WO2 David and his team for detailed searching and desensitisation (goggles, ear defence and cuffing). Once all contraband had been collected, the troops were loaded on to minibuses for transportation to the tactical questioning house. Kept in a consistent conditioned state, the students were separated throughout the building with the eerie silence interspersed with sudden sensory exposure to dogs barking (Pte Dowling was the particular favourite of one hound called Cujo), distant gunfire and shouting.

The exercise scenario took a twist for the troops when 'friendly forces' broke into the

**Capt Weatherall plans his teams' next leg.**

## The Steelbacks

house and released them from their captivity. Forced to run with what they could carry, they received a basic map with an initial agent RV point. Evading in hostile territory, with mobile as well as foot patrols with dogs, the mission was further complicated by defiles and considerable water obstacles and ditches. At each agent location, teams were given their next RV and timing as well as snippets of information that were not to be divulged if captured. The Hunter Force worked hard to target the teams and all but one was caught. 2Lt Finbow and his small band of men are to be congratulated for achieving this accolade. It had been deemed near impossible for a team to evade the clutches of the Hunter Force for the entire exercise.

Once caught troops were reconditioned and taken to a holding area for questioning. Once fed with false information they were deliberately disorientated before being returned to the proximity of their capture. Eventually all teams made it to their final RV and were met by minibuses. Unfortunately for them, this had been a ruse and now back in the hands of the enemy they were moved back to the house for questioning. I imagine most people's memory will be of this final stage. Desensitised once again, sitting in a cold room, before being 'drilled' for information by interrogator extraordinaire CSgt Taylor (a distinction on his TQ course by all accounts). Having resisted interrogation the troops were led back to the transport unaware endex was in sight. Once back on the minibuses the gentle tones of WO2 Chillingsworth informed the 'runners' their ordeal was over. Back at Colchester TAC, the troops were treated to some hot food and a thorough debrief by the CO, who had also taken part in the exercise (less a stop at a curry house!).

All the soldiers who took part in this exercise should be exceptionally proud of themselves. They endured an arduous exercise in extremely difficult conditions and, for the younger element, it was probably their first experience of a SERE exercise. The Steelback spirit was prevalent throughout, as was the competency of our junior commanders to rapidly gel a team and face adversity with stoicism and grit.

### Exercise Steelback Patrol II

*2Lt C Finbow writes:*

The weekend of 26 - 28 February 2010, saw the Steelbacks hone their Field Firing skills on Exercise Steelback Patrol II. The Battalion deployed to Wathgill Camp on Friday evening with most arriving in the early hours of Saturday morning, ready for an early reveille in order that soldiers could be fed, briefed and the ORBAT sorted out for the weekends training. The resulting groups then boarded their transport to be taken to Feldom Ranges, an event in itself as on the ascent to the higher ground that is home to the ranges, we found ourselves moving through the snow line into a blanket of white!

With most now in warm kit, the firers



**Cpl Baker (A Company).**

set about zeroing their weapons, checking or recording collimator readings. The day proceeded to plan, with groups moving through the necessary series of ranges, depending on their previous year's training, thus progressing from IBSR to section attacks and leading up to the Platoon Attack ranges on Sunday. Morale and banter were

in plentiful supply, despite the semi-arctic conditions, and spirits were further lifted when the Colonel of the Regiment paid the Battalion a visit, spending time with the soldiers on the range complex.

A further highlight for many was the opportunity to throw the L109 Grenade, an experience that the majority of soldiers had



**On the way to the FUP.**

## The Steelbacks



**CO with E Company GPMG SF team.**

yet to have. After a thorough briefing and practice with a Chorley Grenade, which saw some obliterate their chances of ever being selected for the Battalion Cricket Team, it was into the holding bunker to wait for the call of 'change', which signalled that the next thrower was to move out and collect their three L109s. Under the watchful eye of the RSM and WO2 Beard, the Hun's head was then subjected to some serious punishment by most, and some light grazing by our fore mentioned 'non-cricketers'!

With the days ranges successfully completed and the RSM sporting a few more grey hairs, the Battalion moved to range control to feed on Cpl Rogers' range stew and admin themselves in the warm, before receiving the ORBAT for the night shoot and following day's platoon attacks. The night shoot was an excellent range with sections patrolling into pre-prepared positions under the cover of the GPMG SF team from an overlooking hill. With every soldier and the SF teams using tracer, and trip flares rigged to the targets, the view from the range control hut was quite a show; and the advancing enemy were soon repelled back into the night.

Sunday saw the final preparation for the platoon attacks, followed by a move to Range 2A, a demanding range in terms of terrain and approach to the enemy positions. Safety briefs were given, followed by the pl comds delivering their orders to the section commanders. This gave the soldiers the opportunity to demonstrate their skills and drills as part of a bigger machine in front of the CO. Endeavour and hard graft were well displayed and, as the attacks progressed, the enemy were successfully eliminated from the Platoon's AOR, as was tasked in the initial mission.

All that remained was the dispersal brief



**Cold, wet, but happy.**

from the CO and RSM, before the Company mounted their transport and returned south to await the warmer weather and training challenges that the spring will hold.

### **The Battalion Skill at Arms Meeting 2010: 'Every soldier is a rifleman first'**

The Battalion held its Annual Skill at Arms meeting at Beckingham Range Complex in a surprisingly sunny Lincolnshire. With all the ranges booked and accommodation shared with East Midlands cadets and members of the recruit training staff, it would be a busy

weekend. It also provided members of the Battalion their first opportunity to complete the first phase of the Army's new Operational Shooting Policy.

Range recces having been conducted before the new shooting policy was published, we then found out that the new shoots could only be supported in various forms and with limited numbers of firers. So the Permanent Staff had to discard some of the old favourite shoots and forge forward with the new Policy. The range staffs were extremely helpful from the outset, assisting us in providing workable solutions to safely achieve our aim within the constraints of the range.

The G4 support was busy working in the background, securing accommodation and facilities. After a quick evening meal and a coord conference, all that was left to do was await the arrival of the troops. The Permanent Staff provided the Range Officers in order to allow the Steelbacks' officers and SNCOs a chance to compete towards the respective prizes. It was a fast turnaround for them as they then discarded weapons and webbing to act as safety for the remaining firers.

Shooting started well with soldiers firing Rifle Live Fire 5 properly, apparently for the first time in some cases. However the tactic paid dividends, with junior soldiers surprised at their ability to hit the target, where they wanted to hit it. There were some strange examples of the almost extinct kneeling unsupported position being practiced, with some firers changing knees between shots. But moving onto Advanced Application the soldiers' results remained consistent. The Close Quarter Marksmanship (CQM) practices were also shot by some on the first day, with the remainder firing on Sunday. Again there was good shooting, helped by

## The Steelbacks

WO2 Snow and Sgt Wallis running the range at full capacity and adamant that time wasn't going to beat them. That night culminated in a quick Counter IED DVD, to make a start on the dreaded MATT returns, followed by a real-time fire practice organised by the cadets. Fortunately for us this didn't take too long and Sgt Ward's takings at the bar didn't suffer too badly.

Sunday came rapidly; so it was up early to hand the accommodation back and pack the vehicles before hitting the ranges again. Our faces, burnt a bright shade of red by Saturday's weather, were soon chilled by the wind which started as a breeze but then challenged the firers for the remainder of the day. The Annual Combat Marksmanship Test Dismounted Close Combat, was run with a detail completing every 30 minutes. The CQM range ran at a similar speed but timings were tight, not only for the Bde Comd's visit, but also to get on the road by a decent time.

The day progressed well with the results finalised as the Battalion was marching into a hollow square; so well done to Cpl Massingham and LCpl Clay for collating the scores. There were prizes for Best Class A and B shots, Best Officer, Best SNCO, Best Female and the top 12 within the Battalion. Clearly no one would win a prize for their drill, but that at least kept the Honorary Colonel entertained. A (Norfolk & Suffolk) Company where crowned winners of the Inter Coy SAAM 2010 (no matter which way you worked it out!). Whilst C (Leicester & Northamptonshire) Coy were presented the Champion Company Prize, again by Colonel Lacey.



Pte Dowling B Company – Best female shot.



Cpl Kelson E Company - 3 R Anglian Champion Shot 2010.



Col Julian Lacey, Honorary Colonel 3rd Battalion, presents the Champion Company Trophy to C Company.

### Common Signallers Course (CSC) 6-7 February and 13-14 Mar 2010

*Capt I Greenwood writes:*

The CIS Platoon ran the first CSC in February and March 2010. The CSC is the Bowman version of the old TARU cadre that had been running during the Clansman radio era. The cadre was run at Bury St Edmunds, with instructors from HQ Company and the students from both HQ and the rifle companies.

Most students arrived at the TAC very late on Friday night and were able to bed down before the course started on Saturday morning. As the course is designed for a student with no knowledge of communications at all, the early part of the course covers a lot of theory and can be quite a challenge for some. This means that by the end of day there can be some glazed expressions and smoke coming out of some ears.

The day starts with the opening address when the instructors are introduced to the students and the timetable for the weekend published. Lessons start with theory and then progress to the radio sets after lunch. This cadre uses the PRC 354 and 355 Bowman man-pack VHF radios as well as the PRR.

## The Steelbacks



**The course.**

After lessons were over for the day, the instructors were available to help with any students who had any issues with the subjects covered. We enjoyed a few beers in the coffee houses of Bury then back to the TAC.

Sunday introduced the students to BATCO and further radio lessons before an introduction to Electronic Warfare. The cadre finished Sunday afternoon where the students dispersed, slightly shell-shocked with all the information imparted. The second and final weekend started again on the Saturday morning with a test on everything covered in the first weekend.

All passed before moving onto further radio lessons covering the more advanced functions of the radios – secure speech and the GPS. Further lessons covered contact reports, masts and antennas, anti-jamming drills and then some final revision before the tests. The tests take a couple of hours and cover everything taught on the course. With some worried students watching, the instructors retired to mark the tests. All students passed the written part, and then it was on to the issue of the kit for the test exercise on the Sunday.

The exercise was held on the Barnham

Training Area and involved the students moving between fixed stands in small teams. At each stand they were tested on subjects ranging from Airwave radios to masts and antennas.

When moving from stand to stand they had to encode and send various messages. At the end of the exercise all the students taking part had passed with some very impressive performances.

Pass certificates were then handed out by WO2 Beard and the weekend came to an end. The next cadre is later this year when we are hoping to teach around 60 students.



**CSgt Bygrave instructs students how to test the radios.**



**WO2 Beard instructs on Masts 7 antennas.**

## The Steelbacks

### Adventure Training at Capel Curig 14-18 March

*WO2 David SPSI C Coy writes:*

In November 2009 I was approached by the CO and given the task of organising the permanent staff adventure training. Not being a natural sportsman or indeed an adventurous trainer in the broadest sense of the words, I cautiously began to formulate a plan. After many phone calls and several draft programmes the final plan was set. On 14 March 2010 members of the permanent staff from 3 R Anglian descended on Capel Curig to participate in the following text book adventure training activities: hill walking (Maj Pook's interpretation was way off what WO2 Chillingsworth would call conventional hill walking!), mountain biking and white water rafting.

Day 1: Monday morning was an early start which saw the party split down into three separate hill walking groups. Group one led by the CO attacked Snowdon from the west along Rhyd-Ddu path over the summit and finishing at Nantgwynant. Maj 'Cliff-hanger' Pook did the reverse route with both groups meeting at the summit for a chance photo opportunity. The third group, led by Maj Murphy, headed for the summit using both the Miners and the Pyg Track. Overall the feedback for the first day was good.

Day 2: The start of the day saw the 'Sir Chris Hoy' wannabees preparing their bikes for the upcoming day. WO2 Snow had to do some panic de-rusting of his machine while Sgt Young was proudly showing off his new bike (which we later found out he had borrowed). They then descended to the Gwydyr Forest under the watchful eye of RQMS WO2 'Steve the Lung' Woolcott. After a 3km climb to the start point, the group took in both gravel track riding and



**White water rafting at Capel Curig.**

red route, off track, trails and, to everyone's amazement, LCpl 'Ferret' Ehret managed to negotiate himself around the most difficult of obstacles on nothing more than a trade bike. With a few of the members of the group's legs and chests now burning, not to mention the MTWO's finger, it was called a day after 35km.

The two hill walking groups mounted up in their vehicles and headed for Tryfyn which had been mentioned on more than one occasion as the peak to climb in Snowdonia. We arrived at the base of the north peak and the first group, led by Maj Pook, began to ascend. After an hour of steep, but relatively easy going terrain, the first group arrived at the north face of Tryfyn shortly followed by the CO's Group. After a quick pause the two groups continued the

climb. Although all members of the groups felt out of their comfort zones at times, a huge sense of relief and achievement was felt on reaching the summit. That said, the author strongly believes the climbing pamphlet needs amending as, although physically impossible, five points of contact is a must (or in WO2 'disco legs Elvis' Chillingsworth's case, eight points). Once at the summit photographs were taken and a tamer route saw the groups arrive at the pickup point.

Day 3: Again the party was split with the majority participating in mountain biking and the remainder hill walking (this time the route was more sociable, but all the group had the mountain rescue phone number on speed dial just in case). The mountain bikers were led around the Gwydyr Forest



**WO2 Chillingsworth being pursued by RQMS Walcott.**



**WO2 Smith carrying out halt checks on his bike.**

## The Steelbacks



**WO2 Snow looks on as the CO brews up at the top of Snowdon.**

by a local guide, able to cater the route to everyone's needs. Sgt Chris Wallis was now on a more professional machine rather than the nine-year-old girl's bike WO2 Snow had brought for him. Initially several members of the group encountered what they thought were mechanical problems. It soon became apparent that the last time they did mountain biking was on a Penny Farthing and bikes now have more than one gear. That said, after a few kilometres, everyone was taking all the guide could throw at them.

The minority that opted for a hill walking session led by the CO were pleased to see that it was a steady session allowing them to stretch off from the previous day's route and take in the views while firmly on the ground. After pushing out several miles around Mynydd Deulyn, it was into Betws-Y-Coed to take in some of the local culture.

Day 4: After the clean up and handover of the accommodation the permanent staff left Capel Curig and headed for the white water rafting centre for the final activity before heading back home. Once there we grouped ourselves off and awaited our instructors. After a couple of minutes, three new age travellers aged about 16 came out and gave us the mandatory safety brief. After the safety brief, wetsuits, boots and helmets were issued; then it was off to the changing rooms to squeeze ourselves into them. Once everyone was suited up we came out, stomachs in chest out. It was only when I put my foot in the water that I realised that the middle of March was not the best time to be doing white water rafting - especially with the snow melt flowing into the river we were about to go down. However, we had long gone past the point of no return. We managed to get five runs in and the instructors made a relatively tame river enjoyable by varying the runs and ensuring that everyone got their fair share of the river.

After the fifth run we had all had our fill of the cold Welsh river and, with the remaining

feeling quickly deserting our extremities, it was time to call it a day before hypothermia set in. The white water rafting was the final activity of a busy programme and, with aching limbs, the permanent staff headed back to their Company locations to climb another mountain... of e-mails.

### Steelbacks – 5th Division Orienteering Champions

The Steelbacks have once again been the mainstay of the 5th Division Orienteering League throughout the year. The CO is the 5th Division Orienteering Chairman,

with the QM, Maj Tim Beighton, being the Divisional Equipment Manager. This is how the Battalion came to organise the 5th Division Orienteering Championships at Swynnerton Training Area on 21 April 2010.

The CO, who was the Divisional Champion last year, was unable to run this year as he had to do the technical planning of the courses. However, much of the credit for pulling this event together goes to the QM, who organised all of the activities apart from the planning and controlling of the courses. The event attracted 83 runners from 12 units, including major, minor, TA and ladies teams. The weather was hot and sunny, which always makes for good sport. The area however was very busy, which led to a delayed start and some competitors running through RAF Regiment section attacks!

The Steelbacks had a six-man squad, consisting of Maj Tim Beighton, Maj Chris Pook, Capt Chris Tate, WO1 (RSM) Granfield, Sgt Wallis and LCpl Ehert. The Battalion needed a team of three to count; one on the 7.8km A Course, one on the 5.7km B Course and one on the 3.4km C Course. The Battalion had two runners on each: Maj Pook and Capt Tate on the A, QM and Sgt Wallis on the B and the RSM and LCpl Ehert on the C Course.

This spreading of experience paid off well and the Battalion had the fastest three-man team of all other teams entered, with Capt Tate second on the A Course, the QM the fastest on the B Course by only 25 seconds and the RSM fastest on the C Course.

The Steelbacks are now the 5th Division Orienteering TA Champions for the second year running (no pun intended). In addition,



**Capt Chris Tate receiving his prize from the CO.**

## The Steelbacks



**QM receives the B Course Winners Prize from the CO.**

Capt Tate was the Winner of the M45 prize and the Overall Divisional Champion runner-up and Maj Pook picked up the winner of the M40 prize. Unfortunately the Battalion was unable to enter the Army Championships in Germany this year owing to other commitments, but the squad, less the CO, is looking forward to next year's session which starts in September.

### Rugby at its Best for the Soldiers Charity - Leicester Tigers v London Irish

*Capt Ty Smith, PSAO C Coy, and Tiger Supporter, writes:*

It will come as no surprise to many of you that strong links continue to exist between the Leicester Tigers and the Army and especially with our Forbear Regiment, The Royal Leicestershire Regiment. During mid winter, and after much hard work by the Regional Director of Finance for the ABF in the East Midlands, Leicester Tigers Rugby Club agreed to assist with sponsorship and fundraising for the fixture in March 2010 v London Irish at Welford Road, Leicester.

C Company joined forces with several 'Walking Wounded' from the VIKINGS, along with the local ACF and set themselves up for the match day, the aim being to raise funds for the ABF prior to, during and after the game. On the coldest day of winter, Sat 6th Mar, and to a sell out crowd of over 20,000, the soldiers and cadets swung into



**A view from the stand.**

action. Teams of soldiers and cadets were sent to strategic points at the entrances to the ground, together with a select few who invaded the hospitality suites (where all the money was!).

Two major successes: Leicester Tigers convincingly beat the opposition 35 – 19, earning a bonus point to boot. Equally, and more importantly, a total of over £9k was raised through the sales of tickets and wristbands for the Charity. C Company produced a great turnout both on and off the field. The ABF 'The Soldiers Charity' supports our soldiers, former soldiers and their families in times of need. Like a lot of military charities they are under considerable pressure with enduring operations. So we were proud to do our bit for them along with the VIKINGS and cadets.

We look forward to a repeat skirmish during the 2010 - 2011 season and, at the time of writing, Leicester Tigers are still top of the Heineken Premier League with two matches remaining (sorry Northampton, not really).

### Half Marathon A Month

*Pte G Degnan E (Essex & Hertfordshire) Coy writes:*

Following a bout of 'post-camp fitness malaise' and a failure to get into the 2010 London Marathon, I needed something to motivate me to do more than just maintenance fitness. I needed that fear of failure to get me going.

So it was on the way home from a drill night that I came up with the idea of doing a marathon a month during 2010 for The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Fund. I had raised over £600 for charity doing the 2009 London Marathon and my employer, The Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Ltd, had updated its policy on charitable donations, in that it would, subject to approval, match any money raised for charity to a limit of £500. Given the amount I had raised in 2009 and the possibility of £500 from my employer,



**At the finish of the Brentwood course.**

I set the target at £1,000.

I sent an initial email in October to recipients of E Company's 'Staggering Eagle' newsletter in order to install that fear of failure in me and ensure I started training for the first marathon. Due to the lack of time to complete a full 16 week training schedule, I skipped the first few weeks of the schedule, leading to the inevitable injury due to too much, too soon. With the injury to my knee and the realisation that a marathon a month was going to be very expensive due to travel and accommodation costs, I cut it down to a half-marathon a month, which I knew I could do without any specific training.

January's run was the Benfleet 15, a 15

## The Steelbacks

mile predominantly cross-country course, with a one mile section of thick mud that drained all energy out of the legs; at the 10 mile point my legs felt worse than at the 20 mile point of the 2009 London Marathon.

February's run was supposed to be the Dover half-marathon but this was cancelled due to snow; unfortunately I didn't find this out until I arrived at the start. I just managed to scrape in by completing the Roding Valley half-marathon on the 28th. People may remember that Sunday as it was the day when the rain poured down all day – not ideal running conditions, especially when idiots in Range Rovers drive through flooded roads at speed and completely drench you.

In March I completed the Brentwood half-marathon in the more respectable time of 01:53. This was a great course to run as it seemed you were always going downhill.

My runs for April and May are also confirmed. April's run is the Bungay Black Dog half-marathon and May is the Halstead and Essex marathon; the remainder I will confirm in due course.

You can sponsor me at [www.justgiving.com/degs44](http://www.justgiving.com/degs44). This is the most effective way as the charity can also claim Gift Aid, which adds 28 pence for every pound that is donated. You can also follow my progress by becoming a fan of the Facebook page 'Half-Marathon a Month for the Royal Anglians'. If anyone would like to accompany me on any of the runs, I would be grateful for the company; alternatively some support on the route is better than any energy drinks.

### Unit Special to Arm Training: 3 R Anglian LAD

*OC LAD, Capt Warwick Izzard,  
writes:*

Given the pressures on in-year funding for TA training generally, getting in some much needed special-to-arm (STA) REME training has been difficult in recent months. But, with the Battalion's support and a little imagination and graft, 3 R Anglian LAD pushed ahead with a couple of STA training weekends in the final quarter of the 2009/10 Training Year.

Coordinated with Norwich based A Company, who had secured some areas on STANTA including a Forward Operating Base (FOB) to practise infantry patrols, the LAD ran a concurrent training scenario with the aim of exercising Intimate Support Team (IST) level skills in delivering in-mission Equipment Support effect in the current operational environment.

The exercise began with a planning phase at Bury St Edmunds TAC, requiring the TA soldiers to find their way around technical publications to identify spares, special tools and test equipment, lubricants and other resources that they would need to undertake specified maintenance tasks on unit equipments based out at the FOB. After that, IC IST, Sgt Neil Power, had the opportunity to shake out his team and carry pre-deployment kit checks before receiving



**Sgt Power recovering a Land Rover using a Tirfor winch.**

a brief on helicopter drills. Mounting the 'Chinook' (Land Rover) with full kit including body armour, bergens, PRRs and individual weapons, the team were 'flown' into STANTA and dismounted at an HLS a short patrol away from the FOB.

Using a pre-positioned Land Rover and lightweight trailer, both requiring real-time servicing and chosen specifically to meet exercising soldiers' individual equipment

proficiency requirements, the team carried out 24 monthly maintenance tasks until late into the night within the FOB environment.

At first light, the soldiers received instruction on and practised Op BARMA drills, identifying Vulnerable Points, the 4Cs and completing 10 Line EOD (UXO/IED) Reports, before deploying out on the ground in response to a recovery request. During the route out, the team practiced the drills they had been taught. Cfn Stuart Hippey discovered a mock IED and the team exercised pre-seen IED drills to withdraw, secure and cordon the area and send an EOD report. The final phase of the exercise was a recovery task with the team using a Tirfor winch and anchor plates/pins to recover a bogged in Land Rover after having calculated the estimated pull.

A few weeks later, the LAD again concentrated at Bury St Edmunds TAC for STA training, this time focussing on developing individuals' trade skills. Class 2 Vehicle Mechanic (VM) Cfn Kevin Pinkney worked on a Bedford 4T carrying out a clutch change and stripping down the hubs to further his proficiency. Cfn Stewart Garner-Jones, fresh from his VM Basic course, undertook similar tasks to make in-roads into his Trade Proficiency Development Book (TPDB) which he needs to complete to qualify for upgrading from Class 3 to 2. Cpl Steven Bunn, a Class 1 Armourer, carried out repairs and maintenance on the L4 GPMG Mounting Tripod to gain further experience on this equipment. The weekend exercise also included periods of instruction on completing Equipment Failure Reports and Damage Reports as well more general sessions on the REME Ethos, Engineering Hygiene and Equipment Care.

These weekends really ticked some boxes (literally in the case of individual training plans, Record of Experience Charts and TPDBs etc) helping us to make some headway in developing and maintaining competent REME TA soldiers.



**SSgt Steve Alexander (REME VM) instructing students.**



View over Musa Qal'eh from Roshan Tower.

## 1st Battalion



Cool for the camera, Cpl Warner sneaks through crops 150m from the Taliban.



Pte Ensinger, FSG D, with his .338 at the ready.



LCpl Thorpe and Pte Holland ready for action.



Recce Platoon in contact.



Pte McCabe, FSG C, provides fire support from one of many irrigation ditches.



Pte Oldroyd makes a new friend.



Recce Platoon CVR(T) in action during Op MOSHTARAK.



Cpl Eggleton and LCpl Thorpe returning fire at the enemy.



WO2 (CSM) Nobby Clark helps ANA and ANCOP distribute new shoes to the children of Khowshhal Kalay.

## 2nd Battalion



2Lt James Robinson and 2Lt Joe Hartley admire some wildlife.



2Lt Joe Hartley, LCpl Evens and Lt Abu Rami enjoying some scoff in Kenya.



A line of camel mounted Poachers disappear into the bush (hopefully not for poaching!).



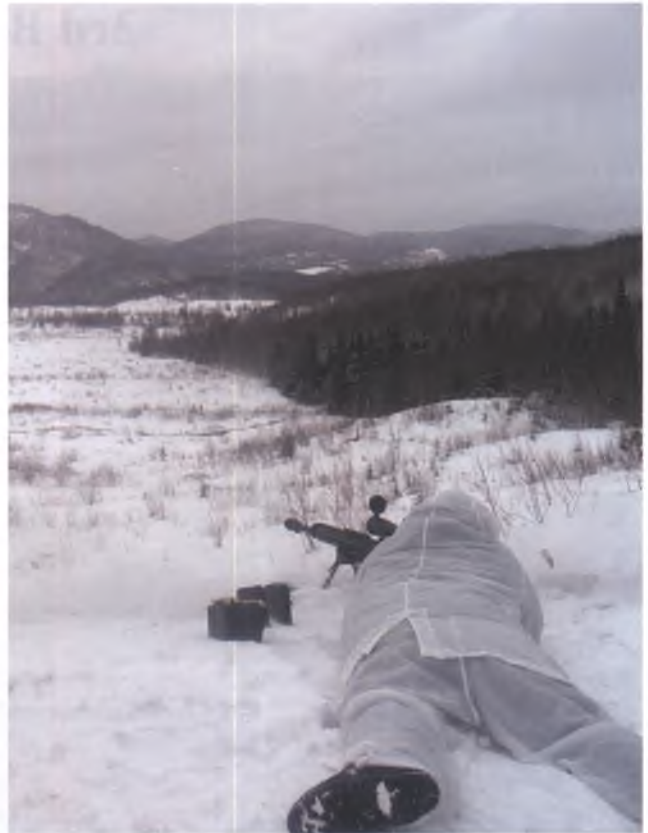
WO1 (RSM) L Waghorn Handing Over as RSM to WO1 (RSM) B Lewis.



Pte Doyle gets the Bantamweight win.



The RSO fights for Comms in Kenya!



Sniping in the snow



Poachers' Sniper Platoon in Canada.

## 3rd Battalion



'Summer' Mountaineering on Tryfyn, Snowdonia.



Col of Regt presents WO2 Beard with his VRSM.



Col Lacey presents the SAAM Trophy to Sgt Jones A Company.



Eyes right from the RSM during white water rafting.



A Company Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess at the Christmas Ball.



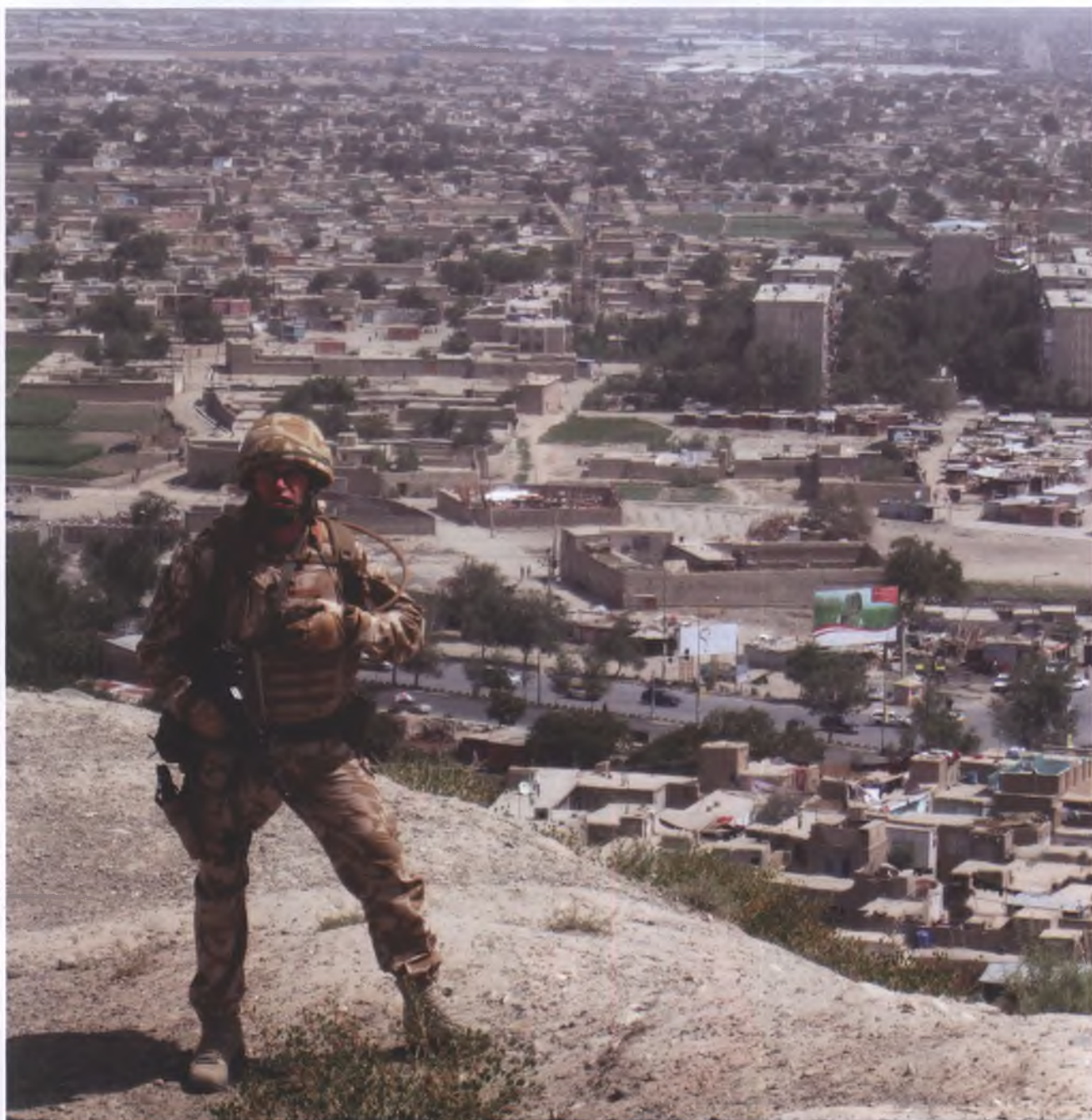
Pte Degnan runs for The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Charity.



E Company GPMG SF Team.



Pte Izzilio and new pal.



LCpl Ruffell on patrol above Kabul.

## Combined Cadet Forces



Stamford School CCF Annual Inspection.



The Colonel-in-Chief presents prizes at Oakham School.



HM The Queen and CSgt Spink Kimbolton School CCF.



Oundle School CCF on their annual ski camp in the Swiss Alps.

## Special Features

### Cadet 150 Royal Audience

*CSgt Barnaby Spink writes:*

There were many things that made the Cadet 150 launch special for me before it even happened. One was that I was representing my school and CCFs nationwide. Another, that I was an ambassador for my county and my region and finally the fact that I was one of two cadets to be representing my affiliated regiment of the Royal Anglians.

Having arrived at the ACF barracks at Hammersmith there was still a certain amount of speculation as to what was actually happening, as it had not yet been confirmed who we were meeting. Later that evening the other 25 cadets and I received the amazing information that it would in fact be Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh!

Although there were many activities planned for the day, the morning was set aside for the royal audience at Buckingham Palace. Having walked over from Wellington Barracks we were allowed through the gates and escorted into the Bow Room, the oldest part of the palace. We were given the customary briefing as to Ma'am as in jam, not Ma'am as in Marmalade. At 12 o'clock a hush came over the room as we heard talking outside the door. In came the Queen followed by the Duke of Edinburgh. They both made their way along the curving line of cadets in seniority of service. Being a member of the CCF and therefore at the front with the longest time to reflect after it had happened, it was like a mad whirl as every one tried to immediately lock the memory safely in the deep recesses of their brains. Just as everyone had got to grips with being in the same room as the Queen it was all over as she started to make her way to the exit. But arriving at the door she had time for one last cheery wave 'goodbye'.

The rest of the day was also a non-stop tour of people to meet and greet all around central London with lunch at the MOD followed by photos outside of and a tour around number 10 Downing Street, finally finishing the day with a charity reception at Lancaster House to celebrate the Ulysses Trust and their most recent project of a trip to Lesotho.

By the end of the day every one was exhausted and buzzing at the same time, wanting to get off their feet but also stay up and talk about the amazing day that had just taken place. Unfortunately the visit had to end and everyone had to go home; but everyone was in agreement that the day would never be forgotten.

*Editor's note: A photograph of Barnaby Spink meeting HM The Queen is on the adjacent page at the end of the colour section.*

### Iraq Service of Remembrance

*Lt Col (Retd) Eddie Thorne MC writes:*

In recognition that combat operations in Iraq ceased in 2009 a memorial service was held in St Paul's Cathedral in October 2009. The service was led by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the congregation included The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh, the Prime Minister, other leading politicians and senior military commanders, as well as large contingents from all ranks of the three Services and the Civil Service. Both the regular battalions and the 3rd Battalion were invited to send representatives. Eligibility to attend was that you held an Iraq Campaign Medal. Because no serving officers who had commanded battalions in Iraq were available, I was asked to attend as the Colonel of the Regiment's representative alongside a small cohort of serving Royal Anglian Regiment soldiers. We were joined there by Capt (Retd) Tom Gregory.

Whatever the rights or wrongs of going to war (and the Archbishop of Canterbury certainly did not spare Tony Blair's feeling by holding back his thoughts on the latter) the legitimately elected government of this country, with the support of Parliament, asked the military to prosecute a war on its behalf and then to sort out the mess afterwards. As an apolitical organisation, it is not up to the military to decide which wars are right or wrong; that path leads to military juntas and the UK gave that up as a bad job after Cromwell. That does not stop servicemen making their personal views known (and there is always the option of resigning) but having been given the order our

job is to get on and do it as best as one can. That we did and the Regiment should be proud of the part its Battalions played and the way the men within them performed. The memorial service was national recognition of a job well done.

Below are three accounts of the day which will hopefully convey a sense of the experience we all felt as a result of being allowed to represent our Regiment at such a significant event and the memories it evoked.

From a personal perspective three memories stick with me from the day: First was the egalitarian nature of the day. Everyone was allocated seats within a particular section of the cathedral; beyond that it was first come, first seated. This led to several generals and admirals who arrived just before the start being directed to seats at the rear while corporals and privates who had arrived early sat at the front. Secondly, my wife Alison's excitement at being seated only six rows behind The Queen and Prince Phillip. I was really pleased to have her with me and for her to see that the service was not just about those who deployed on the operation, but also acknowledged the support of those left behind – one of the readings was given by a mother whose son had been killed in Iraq. It reminded me how we should never forget that the challenges posed by an operation are not limited to the theatre in which they occur. Significant demands are placed on the families left behind, who often have to deal with increased responsibilities and the apprehension when the situation is not quite as OK as we have assured them. Also that their support and encouragement plays a very real part in helping us get through the tough times. Thirdly, how good it was to meet up with members of the Regiment, to hear how well they were all doing and to be reminded of the family nature of our organisation.

#### 1st Battalion: LCpl Cooledge

In October a small group of Vikings went to St Paul's Cathedral to take part in the service of remembrance to mark the end of combat operations in Iraq. As we approached the cathedral it was a surprise to see how big it was and also the amazing artwork. Some of the pictures were so clear and the amount of detail was astounding. It felt like a very imposing place – and the number of senior officers and dignitaries there just added to this feeling.

As we started to move in to the cathedral our tickets were checked and it turned out that the person inside who was doing it was once posted to the Battalion – it just goes to show what a small world it is. Once our tickets were checked we were split into separate groups and moved off to our parts of the cathedral. I ended up being by myself in one part of the cathedral. Just in front of my seat was a stone which had an inscription on; as I read it I started to think about my time in Iraq and what I had done.

My memories started flooding back: arriving in the heat of an Iraqi summer, doing my first top cover and probably my most vivid one – being close protection for ATO as he cleared an IED site. All these thoughts came back to me. Before I knew it the service started. My mind cleared and I concentrated on the service. I felt a huge sense of pride and honour, firstly because of what the Battalion had done during its tour and secondly because of the whole British military involvement in Iraq. Nearly as soon as it the service had started it seemed like it was finishing. As we filed out of the cathedral all the Royal Anglians met up again and we went to the Guildhall for a drinks reception.

Once at the Guildhall we were given champagne to drink and listened to another couple of speeches. I had the chance to speak to a few of the Mayor's Guard – it was very interesting to talk to them and find out what they did. By the time I finished talking to them I had a look round and noticed that it was only Royal Anglians left in the Guildhall. We all got together had a chat about the day and then headed back to Pirbright. On the way back to camp we all agreed that the day had been very interesting and worth being involved with. It certainly gave me a chance to think about my experiences in Iraq and I'm sure other people did the same too.

#### 2nd Battalion: WO2 Danny Morgan

Why was I selected? With the Battalion being on exercise in Kenya, it came down to who was left in the UK at the time of the service.

## Special Features



**The Regiment's representatives at St Paul's.**

However what I thought was a 'dicking' turned out to be an amazing day, full of varied emotions, from laughter, to great sadness.

Leading up to the service we couldn't help ourselves but remember some of the fun times we had in Iraq; but unfortunately with the good, sometimes the bad follows. I personally remembered that night on 13 May 2006 so well. It was the night that members of 8 Platoon C Company were out on a routine patrol, even though 8 Platoon's usual role was that of Operation Vigilant, a task that saw the Platoon deploy in helicopters around the city of Basra and surrounding areas to act as a deterrent to the Indirect Fire threat. But the night of the 13 May we had been told to go and support in the north west of the city in Snatch vehicles. Well the rest is history really. It ended up being a night to remember, but not for the right reasons, as two of our soldiers, Pte Joseva 'Dogg' Lewaicei, and Pte Adam 'Borris' Morris, were killed and another one of our soldiers, Pte Lionel 'Dez' O'Conner, lost his leg.

This being said, there were some happy memories from that tour and subsequent tours, and as always the soldiers were unwilling to give up, sit back and say that they were beaten. So due to some amazing displays of courage, grit and determination, 8 Platoon, and indeed the rest of the Battalion, gripped the bull by the horns and continued to have an outstanding tour. Although there were unfortunately more injuries, thankfully there were no more friendly deaths.

Leading up to the memorial parade itself was a bit of a shambles. Information was being passed down, but it was very limited and we found out the day before that there was no parking arrangements, or changing facilities. So it was going to have to be a trip on the London underground in service dress. For those not aware, neither ammo boots nor the shoes we wear with Service Dress are underground friendly. So as we moved through the underground it looked more like the auditions for *Dancing on Ice*.

As we arrived at St Paul's it was an amazing sight, seeing so many different dress uniforms and weird and wonderful ways of

wearing it. It was at that point I realised that this event was bigger than I thought. So we were ushered in and shown our seats - I was sat between a Major General and an RAF Wing Commander (who was a little too camp for my liking). We sat and waited for the dignitaries to start arriving, starting with Tony Blair, then Gordon Brown, and all manner of MPs. Then what seemed like minutes later the Royal Family arrived. What meant the most was that the vast majority of the Royal Family were there, which in my eyes was a great show of respect.

During the service several servicemen and women got up and gave a brief reading or said a few comments. This really bought it home that none of this was a PR stunt to make politicians look good; this was purely about those servicemen and women who gave their all.

After an emotional service, we were all invited back to the Guildhall for drinks and a buffet. This was a great opportunity to move around and chat to some of the people involved. I was lucky enough to catch up with an ex Poacher who had transferred to the RLC (not his fault - he was a muddled man). During the reception there was a large screen in the rooms, on which the speeches were played; it was good to hear that so many people had come to show their respects.

The service and reception was such an experience. I felt honoured and privileged to have been a part of it and, to tell the truth, I even feel guilty for thinking 'what have I been dicked for this time'. So all in all I am over the moon to have represented the Battalion.

I will leave you with one last thought...not one about the service but related to it. During the day, moving around London, as you can imagine we got some funny looks and the occasional jibe. But while we were sitting on the train on the way home, a civilian came up to us and started talking, just waffle really, but then as he left he said he really wanted to say thank-you, not just to us but to everyone, because he hears on the news all the abuse we get, and he wanted to take the opportunity to say thank you, for all we give up on their behalf. Now in my eyes that was the perfect end to an amazing day

**Sedgeford Hall Estate Shoot***Maj Chris Pook writes:*

On Tuesday 26 January 2010 members of the 1st and 3rd Battalions enjoyed a superb day of driven shooting at the Sedgeford Hall Estate in North Norfolk run by Charlie Campbell and his wife Holly.

The idea for the shoot came from Martin Gilvey and Peter Glenser. Martin is a shooting agent with a deep love of the sport. Peter is a barrister specialising in firearms law and courts martial and has close links with the armed forces. Between them they gathered together a very generous group of people united in a wish to say a personal thank you to our soldiers for their efforts abroad.

The day was attended by a broad range of individuals ranging from relatively new arrivals - Ptes Read and Jones (1st Battalion) and Ashford (3rd Battalion) - to the rather more senior Maj Chelsea

**Gotcha! Part of the 'bag'****A nice high bird - now follow through!****The shooting party.**

## Special Features



**Maj Chris Pook trades one days shooting for a Regimental Plaque.**

Hall. Each novice gun was mentored by an experienced sportsman to provide tuition and ensure safety.

The day also provided a great opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones across the Regiment. I shared a peg with Cpl Parker, a man who I had heard much about and was delighted to have the opportunity to meet. It also appears that WO2 (RQMS) Shaw has forgiven me for the PJNCO Cadre I put him through in the early 90s. And Sgt Bisset tells me we shared a camp last year but I did not recognise him because of the beard he was sporting at the time.

A full report of the day is available in the April edition of the *Shooting Gazette*. High points from a shooting perspective include Capt Ollie Ormiston taking a high cock early in the day and Pte Jones taking three cock birds on the final drive.

A fine dinner in the evening was provided at the King's Head Hotel in Great Bircham where we were joined by estate owners Susan and Bernard Campbell. Wines were provided by Jane and Gordon Hall of Bijou Bottles in Wroxham. The wine included a Methuselah of Billecart-Salmon Brut Reserve champagne opened with great style by Pte Read.

It is difficult to estimate the number of people living in and around Sedgeford Hall who gave very generously with financial support and their time. The guns are extremely grateful to all of those who contributed for providing us with a very memorable happy and successful day.

If you are interested in arranging a day of shooting or a stay in North Norfolk, please consider using the services of those who have supported us. I would be delighted to pass on their details.

### Officer Recruiting

*Capt Nick Denning, Regimental Careers Officer, writes:*

At the time of writing this article I have spent seven months in the role of Regimental Careers Officer (RCO). Having been posted at short notice to Bury St Edmunds last September, I have found myself immersed in one of the most rewarding jobs of my career so far. The horror of missing an operational tour took some getting used to, but this concern has been balanced by the satisfaction of nurturing talented young individuals that stand to make excellent commanders of the future. With The Regiment in vogue and operating to a standard as high as can be found anywhere in the Infantry, only the best will do and it has been a personal battle to get the most desirable candidates into a position where they are able and aching to become one of us.

At present, the Regimental books contain a staggering 482 Potential

Officers (POs) of varying degrees of talent. This sample contains all individuals between the stages of requesting an initial interview with me and marching up the steps of Old College at RMAS. Through visiting CCFs, ACFs and UOTCs within our catchment area, we have always cast our net as widely as possible. These methods are time-honoured and promote awareness of our cap-badge. More recently, *Ross Kemp in Afghanistan*, *Attack State Red* and the instability of business careers in the civilian world, have all pumped oxygen onto the flames of our officer recruiting movement.

The centre of gravity in the battle to recruit the appropriate talent has proven to be very late in the game - in the 11th hour before the candidates' entry to Sandhurst. Despite the fact that the long term nurturing and courtship of candidates has worked for decades, it is a fact that many of the finest candidates begin their recruitment in their final year of university, if not post-graduation. The resulting tactic for this year has been to invent what has become known as the super visit where POs are loaded onto a Regimental visit as close to their Sandhurst intake as possible, and in as great a number and high as quality as possible. This has resulted in ten POs or more visiting one of our Battalions a mere fortnight before Sandhurst entry. This has some distinct benefits:

Visiting POs have a chance to meet and bond *en masse* before their commissioning course. Inevitably, some will end up in the same platoon at Sandhurst. This allows them to help each other out, and create a solidarity that wards off the advances of other cap-badges that would seek to poach them from our books!

The visit they undergo can be pitched at the highest possible level for a civilian. The hosting officers can expect a high common factor of intelligence and life experience, so that they might put together a stimulating visit package that will help to both sell The Regiment and allow the hosting officers to assess the candidates thoroughly.

The visiting POs arrive at Sandhurst with our Regimental Ethos at the forefront of their minds.

At RMAS, the stakes have risen. Since September 2009, the Choice of Arm procedure has undergone a fundamental change, in that OCdts must now overtly put their two choices of arm in order of preference, at Week 7 in the Intermediate Term. This Declaration of Preference (DOP) is contractual; a candidate, if selected by their first choice regiment or corps, must go to them on commissioning. Therefore, any candidate of high quality who has The Royal Anglian Regiment as their second choice is unlikely to come our way unless his Selection Board with his first choice cap-badge goes badly.

As a result, it is essential that the Regiment self-publicises throughout the officer recruiting pipeline and RMAS. Huge credit must go to the 2nd Battalion, which has pioneered the first two super visits in Celle. Superb hosting has helped to ensure that the vast majority of our top-end candidates have put us as the first choice at DOP. The latest batch of POs to enter RMAS saw 14 out of 17 candidates in Celle with the Poachers a fortnight before their entry date. Of those, only two did not formally express interest in the Regiment at Week 8 of the Commissioning Course, with a further five joining the fray having heard how much fun our visitors had had so recently.

Maj Borgnis and the infectious CSgt Love have also had a great impact on the OCdts at Sandhurst, with CSgt Holmes now stepping into the fray. Approachability, professionalism, and force of character have been the watchwords of their role modelling and many OCdts (and not just our POs) have commented on how they favour the Royal Anglian brand of instruction above that of other cap-badges.

From CCF outings with our Regional Recruiting Teams, through Initial Interview at RHQ, nurturing for AOSB, Regimental Visits and engagement from our DS at RMAS, it is pleasing to see that the Regimental Ethos is consistently present. The appeal of the locally tied family Regiment that 'makes it happen' is greater than ever for the PO, especially on the back of recent operational successes. This homely and welcoming outlook competes robustly with the elitism of the Parachute Regiment, the glamour of the Guards and Richard Sharpe's marketing of The Rifles. Most pleasingly of all, all ranks of the Regiment portray our ethos admirably and never fail to impress our POs. Every Royal Anglian, in his own way, however small or indirectly, contributes to the function of the Regimental Careers Officer and for this I must express my gratitude.

## Confessions of an Aide de Camp

*Capt Ali Luff, ADC to DSACEUR, writes:*

On a Thursday afternoon towards the end of 2009, I was quite happily chuntering about life as a platoon commander at ITC Catterick (the normal way for a non-grad officer to make up time), while sipping beers and comparing notes on whose recruits had had the best slip up that week (the King's Division won with the recruit who came back to his section commander at the end of an exercise with his pockets full of torn up turf; and it being explained to him that he had been sent out to collect brass not grass.)

Thursday drinks were interrupted, however, when I was summoned by a call from CO the Vikings. I was being offered a chance to be an *Aide de Camp* (ADC) to a UK General working in NATO. I weighed up the pain my girlfriend would cause me, against the alternative of snubbing the CO (at that time the largest star in my universe); and it seemed unlikely that as a 'two-pip' I would be able to snub a General even if I tried. So I accepted.

The interview revolved around me trying to look keen and really wanting the job, while the General explained that anyone who actually wanted to leave his Battalion and work in an office might make a good ADC, but was not the sort of person he was looking for. This was a paradox I was to encounter again and again.

The interview with the Regimental Secretary was simpler: 'Rule Number One – don't F\*\*\* Up. Any questions?' And with that, two weeks later, I found myself in Belgium dressed like the *Man from Del Monté*, trying to give a sound explanation to an irate Group Captain as to why I had just connected a phone call with Gen Sutherell instead of General Deverall. I had broken Rule Number One.

I tried to work out what an ADC actually did, apart from arranging phone calls. Six months later, I have still not fully mapped out the role, but I will take a stab at it. The ADC liaises with whoever necessary in order to make his boss's life as smooth as possible. He coordinates the Chef with the PA, his General's wife with the drivers and the visits team with the military assistants, to make sure his boss is in the right place (EU Parliament, MOD, FOB Silab), at the right time (the night before, five minutes before, never late!), wearing the right gear (Service Dress, Blues, with or without the KCB?) and with a way of getting to the next 'right place'. His other duties include acting as the military assistant for matters relating to the UK or The Regiment, which can range from writing letters to booking travel and hotels. Using a simple mobile phone, he also acts as a combination of BG Tac and Directory Enquiries; arranging phone calls with the great and good of the world while sitting in the departures lounge of Brussels Airport.

The final, most ill defined, but import, role of an ADC is to act as a trouble shooter. As we know, 'no plan survives contact with the enemy.' Something will always go wrong, regardless of how careful your planning is, so the ADC is on hand with his phone, his credit card and a working knowledge of *Expedia.com* to try to avert disaster. Oddly this has often turned out to be the most satisfying part of the job.

While the General was right on that first interview – someone who enjoys the Field Army may not make the best ADC – I think that being an ADC has made me more useful in the Field Army. My forward planning, concurrent activity and attention to detail (none of which were ever strengths of mine) have all improved by sheer necessity. In a 15-day period this year we conducted four separate overseas trips, each of two to three days, covering five countries. Working to that tempo cannot help but improve you as an officer. I will certainly never forget the feeling of watching our motorcycle escort skid into the ditch at the side of the road when we were still 90km from the airport in rush hour traffic. Nor will I need to be told twice that: 'They're in my briefcase...in the car...in the car park' is not an acceptable answer to the question: 'Where are the documents marked 'Secret'?'.

There can be few educations available that compare to being an ADC. The first few months may be completely and terrifyingly incomprehensible; but once you start to understand the nuances of NATO/EU cooperation (or a similar topic), you start to understand how the real decisions are made. You see how much individuals can affect the course of events and how painstakingly thought out all



The author (the one with the handbag!) accompanying the Colonel of the Regiment to the NATO Training Mission at Ar Rustamiyah in Iraq.

activities at the strategic level are. Confident that I will never sit in his chair, it is rewarding to be able to draw in as much information and experience as possible, while it lays so thick on the ground.

So six months in, and with Rule Number One broken more than once, I continue to relish the challenges, travel and education this job brings, while simultaneously looking forward to returning to the Battalion (and my girlfriend's good books) in the future. With a number of senior Royal Anglians moving into the realm of Swords and Batons, there will be chances in the future for other young officers to try their hand at high profile briefcase carrying. I cannot stress enough what an eye opening job it can be.

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## Special Features

### Royal Anglian Way Gibraltar

*WO2 D Riley, TSA 49 (East) Brigade, writes:*

As part of the 150th anniversary of the cadet movement, Essex ACF was fortunate enough to secure a seven-day trip to the Rock of Gibraltar.

The idea of the trip, as well as being part of the celebrations, was twofold: firstly for the cadets to experience an overseas expedition; and secondly to learn something of the history of Gibraltar and its strategic importance during World War Two.

For those who aren't familiar with the military history of Gibraltar, 1769 saw the start of a 14-year period of war. Besieged by the Spanish and French between 1779 and 1783, the 12th Foot, later the Suffolk Regiment, played an active part in the Great Siege. Under the control of Col William Picton, the Regiment formed the main body of the Grand Sortie which broke the siege on 17 November 1781. In recognition of its services during this time, the regiment added the illustrious name Gibraltar to its colours and the arms of Gibraltar were taken as its crest. The design comprised a castle and key with the words 'Montis Insignia Calpe' - meaning 'The Arms of the Rock of Gibraltar' - written beneath.

During World War Two, Gibraltar played a critical part in the outcome of the war, controlling virtually all naval traffic into and out of the Mediterranean Sea from the Atlantic Ocean. In addition to its commanding position, Gibraltar provided a strongly defended harbour from which ships could operate.

Under the command of Vice Admiral James Somerville, Force H had the task of maintaining naval superiority and providing a strong escort for convoys to and from the besieged island of Malta. At the same time Gibraltar came under aerial bombardment from aircraft and was the focus of underwater attacks by the Italian Navy. To protect themselves from land attack, 30 miles of underground tunnels were excavated from the limestone, creating an 'underground city'. This secret haven contained caverns, barracks, offices and a fully equipped hospital for soldiers and their families, some of which were from the Suffolks and Hertfordshires who served there during WW II.

In November 1942, Operation Torch, the allied invasion of North Africa was coordinated from the 'Rock'. General Eisenhower, who was given command of the operation, set up his Headquarters there from where he planned each phase. Following the successful campaign and the surrender of Italy in 1943, Gibraltar's role shifted from a forward operating base to a rear-area supply position for



Before – WO2 Riley notes the problem.



During...



After – the group present the fruits of their labour.

convoys travelling through the Mediterranean. This continued until VE-Day in 1945.

In 1968-69, 2 Royal Anglian built a memorial to commemorate the soldiers from our former regiments who fought and died in Gibraltar. I have personally been lucky enough to visit the site on a few occasions and, like most Royal Anglians, take a particular interest in the history of where The Regiment has fought. So during Essex ACF's visit to Gibraltar, and after speaking to the ACF chain of command, I proposed that the cadets visit 'Royal Anglian Way' and learn about the history of Gibraltar and The Regiment.

Unfortunately 'Royal Anglian Way' does not come under the nature reserve, leaving the pathway and plaque unmaintained. But armed with the knowledge about their Regiment and what they fought for, the cadets took part in cleaning, weeding and restoring the path and the Royal Anglian sign. The task itself took two full days, but the hard work was definitely worth it. Hopefully we will not be the last persons to do this.

It goes without saying that if you're ever on the 'Rock' and get the chance to visit 'Royal Anglian Way' and you have the resources, please help to maintain this site in order for it to remain a credit to the Regiment.

## In Praise of Regimental County Committees

*Maj Bill O'Driscoll, Area Secretary Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, writes:*

As the Area Secretary for Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, it has been my job to develop and act as Secretary for the County Committees in my patch. Regimental County Committees were endorsed by the Regimental Council in November 2003, since when they have developed, realigned within county boundaries and grown into organisations that provide benefit for The Regiment. The idea of having committees that deal only with Royal Anglian matters is sound, as it focuses the Regimental effort where it can be the most beneficial ie recruiting, ACF/CCFs, TA, Associations and the civil interface in cities and towns. In short these committees are able to promote and support The Regiment.

Recent committee meetings in the East Midlands have been attended by OCs A, B and C companies 2 R Anglian, who gave excellent and comprehensive presentations on the Poachers' forthcoming role in Cyprus and Afghanistan. The attendance by the OCs allowed the members of the committees to offer their support to each of the companies for the time when they deploy. This offer can be in different forms: a member of the Northamptonshire Committee has arranged for an injured soldier who is getting married to have a photographer present on the day to produce all of the wedding photos free of charge; while another one has offered C (Northamptonshire) Company use of the Travis Perkins hospitality box at a Northampton Saints Rugby match.



Leicestershire County Committee.



Lincolnshire County Committee.

Committee members are the intelligence gatherers for The Regiment as they keep abreast of local issues, gauge the grass roots support of the wider Regimental Family and inform the Chairman and Secretary of any opportunities that could be exploited within their counties. County committees are not constrained by size and can be as large or as small as required; however I believe the more the merrier and from all levels of the Regimental Family, with the aim of providing an all informed net for those concerned.

Committees meet twice a year and the Chairmen brief the Colonel of the Regiment each November, in the margins of the Regimental Council Meeting. The Regiment needs to remain dominant in the counties and these committees are a way of furthering this aim. If readers feel they have something to offer on a County Committee in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire, then contact me on 01604 635412; or email [william.odriscoll564@mod.uk](mailto:william.odriscoll564@mod.uk).

## Young Mr Spriggins Joins His Regiment

*Shagrat (Viking, Poacher and Tiger) writes:*

*Readers should note that these are the edited highlights of an incident that took place in a garrison somewhere on the southern flanks of a major training area which some old soldiers may describe as ... 'open rolling down land suitable for tanks'. The terrorist threat at the time was very high, but not sufficiently high to necessitate the erection of perimeter fences and therefore all the roads in the garrison were open to Tom, Dick and Seamus. All the incidents took place, believe me, for I am an officer of considerable rank and reputation and I may have your grid reference (whatever that is).*

The Captain sarcastically asked Cpl Snooks, the driver of the Land Rover which had just deposited the newly-joined young officer at the front door of the Officers' Mess, if the new gentleman had given his driver a tip. 'No sir, not even the 3:30 at Haydock Park'. 'Bad form,' said the Captain, 'let him carry his own bags then'. 'Very good skip,' replied the corporal who dropped the bags, returned to the driver's seat and promptly drove off over the young man's golf bag. 'Should've tipped him,' muttered the Captain, toeing a badly bent mashie niblick into the roses.

'You're going to B Company, I understand young man,' said the Captain. 'They are in good form, Maj Beddup commands, Daffy Duckworth is 2IC, keep on the right side of Company Sgt Maj Shouter, good man, but doesn't see the point of subalterns. The platoon commanders are an odd bunch, 'Smelly' Trouseron, 'Blimey' O'Reilly and 'Spiders' Tuffet, they'll put you on the right track.' Spriggins picked up his kit and his golf bag with the cross-country tyre motif and followed the Captain into the lobby of the late Victorian mess.

At this point the CO appeared in the anteroom door just as the side pocket of Spriggins' recently run-over golf bag split and several golf balls bounced joyfully about the tiled floor. 'You must be Spriggins and you have just dropped some bollocks. I'll see you in the bar at lunchtime. By the way, I've just noticed a golf bat in the roses, it's taken the head of one of my favourites, *Floribunda tuberosa* Mrs Trellis. Damn shame, the old Major is buried under there, bloody fine boxer. Lunchtime then'.

## Special Features

The Mess Colour Sergeant led Mr Spriggins to his room. 'Is it true about the Major under the bush?' asked Spriggins as he put down his bags. 'Oh yes Sir, a legend in the Battalion, so best remove your er, noblick from his grave Sir' said the Colour Sergeant. Spriggins hid his surprise that a well-respected Field Officer should be buried in the mess garden and got on with unpacking his kit.

Alas, young Mr Spriggins did not listen to wiser heads and, over the next few days, managed to upset, in some way or another most of the important people in the 1st Battalion The Royal Midshires. The Captain became aware of these matters by means of his various 'sources' around the Battalion. He discovered that the young man had ignored the salutes of private soldiers, refused the advice of Junior NCOs and had told his Platoon Sergeant that he, as the officer, would be in charge of the Platoon's discipline. 'Time the brat was taught a lesson,' he mused.

A cabal of living-in officers met, plotted and devised a plan. The result was that three days later, Spriggins was told that the Battalion was buzzing with the rumour that, according to very good sources, a terrorist attack on a unit in the Garrison was imminent. In order not to alert the terrorists, it was decided that personnel would defend their own accommodation ie the Band would defend their Band accommodation, the sergeants their mess, B Company their block and so on, and that nothing unusual should be seen.

Young Spriggings was very excited, he'd only been with the Battalion for a few days but here was an opportunity to show them just what a good soldier and officer he was. Thus the living-in officers met on the lawn of the Mess that afternoon for alfresco tea and a serious, but impromptu O Group. One by one, still apparently making teatime chat, they were briefed on the arcs of fire that they would take up that night, in the garden, in the defence of their mess. Spriggins was last to be briefed, 'Left of arc the hydrangea, right of arc, corner of the fence under that big conifer, near the floribunda. There will be a subaltern from the next mess on the other side, they're all a bit 'special forces' next door so you probably won't hear him' said the Captain. Spriggins put down his cup and saucer and dropped to the ground in order to check his arcs at ground level. 'Not now you bloody fool! Paddy is probably watching right now.' Chastened, he got to his feet, stepped back on his plate of fish-paste sandwiches and the O Goup dispersed.

As instructed, Spriggins turned up in the bar at 1830hrs dressed in combat kit. He dropped his webbing in the lobby but carried his SLR into the bar. His brother officers were all there, all in combat kit and not wishing the inconvenience of drawing their personal weapons, they announced that: 'Never mind old chap, our rifles are in the silver room, chuck your weapon behind the bar while we eat, Cpl Bagworth will look after it.' Lots of beer was drunk before they trooped through to the dining room, but one officer dallied in order to remove the all-important firing pin from Spriggins' self-loading rifle... 'just in case'.

After dinner, confirmatory orders were given, code words and nicknames issued and final preparations made. 'Got your magazine filled young Spriggs?' 'No, I haven't got any ammunition yet.' he stammered. 'Here this will do you.' as two clips of 7.62mm were thrown at him. Spriggins, now very nervous, made an embarrassing hash of filling his magazine, rounds skittering across the parquet as he fumbled this basic infantry skill. Under the silent gaze of his peers he finally filled the magazine and placed it in his webbing. One by one, at irregular intervals, officers left the anteroom to collect their weapons and then to leave the mess by various routes, ostensibly to take up their fire positions around their building. Finally it was his turn. He was reminded of the importance of this his first Operation, the danger presented by the terrorists and the proud traditions of the Midshires whilst under fire. 'You'll need this young Spriggs,' said the Captain, throwing an A40 radio at the now slightly befuddled subaltern. Old soldiers reading this (still reading?) will remember the A40; a radio set in name only, it looked and felt like a brick and had the range of a well-thrown brick. However, it provided young Spriggins with communications back to the Operations Room of this venture. Initially this command and control was in the bar of the Midshires mess, where whispered situation reports were sent to the lone Spriggings under his conifer in the corner of the mess

garden as he carefully observed his arcs of fire, from hydrangea to conifer. The poor reception of the A40 masked the sniggers and barely concealed chortles of the inmates of the bar. Eventually they tired of this fun and the set was taken to the unit Guard Room where the Guard Commander, Cpl 'Tabby' Catt, was delighted to have a little light relief listening to the hushed sitreps and nonsense code words issued, in the small, cold hours by the lone subaltern under his strategic tree. The private soldiers of the guard bit their lips as the keeper of the conifer repeated code words such as 'Numb nuts now over', 'Rutting rabbits in my location over'.

During the long uneventful hours the young sentinel grew to regret the several pints of ale that he had consumed before dinner, so in the tight confines of the rose bed he relieved himself rather inaccurately. The night passed, no volleys of small arms fire, no arrests and alas, no medals; even the rutting rabbits left the scene. So at dawn, the sound of running boots got the young man's attention. Through the early morning mist they came, a platoon of thirty or so soldiers (told you this was some time ago!) on a pre-breakfast run with a SNCO at the front. Just as they came into his left of arc he heard the sergeant shout a command 'Eyes right, mornin' sir! Eyes front' and they were gone into the mist, towards their breakfast. 'That looked just like Sgt Throat and my platoon,' he mused, 'I wonder how they knew I was there? Why aren't they on guard? Must look into security'.

Just as Spriggins was thinking about spoiling his Platoon's day with new edicts, the front door of the mess opened and out strode a whistling Cpl Bagworth dressed in blues trousers, white shirt, dicky bow and cummerbund, carrying a silver salver. He left a track in the cold dew that covered the lawn in front of the mess. 'Morning sir, fresh one isn't it? Tea or coffee sir?' asked the Mess Steward. 'Oh tea I think Corporal,' replied Spriggins. 'Can I have your mug sir?' enquired the Corporal. Now you old fools who have already admitted that you remember the SLR and the A40 will also remember just how difficult it was to remove the mugs, drinking, black plastic from the carrier canteen, when the 58 pattern webbing was soft and dry and you were standing, (gosh what memories we have); so imagine the challenge the young man had when his webbing was new, cold and how shall I say, slightly damp?

However Cpl Bagworth waited patiently and eventually carried the officer's mug, drinking, black plastic, back into the mess on his silver salver, returning quickly with the mug steaming and full. 'Compliments of the officers, will you join them for breakfast?' asked Bagworth. Slowly Spriggins wriggled out of his fire position and shuffled stiffly towards the mess. He entered the lobby expecting to be greeted like a hero, instead the senior subaltern asked wearily if he had unloaded and cleared his weapon and when told: 'Er, no sorry I haven't,' was curtly given the necessary range order and informed that this serious lapse of training would cost him a round in the bar that night. The Captain looked enquiringly at the damp patch in Spriggins' combat trousers and asked 'You realise that you were on the Major's grave last night and I think you've piddled on his bones, am I right?' Spriggins nodded. 'Better tell the Colonel at lunch time then,' said the Captain.

After changing his combat trousers, the Platoon Commander joined his men for muster parade. His men asked him if he'd had a good night out because he'd missed the platoon run. He muttered something about security and looked forward, with trepidation, to lunchtime and to explaining his misdemeanor to the CO.

In the bar he waited for the Colonel to indicate that it was time to talk. 'I'm very sorry Sir but I think I, err, may have urinated on the Major's grave last night. I had rather a lot of beer'. The CO, who had been briefed, looked theatrically thunderous, but when he saw just how crestfallen young Spriggins was, he relented and said: 'Get some more beer in then, the old Major used to piddle there at least once a day'. 'I don't understand sir, there by the roses?' asked Spriggins. 'Yes, he was a creature of habit the old Major, did my floribundas no end of good!' roared the CO, 'There's his photo there'.

Spriggins turned and there, behind the bar, was a photo of a regimental boxer, flat nose, pink tongue, brown coat, short tail, dog tags and a major's crown on a studded collar. The inscription read: 'The Major, may his bones rest in peace, wherever he has buried them.'

# Regimental Association

## Obituaries

### Lt Col WF Badcock MBE



Lt Col Walter (Wally) Badcock MBE, who died on 13 January 2010 after a short illness, was a man who was proud of the British Army and especially of the Cambridgeshire Regiment. He was a serving soldier during World War Two and his work and much of his leisure time thereafter was devoted to the volunteer Army forces.

Born in 1917, just a month after his father was killed in Ypres, his mother took on extra work to pay for his education at the Cambridgeshire High School for Boys. After school he worked at Pye telecommunications in Cambridge until volunteering for the Cambridgeshire

Regiment, where he joined the 2nd Battalion in 1939.

Initially the 2nd Battalion HQ was in Wisbech and then moved to Norfolk to take up coastal defences between training duties. After further training in Scotland, Wales, Lancashire and Yorkshire, the Battalion began the process of mobilisation in October 1941. Its destination was to be Singapore, via Nova Scotia and Cape Town, arriving in January 1942. Wally was first deployed on the mainland of Malaya before the retreat to Singapore. He was then in action during the heavy fighting in Singapore before the surrender of British troops. There followed three and a half years as a Japanese prisoner of war working on the notorious Thai railway. This is a period of his life that he seldom spoke of except in the most general of terms. His family learnt of his retreat from Malaya before the Battle of Singapore when he travelled down the coast in a small boat with a makeshift sail and mast, sailing by night and resting by day in fishing huts. He spoke of his horrendous journey from Singapore up the mainland, by rail in covered metal wagons, overcrowded and with no fresh air, which lasted for five days in tropical temperatures, but left the listener to imagine the conditions the men endured.

His family had some insight when he travelled back with them on three occasions to visit the war graves and travel up country, through the jungle, on the River Kwai. He described the work, the bamboo huts crawling with maggots, the cholera and dysentery, lack of food, and the never ending hard labour when even the sick were carried on stretchers to the worksite. He told how he bit right through his bottom lip with the effort of force marching and on a lighter note how, because he was a good swimmer, he was lucky to be given a job swimming in the river to undo any log jams as the sleepers for the railway were sent downstream; it enabled him to keep cool in the oppressive heat of the jungle.

After three and a half years, during which time Wally's brother, Bill, died of cholera in one of the camps, the Japanese surrendered and the troops were repatriated. He came home suffering from malnutrition and, in common with all the prisoners of war, having to learn to live with the memories of the camps.

On return, after a period of recuperation, he worked as the production manager at the flax factory in Exning before accepting the invitation to join the staff of County TAFA (now RFCA) in 1948 as the finance secretary and deputy secretary. For a period in the early 1950s he was also Captain and Adjutant of Newmarket Home Guard Battalion. In 1967 he became the Cadet Executive Officer of the Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force and was awarded the MBE in 1974 in recognition of his services. During his time as CEO he instigated several notable initiatives, amongst which was the overseeing of a pilot scheme for the introduction of girls into the Cadet Force. He also oversaw a period of significant expansion of the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely ACF. He was Staff Officer

to the County Cadet Commandant and retired as CEO and Deputy Commandant in 1982.

From 1972 to 1986, he was chairman of the Cambridgeshire Regiment Old Comrades Association and was president from 1997 to 2003 when failing eyesight forced his resignation, but he was proud to continue as a patron.

Wally's first wife died a few years after his return from the Far East but he had 55 years of happy marriage to Mary. He was a much loved and respected father of Diane, Suzanne and David and was proud of his grandchildren and great grandchildren. As his grandson said at his funeral: 'The world is a better place for him having lived in it and we have lost a great man'.

CE

### Maj TC Eaton OBE TD DL



Maj Tom Eaton OBE TD DL, died on 19 January 2010, aged 91. He was commissioned on 2 December 1936, two days before the abdication of King Edward VII. Tom Eaton was a remarkable man of great character, dedication and drive. He was a Royal Norfolk veteran of World War Two and the war in the Far East. He was captured at Singapore with the 4th Battalion and spent over three years in captivity at the hands of the Japanese. After the war he went on to become one of the youngest Mayors of Norwich and the senior partner of a prestigious law firm

in Norwich. He was a founder member and the inspiration behind the creation of the Museum of the Royal Norfolk and Royal Anglian Regiments in Norwich. This museum was a national pioneer of the concept of embedding Regimental museums with the county museum service. Both the Royal Norfolk Regimental Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment have benefited immensely from his wisdom, foresight and commitment. For many years, until 2008, he was President of the 4th Battalion R Norfolk Regiment Comrades Association and chaired the 4th Battalion R Norfolk Regiment Officers' Dinner Club. The Norwich Cathedral Service of Thanksgiving on 12 February 2010 truly indicated the respect in which he was held. The cathedral was packed to overflowing.

His son, David Eaton, spoke at the Thanksgiving Service: 'I expect that many of you here today knew my father in his professional life, as a solicitor, alderman and civic leader or maybe from his days in the Royal Norfolk Regiment or as a patron of the library, museum and Theatre Royal. Others of you, may have met him at social events, in the Norfolk Club over lunch, or encountered him whilst striding with purpose down London Street.

'The Eaton family, or at least part of it, has lived in Norwich for over 200 years. My father continued that tradition, committed wholeheartedly to Norwich and to Norfolk. Indeed, he admitted that if he hadn't been sent away to school and confronted by the Second World War, then he might not have travelled further in his life than Thetford or King's Lynn. Instead he became a seasoned, if infrequent, traveller, enjoying French culture and a special relationship, through the 2nd Air Division of the 8th Air Force, with the USA.

'He was a Stoic, by education, but had an Epicurean spirit for life. Whilst committed to routine, he was a lover of all things indulgent from liqueur chocolates to puddings and extra helpings of Sunday lunch. His wardrobe was full of familiar, tailored-for-life clothes. He was not a man to be swayed by fashion but he was always smart and distinguished. Clothes were replaced only when they wore through. It amused me that this attachment to one style - double breasted suits with turned up trousers - saw him unintentionally become a fashion leader at least twice in his life!

'A figure of resolute good health, he rarely succumbed to colds or flu. Until he was 86, he was still walking or driving to his office

## Obituaries

at 3 Upper King Street to check the post, turn on the heating or just to complete some unfinished business.

'He believed in striving to make better. He was wise, a man of thoughtful and considered advice. He championed causes from pensions to people, from libraries to theatre, from the law to education. Most of all, he demonstrated to us, as children, how to live life to the full. He believed that in times of darkness, good will overcome, that the phoenix will rise from the ashes and that we should strive to do the very best for ourselves and for others.

'I have a copy of some verses he gave me when I was a young boy, the last two lines of which sum up his spirit:

*Life's battles don't often go to the stronger or faster man  
But sooner or later the man who wins is the man who thinks he can.'*  
He is survived by his wife Robin and children David, Kate and Mary.

JR

### Maj John Owen 'Jof' Flint DSO MC



Maj 'Jof' Flint, who has died aged 93, was awarded a DSO and an MC in 1944 while serving with the Lincolnshire Regiment.

On November 22 1944, Flint led B Company, 4th Battalion the Lincolnshire Regiment (4 LR), in an attack on Maasbree, a Dutch town close to the border with Germany. The ground was flat and provided no cover. The Germans had Spandau machinegun positions which were well dug in, and the leading platoon sustained heavy casualties. Flint led the two remaining platoons forward and directed the attack, which was carried out under a hail of machinegun fire. Once again, the

advance was checked as the forward troops took casualties.

Followed by his runner, Flint stalked the most dangerous of the Spandau teams. Despite coming under direct fire from the other machinegun positions, he succeeded in accounting for the Spandau and its crew with his Sten gun. He brought his company on to their objective, where they came under heavy shell fire. His Forward Observation Officer's carrier with its communication unit was knocked out, so Flint, using his radio set, called down artillery and mortar fire and broke up two counter-attacks.

When a third attack came in from the flank, no complete platoon could be spared to deal with it. Flint led an assault party, and, firing his Sten at point-blank range, caused the enemy to flee in disorder, leaving behind their dead and wounded. He was awarded an immediate DSO.

John Owen Flint was born at Stamford, Lincolnshire, on 24 July 1916 and educated at Stamford School. He worked for Barclays Bank, joined the TA and, when the Second World War broke out, was commissioned into the Lincolnshire Regiment and posted to 4 LR.

While taking part in the short, ill-fated campaign in Norway, he was forced to enter a farm where his men were sheltering through a door covered by enemy snipers and a machine gun. When the house was set ablaze, he got his platoon out of the building by firing a Bren gun from an exposed position to cover their withdrawal. He was mentioned in despatches.

After two years in Iceland, where the aim was to forestall occupation by the Germans, Flint landed with 4 LR on Sword Beach on D+4. The Battalion went into action soon afterwards and lost most of its carriers in heavy fighting.

In September the company commanded by Flint made a successful attack on a strong enemy position in woodland at Gainneville, near Le Havre.

In October, they held a vital sector of the main approaches into Baarle-Nassau, a village on the Belgian-Dutch border. Flint's outstanding leadership, skilful patrolling and deployment of his men

convinced the enemy – as confirmed by interviews with prisoners – that they were dealing with a force three times the size. He was awarded an MC.

A tank commander from the Canadian regiment, which fought alongside Flint at Arnhem, said of him: 'He was a real soldier, one in 1,000, the best I've ever served with. I was with every division in the British Eighth Army and some in the US Fifth Army, and I knew only two like him. The Germans didn't stand a chance against guys like him.'

On returning to England, Flint farmed at Barholm, Lincolnshire, where his cattle were an absorbing interest: he bred his own and won many championships at the local shows. For many years he served on the Stamford Show Committee as Chairman and later as President.

Flint worked on a number of diocesan committees and played a regular part in church activities. A lifelong supporter of the Lincolnshire Regiment, he served on the regional Army Benevolent Fund for many years.

He was appointed Deputy Lieutenant of Lincolnshire in 1964.

'Jof' Flint died on December 15 2009. He married, in 1944, Kathleen Smith. She predeceased him, and he is survived by their son and daughter.

### Maj HK Merriam MC



Maj Hugh K Merriam MC, died on 11 October 2009 aged 90. He was born in 1919, one of five children brought up in London. He went to Rugby School in 1933 and completed his education with a year in Switzerland.

He joined the Royal Corps of Signals at Catterick in 1940. Hugh soon requested a transfer to the infantry and after OCTU he was commissioned into The Suffolk Regiment and in December 1940 was posted to the Depot at Bury St Edmunds. In March 1941, he joined the 1st Battalion in Weymouth and was to remain with the Battalion until the end of his service.

In the autumn of 1943 the Battalion moved to Nairn on the Moray Firth to carry out final combined operations training with the naval force which would eventually carry the Division to France. In January and February 1944 several exercises in near Arctic conditions were held with new US landing ships which carried the small landing craft suspended on davits. As Adjutant, Hugh had a huge task in calculating the logistics of men and vehicles for the various craft. After three years of planning, the final preparations for operation Overlord (the D-Day landings) were made. It was to be the biggest sea landing ever mounted.

Hugh landed from an LCP (Landing Craft Personnel) and was part of the Rear Battalion HQ due to beach two hours after the first craft hit the beach. Afterwards, he spoke of the sea being covered by hundreds of ships; of the terrific noise of the naval bombardment off the coast. Ahead he could see the small landing craft being lowered from the Assault ships three miles out from the shore. On reaching the beach the scene appeared to be absolute chaos with fires everywhere, burning tanks and craft and many bodies and wounded men. However, he succeeded in reaching his collecting point about a mile inland. Hugh also recalled how RAF bombers flew over that evening towing gliders which were to be released to reinforce the paratroops who had landed in the early hours of the morning. The bombers continued on and then circled back and this time releasing thousands of coloured parachutes each denoting which sort of supplies it carried. At this time Hugh had about a dozen prisoners who looked up in sheer amazement - there was not a single enemy aircraft to be seen. From that moment he never doubted that we would win the war. The successful capture of the fortification codenamed Morris was followed by the seizure of the more difficult fortress of Hillman on D-Day.

## Obituaries

Hugh's service took him through France and Holland and into Germany - the battles at the Chateau de la Londe, the crossroads at Tinchebray near Flers, to Weert in Holland. After the capture of Overloon and Venray with heavy casualties, Hugh took command of A Company and was promoted to Major. The Battalion moved up to the River Maas and Hugh's company was in Blitterswyk being heavily shelled in wet and freezing conditions and he had to take out a patrol to repel an enemy landing on our side of the river. They moved the enemy back but, on approaching a wood held in strength, came under intense fire and nearing daylight had to extricate his men in twos and threes, some wounded, and not leaving himself until the last man was clear. On return he found his Company HQ had received a direct hit, burying many men and wounding his 2IC. He immediately set about restoring the situation while mortar bombs were still falling. Hugh was awarded the MC for his disregard for his own safety and his calmness and courage were an inspiration to those under him.

After the Rhine crossing the Battalion was again involved in an attack on 13 April 1945, at Brinkum, near Bremen. It was during this operation that Hugh was wounded by a bullet through his thigh. He was eventually evacuated and was in hospital for three months with the damage in his right leg limiting his movement for the rest of his life. The war ended in Germany on 8 May 1945.

Hugh returned to civilian life and returned to farming. He married Joan, who came from a farming family, in July. It was a very successful partnership extending their farming enterprise and raising three sons. Hugh acquired his own farm at Wickham Skeith in October 1947. He involved himself in local community work and sport. He became a JP and Chairman of the local Bench, Chairman of the Parish Council, church warden, a steward at the Suffolk Show and on taking up golf he became Captain and then President of Stowmarket Golf Club. When he could no longer play golf he played bowls and enjoyed bridge, all with a very wide circle of friends.

He retained a keen interest in The Suffolk Regiment and attended the annual reunions at Bury St Edmunds as well as the Normandy reunions initiated by the Hillman Committee, of which he became Chairman.

This committee arranged the annual pilgrimage after the initial ceremony of the 40th Anniversary of D-Day. Much of the planning was done by Hugh and Gen Sir Richard Goodwin, his CO in 1944. They were supported by *Les Amis du Suffolk Regiment* who restored the Hillman site which is now open for visitors.

In what was to be his last year he received an invitation from the Royal Almoners Office at Buckingham Palace to attend the Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds to accept the Maundy money from the Queen: a great honour and a memorable day for him. He also completed a book, *My life*, for the benefit of his family. It is a modest account by a very special man. Although failing in health he was able to celebrate his 90th birthday in August 2009 with family and friends.

KM

### Sir Richard O'Brien DSO MC



Maj Richard O'Brien joined the 2/5th Leicestershire Battalion, part of 46 Infantry Division, in late September 1944, at the height of the prolonged battle of the Gothic Line in northern Italy, the last line of defence of the German army in Italy. The 2/5th Battalion had lost four of its company commanders, and Richard was one of four officers from the 14th Battalion of the Sherwood Foresters who were sent to replace them, together with replacements of other ranks from the Sherwood Foresters. Their own battalion had been broken up, along with the whole of 1st Armoured

Division, following a failed attempt by that division, with heavy losses, to break through the Gothic Line.

The Sherwood Forester replacements were of a very high quality.

Richard arrived with a MC and Bar, which had been awarded for bravery at El Alamein and, later, at Anzio. Richard served with the 2/5th Battalion, in command of C Company, from the end of September 1944 to mid April 1945, a period of seven months.

In November 1944 he was awarded the DSO for conspicuous gallantry in leading C Company in a successful attack against a German mountain strongpoint in the approaches to the Po Valley. By mid November 1944 slow progress in the mountains had been replaced by slow progress in the flat, wet plain of the Po Valley, with its many crisscrossing water courses. Suddenly, on 28 November, the Battalion was withdrawn from the line, transported to Bari, and flown to Athens. For the next five months the Battalion was engaged in fighting the Communists in Greece, who were trying to take over the country by force. During this fighting, Richard was wounded by a sniper but he soon discharged himself from hospital and returned to command C Company. In April 1945 the Battalion was back in Italy. The war in Europe was nearly over. Richard was summoned to join the staff of Field Marshal Montgomery in Germany and he remained there until he was demobilised.

Richard was not only an exceptionally fine looking man, but he was a natural leader of exceptional quality. He had great charm but also great determination to serve the interests of people in his care. After the war he built a reputation as a superb negotiator in industry, leading to a distinguished career in the field of human resources in both private and government organisations, for which he was knighted in 1980. Among other appointments, he chaired the Manpower Services Commission for six years, the Crown Appointments Commission and the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas.

He died on 11 December 2009 at the age of 89, leaving his wife Elizabeth, two sons and three daughters.

### Capt MO Driver



Capt Martin Driver, aged 31, originally from Barnsley, commissioned into the Vikings on 16 December 2006. He had previously served in the Parachute Regiment's TA Battalion while at university and deployed during this time on operational tours in Iraq and Northern Ireland.

Having completed the Commissioning Course at RMA Sandhurst, he deployed to Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 6 in 2007. After two years commanding his Platoon, he was posted to study Arabic at the Defence School of Languages, Beaconsfield, and promoted to captain. He returned to the Vikings as 2IC A (Norfolk) Company. It

was in this role that he deployed to Afghanistan for the second time in October 2009 and was Acting Company Commander when he was tragically injured by an IED blast whilst on patrol in Musa Qaleh. He died of his wounds in Selly Oak Hospital on 15 March 2010.

WM

*Maj Stuart Smith, Officer Commanding A (Norfolk) Company, adds:*

Capt Martin Driver finally succumbed to his wounds three weeks after sustaining a terrible injury and it is testament to his strength of character that he held on for so long. Martin was an exceptionally talented young officer. Using his vast operational experience to best effect, he was not only an excellent Company Second in Command, but had also been earmarked for future key roles within the Battalion. He was diligent in his role, but he also brought his dry sense of humour to the fore as he mentored the platoon commanders. At the time of his injury he was acting as Company Commander and was relishing the opportunity of commanding the Company on operations. Hugely popular across the whole spectrum of ranks and a great

## Obituaries

friend to so many of us in the Battalion, he will be greatly missed. His passing has left a huge gap in the Battalion's ranks but I know that as a dedicated officer, he would have wanted the Company to continue on with its mission.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his family, especially his parents, brother David and girlfriend Jo, at this very difficult time, particularly as they had held vigil at his bedside for three long weeks. A great man and a great friend, Martin was and always will be the epitome of a true Viking Officer.

### Capt DEA Michael



Capt David Ernest Ashwyn Michael, who served in the Royal Leicestershire and The Royal Anglian Regiment from 1961 to 1968, died on 22 November 2009 in Anatalia, aged 69.

The son of the then Chaplain of the Tower of London, David was commissioned into the Tigers in 1961, serving initially in Münster. By then an accomplished sportsman, he had already distinguished himself in the Army Under-21 Pentathlon championships. He was a good rifle shot and skier, and his love and skill with horses led to that interest duly

being passed to his children. In 1963 when 1 R Leicesters was posted to Hong Kong, he led a seven-man group in the 8th United States Army's Honour Guard at United Nations HQ in Korea for three months. A good raconteur, his amusing account of that assignment appears in the Regimental History. On return to the Battalion's fold, he then served two periods on active service: six months as a rifle platoon commander in the jungles of Borneo during the Indonesian Confrontation, followed a year later by six months as a support platoon in Aden and South Arabia during the British rundown.

When 4th (Leicestershire) Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment was posted to Malta, David was appointed ADC to the British High Commissioner, a job at which he excelled and where he could play polo, alongside the legendary Maj Gen Johnny Frost of Arnhem fame. In 1967 he became ADC to the Governor of Western Australia, Sir Douglas 'Joe' Kendrew, an even more distinguished Major General who was the last Colonel of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment.

In 'Double U Aye' - as the people of Western Australia call it - he enjoyed and contributed to the hospitality of that wonderful state, and there he subsequently spent many years of his life, selling prestige motor cars, working for the billionaire entrepreneur Alan Bond, and then becoming Personal Secretary to the Nizam of Hyderabad, a post which he held until the end of his life and for which service in 2005 he was granted the title of Nawab. By coincidence, in the Nizam's family's heraldic crest is a Tiger.

David always had a twinkle in his eye; often a smile on his face indicated that he was about to tell a funny story, and he would frequently double-up in hysterics. It was difficult not to notice him in a crowd, quite apart from the mirth which emanated from where he was standing. He was invariably impeccably dressed, notably wearing a shirt with detached starched collar, and tie secured by a stick pin. He was a generous man, among other things working for the Army Benevolent Fund in London, contributing to the Royal Leicesters' welfare funds, and driving people to regimental events in his Rolls Royce.

David loved life; he loved his Regiment; and above all he loved his family. He was twice married. He was particularly close to his sister Rosemary and intensely proud of his children Henrietta and Alexander, daughter-in-law Lucy, and his grandson Bertie.

David's father was on the Committee which rebuilt The Guards Chapel after it was bombed in the Second World War. It was particularly fitting, therefore, that the Service of Thanksgiving for his life took place there, with its powerful and prayerful symbols of Service, and where family and friends could salute the life of David Michael and thank God for it.

MKG

### Sgt Assela (Tony) Waqairoba



In November 1961, 212 young men were recruited from Fiji to join the British Army; the first of many Fijian troops to serve. Many went straight from school; others had worked for only a few years; there were students, farmers, clerks, people from all races and walks of Fijian society. Few had been outside Fiji. They left Fiji in the height of the tropical summer and arrived in Britain to face one of its coldest winters ever.

Tony Waqairoba was one such man, enlisting into the Royal Leicestershire Regiment and arriving at Glen Pava

Barracks to start his basic training. Tony was a gifted sportsman and played rugby for the Army and the Regiment. Those who are knowledgeable about the game say his Army playing days would have been longer, had the selectors not played him out of position.

Tony was a member of the Signal Platoon with the Tigers and the 4th Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment. In the early 1970s he moved to the Poachers in Münster as the Chief Instructor on the D and M Wing, where he was responsible for converting the Battalion's drivers and commanders on the AFV 432. An excellent shot putter he was one of the stalwarts of the athletics team for a decade, helping them to a number of Army Finals.

Tony served his final days in the Army with the Pompadours in Colchester and left in 1983, retiring to his birthplace of Fiji. Tony Waqairoba was a professional SNCO and gentleman, who is fondly remembered by his friends and colleagues across the Royal Anglian Family.

WO'D

### Cpl Walcott (Wally) Taylor



Cpl Wally Taylor is considered to be the best all round sportsman ever to have served with the Poachers. Wally joined the Battalion in 1973 and was posted to the Signal Platoon. It wasn't long before his talents as a 400 metre runner were noticed and in 1974 he became the BAOR 400 metres champion and was awarded the Cotterell Challenge Cup as the Army's most outstanding athlete in track events.

In 1975 he had another fine season adding more titles to his already outstanding list of honours, the most notable being the Combined Services 400m hurdles champion, an event he had only started seriously at the end of the previous season.

In 1976 he swept the board at the BAOR, the Army Individual and the Inter Services Championships. And in 1978 he made Regimental history when he became the United Kingdom 400m champion in a time of 47.5 seconds, as a member of the British Athletics team.

On the domestic front of Regimental sports, he swept all before him and excelled in any sport he tried: boxing, hockey, rugby, cross country - the list goes on.

WO'D

### Maj Roger Antolik, a fellow Poacher and British Athletic Team member, adds:

To everyone in the Poachers he was without doubt the best known, most gifted and most widely admired sporting talent of his generation. Athlete, boxer, cricketer, rugby winger (although I can't remember whether he ever made a tackle!), basketball player and everything in between, he could, like all great athletes, turn his hand to just about anything and everything. To the Army and Combined Services athletes around him, he was simply a star who could be depended on to take the maximum points in his events, whatever the opposition.

I recall meeting Wally for the first time at the Sennelager track

## Obituaries

just prior to the BAOR unit finals in 1975. I already knew of his reputation as an outstanding runner with a maverick, showman-like style, but nothing had prepared me for what was to come over the next 10 years. Those who were privileged enough to see him run, need no reminding of how he could anchor a seemingly lost 400m relay into a victory that would be talked about for the rest of the year. He was simply the most widely known, respected, and to his competitors, feared, Army athlete between 1975 and 1982.

For me, Wally was a great friend on and off the track. We competed together for almost six years in events ranging from inter-company to internationals and, despite the differences in our backgrounds and 'place' in the great scheme of service life, it was easy to forget all this and just enjoy his amazing talent for what it was. I consider myself fortunate and humbled to have been able to spend so much time with him while he was developing his talent and reputation for winning.

As his reputation developed, Wally spent some time working with the greatest of the British 400m runners, David Hemery. Hemery was prepared to coach him and was convinced that Wally had the makings of an international champion, but the Army got in the way and the opportunities he needed never materialised. Being an infantryman and sportsman in those days was a dichotomous relationship and Wally (and the Army and GB) suffered from his Royal Anglian heritage. This was perhaps the greatest of all the tragedies that developed through his life, especially as he proved time and again his strength, speed and superior running ability, over rivals like Kris Akabussi who themselves got the breaks and went on to much greater things, including Olympic gold. The opportunity for Wally to break through onto the world stage, as a member of the 4x400m relay squad, was lost when GB withdrew its team from the Moscow 1980 Olympic Games (ironically in protest at the Russian invasion and occupation of Afghanistan).

Wally's international athletics career aspirations ended tragically in the INLA bombing of the Drop Inn Well bar at Ballykelly on the night of 6 December 1982. Wally was running the disco and 17 people died that night, of which 11 were soldiers. Wally was seriously injured and thus ended the career of unquestionably the Poachers' greatest ever athlete. I remember seeing him in Musgrave Park Hospital in Belfast soon afterwards. Margaret Thatcher had just visited him and I'm sure she'd made more of an impact than the bomb that had put him there! But his life and body had been shattered by that event and whilst outwardly he repaired and even tried to compete again, there were unseen and unshared horrors that meant he could never live up to his phenomenal promise. As a competitor with winning in his blood, he harboured, as many do, the frustrations of no longer being able to perform to the level that the spirit within relentlessly pursues.

Wally epitomised competitive fighting spirit. Unorthodox in just about everything he did, bucking the trend and making a nonsense of conventional wisdom of how to prepare and work up to a competitive event; and yet he never let anyone down, no matter what team, what event, what occasion. He was both a complex, yet straightforward person, incredibly likeable and personable, with a smile and encouraging word for everyone and anyone, even those he so soundly beat - and there were many.

### LCpl AP Drane



LCpl Adam Drane was killed in action on 7 December 2009 while carrying out security duties at Check Point Paraang in Southern Nad-e' Ali, Helmand Province. He had deployed to Afghanistan as a section Second in Command within C (Essex) Company, attached to the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards Battlegroup. He was employed within 6 Platoon and was charged with engaging with and reassuring the local population, as well as defeating the insurgents in one of Helmand's most challenging areas; he had been completing this

task for nearly two months.

LCpl Drane was born in Bury St Edmunds on 24 July 1986. He completed his training at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick on 15 August 2007 and, within two weeks, had joined the Battalion in Afghanistan for the last two months of their Op Herrick 6 tour. On returning to the UK he completed a Junior Non-Commissioned Officer Cadre and was soon promoted to Lance Corporal. Prior to deploying to Afghanistan for his second tour, he had completed a number of demanding field exercises in the UK as well as achieving a semi-final place in the Inter Company Boxing Championships of 2009. LCpl Drane leaves behind a close and loving family and his beloved fiancée Sian, who he was planning to marry directly after the tour.

Quietly confident, Cpl Drane was an extremely kind individual who had a wonderful sense of humour. He was well known and respected across the Battalion as a soldier, but was particularly renowned for his love of music and guitars. He was very much career orientated and was looking forward to completing the demanding Section Commanders' Battle Course after the tour.

WM

### Maj Christopher Davies,

#### Officer Commanding C (Essex) Company, adds:

LCpl Adam Drane was a thoroughbred soldier with huge potential. Having already served with distinction in Afghanistan in 2007 as part of B Company, it was no surprise that he stood out amongst his peers as someone special when he moved to C Company in the summer of 2009. After nearly two months of almost daily engagements with the enemy, of which the majority were fierce and unrelenting, he remained hardy, focused and full of resolve. His stoical nature made those around him stronger and his sense of humour and genuine compassion for his fellow men allowed him to create a confident and extremely capable team. LCpl Drane was naturally brave and courageous, convincingly demonstrating this in the boxing ring as well as the battlefield. A true inspiration to others, his absence will leave an irreplaceable gap within the ranks of C (Essex) Company. Such a tragic loss of life is hard to comprehend, but will be most acutely felt by LCpl Drane's fiancée and family who meant so much to him and our thoughts are firmly lodged with them.

### LCpl STM Hardy



LCpl Scott Hardy was born and raised in Chelmsford. A bricklayer before joining the Army, he excelled at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick. He passed out of training in May 2007 and deployed to Afghanistan on Op HERRICK 6 only three weeks later. His age and maturity showed in Afghanistan and he was identified as a soldier with the potential to become a Junior Non Commissioned Officer. He passed his Leadership Course in the winter of 2008 and was promoted shortly after. His performance on this course was indicative of the man.

In the swirling snow and sub-zero conditions and after four and a half hours of tabbing up mountains, he was still there, plugging away with a grim smile on his face. He soaked hardship up and got on with the job.

LCpl Hardy arrived in Afghanistan on 19 October 2009 and was employed as a section Second in Command in 3 Platoon of A (Norfolk) Company. He was killed, aged 26, in an IED explosion north of Musa Qaleh whilst on an operation inserted deep into Taliban territory, attacking the insurgents where they least expected it.

WM

### Maj Stuart Smith, Officer Commanding A (Norfolk) Company, adds:

LCpl Scott Hardy was a larger than life character with a great sense of humour, but beside this he was a thoroughly professional JNCO. He

## Obituaries

relished the challenges that came with the job of a light role infantry section commander on operations. Whether he was engaging with the local nationals or taking the fight to the enemy, his first thought were always for his men and they respected him accordingly.

With his previous operational experience in Afghanistan in 2007 and with his current performance this year, he had shown his full potential and was highlighted as a real star of the future. Snatched from us in the prime of his life, he will be missed by all who knew him. Our thoughts are with his family, girlfriend and friends at this very difficult time.

**Lt Simon Broomfield, Officer Commanding 3 Platoon, adds further:** Older than most when he joined up, LCpl Hardy was one of the rocks that 3 Platoon relied on. Due to go on his Section Commanders' Battle Course on return to the UK, he was undoubtedly going to achieve a strong pass – he was a good leader, a man that I trusted. Always smiling, always ready with a joke, he was one of those larger than life characters who was always looking for the next thing to take the mickey out of. 3 Platoon mourns his loss and he leaves a huge hole in the Platoon. Our thoughts are with his family and his girlfriend Charlene.

### Pte JD Grigg



Pte James Grigg was born in Hartismere, Suffolk, in January 1989. It was at his local school where he developed his first passion in life – the glorious game of cricket. After he left the school he continued to coach their team. It was only later, once he had passed out of training at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick, that he developed his twin passion – being a Viking soldier – and Pte Grigg was utterly loyal to The Regiment. He had only been in the Battalion just over a year when he deployed to Afghanistan, where he served in A (Norfolk) Company. He was tragically killed in an IED blast

whilst on an operation to the north of Musa Qaleh.

WM

**Maj Stuart Smith, Officer Commanding A (Norfolk) Company, adds:**

Pte James Grigg joined A (Norfolk) Company just over 18 months ago and this was his first operational tour and one he was rightly proud to be part of. A thoroughly professional soldier, he was also a real character with a sense of humour that ensured he was popular amongst his Platoon.

An all-round sportsman, he really excelled at cricket and his contribution to the team last summer ensured that the Company was victorious in the Battalion competition. Always smiling and never complaining, James will be sorely missed by all those who knew him. Our thoughts at this difficult time are with his family and friends. Despite leaving a hole in our ranks, I know he would have wanted us to continue with our mission. He had quickly become and always will be, a true Viking.

**Lt Simon Broomfield, Officer Commanding 3 Platoon, adds further:** Pte James Grigg was a great soldier, a capable sportsman and an excellent cricketer. He was a joy to have in my Platoon. An intelligent

and thinking soldier, he was quiet but well liked by his team mates. He had a razor sharp wit. He and I followed the test matches religiously on BFBS and he could be found thumbing his way through my *Wisden* cricket magazine when ever I was not reading it myself.

Words cannot express the loss that 3 Platoon feel now that he has been killed, but it did not stop our resolution in the task we had ahead of us on the tour. I speak for the whole of 3 Platoon when I say that our thoughts and prayers are with his family.

### Pte RS Hayes



Pte Robert Hayes was killed in action on 3 January 2010 whilst conducting a security patrol south of Check Point Paraang in Southern Nad-e' Ali, Helmand Province. He had deployed to Afghanistan with C (Essex) Company, attached to the 1st Battalion Grenadier Guards Battle Group.

Pte Hayes was employed as a rifleman within 6 Platoon. He was responsible for providing assistance and security to the local population, which included conducting patrols to disrupt insurgent activity in one of Helmand Province's most challenging and dangerous areas. He was killed as a result of an IED explosion.

Pte Hayes was born in Cambridge on 9 May 1990. He completed his training at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick on 2 March 2009, aged 18, and joined the Vikings shortly afterwards. Before deploying to Afghanistan, Pte Hayes completed a number of demanding exercises in the United Kingdom and convincingly won his weight category during the Battalion's 2009 Inter Company Boxing Championships.

In a very short period of time Pte Hayes proved himself to be a hugely professional and talented soldier. He was courageous, thoughtful and well liked by all those who served alongside him. Without doubt he had the personal attributes and raw potential to have had a full and successful career in the Army.

WM

**Maj Christopher Davies, Officer Commanding C (Essex) Company, adds:**

The tragic loss of such a young, gifted and promising member of C Company is deeply saddening.

Although he had only been in the Army for just over a year, Pte Robert Hayes was quick to make his own mark and as a result became widely recognised across the Battalion as an extremely capable soldier, brave comrade and talented boxer. He fully accepted his role in Afghanistan and ensured that his personal contribution to the mission made a genuine difference.

For over two months he was involved in heavy and relentless fighting against insurgents and always acted in a courageous, decisive and selfless manner. The considerate way in which he interacted with the local population was synonymous with someone who was genuinely decent and wanted betterment for those less fortunate than himself. Pte Hayes was immensely popular and sacrificed his life doing something that he truly believed in. His loss is widely felt across all ranks within the Company and our thoughts at this awful time remain firmly with his family and loved ones at home, for whom the pain will be immeasurable.



## The Royal Anglian Regiment Association

### Northampton Branch

The Branch has had a good six months and due to wider website exposure, including *Facebook*, membership is increasing, currently standing at 56. Branch meetings are held on the last Wednesday of every other month with social gatherings being held at a local pub or restaurant in the intervening month.

Our Christmas Social was held in the Ex-Servicemen's Club on 11 December 2009 and, by combining our function with the Royal Anglian Social organised by Maj O'Driscoll, the numbers exceeded 200. This was well supported by ex-Northamptoners, some of who had travelled quite a distance to be there. The membership of *Facebook* also played a major part in the number present that evening.

The first 'social gathering' was held at a Chinese restaurant with the second being held at the 'Narrowboat Inn'. Both were well attended and enjoyed by all. Col and Ann Worthy attended the latter event.

Future social events include attending a Concert in the Park at Kneller Hall, a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum on 19 September in conjunction with the Royal British Legion and the Military Tattoo in Birmingham.

Anyone wishing to join the branch or attend any future events should contact Bob Pochin at the TA Centre, Clare Street, Northampton. Alternatively visit [www.royalangliansteelbacks.co.uk](http://www.royalangliansteelbacks.co.uk).

#### Northampton Reunion 11 Dec 2009

Based around a Christmas Social the Northampton Branch of the Association organised a reunion on 11 December 2009. The venue for the event was the Northampton Ex-Servicemen's Club in Sheep Street. This was a very successful evening with old friends and comrades travelling long distances to meet up with people they had not seen in years. Many thanks to Larry Mann, ex 3rd Battalion, who managed to get a posse of Pompadours together in Poacher



Members enjoy themselves at the Northampton Reunion in December 2009.

## Regimental Association

territory. The event allowed the Northampton Branch to engage potential recruits with a view to joining the branch. It was good to see Lawton Tompkins dressed as a Del Trotter lookalike and many thanks to Tony Nash for providing the Disco and also for providing Richard Brown with a lesson in health and safety electrical wiring.

### Peterborough Branch

Peter Horrell, who comes from a well known local farming family and resides at Wansford, accepted the Presidency of the Peterborough Branch at their recent AGM.

Branch members welcomed the announcement of their new President who brings a wealth of experience to the Branch Committee. Peter served with the Territorial Army for 27 years, progressing through the ranks to Commanding Officer of 5th (V) Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment. He was appointed as Deputy Honorary Colonel of the Regiment and today serves as a Trustee of its museum at Duxford. He was appointed as Deputy Lieutenant in 1995 and was High Sheriff of Cambridgeshire for 2007/8.



**Peter Horrell – President Peterborough Branch.**

### Second Poachers' Grimsby Reunion

My eyes struggled to focus, my head was heavy and the thought process like a cryptic code, one big physical effort and my head broke contact with my pillow...yes, I had survived the 2nd Grimsby Reunion! On reflection, I assumed I was no worse for wear than the other 439 that had partied with me through the night until the early hours of Sunday morning. Now the big decision - breakfast or aspirin? Too early to make such a huge decision... I'll have both!

As the day slowly unfolded, some form of normality was regained. After all these years (yes, I know, I'm slow!) it started to dawn on me, just how much it means to be 'A Poacher', what 'the wider Regimental family means'; just taking some time to reflect on how rich our lives are, the friends, the good times...all memories are precious.



**Visit to St Dunstons.**



**Denis Watson with the St Dunstons' Cheque.**

The Beachcomber, Humberston, Cleethorpes is now our home. It has proved to be ideal in hosting similar events throughout the year; so deposit paid, location secured for 2011! Our chosen charity was St Dunstons which cares for the blind and visually impaired; former Poacher, Capt Ray Hazan, is now the President of the organisation so those who served in 1973 will understand the link. We raised a magnificent £850 through the raffle, thank you all for making this happen.

The roll call of those attended read like a Poachers *Who's Who!* The Regimental Secretary, Lt Col Hodgson, Lt Col David Greenfield, Maj Chris Groom and our guest of honour, Maj David Whitehead, ably supported by Gordon Halewood, Hugh Smith, Richard Brown and Roly Cook to name but a few. It was also especially pleasing that Dave and Barbara Dunthorne attended.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the committee - what a grand job you all did. Not often is one person singled out for special praise, not that he would thank me for it, but Frank Rimmer QGM take a bow, Sir, your contribution was above and beyond anything that could be described as 'normal'.

We had some strange requests that we delivered on: a wheelchair and another for 10lb of sausage meat from Pettits (awarded Lincolnshire Butcher of the Year); another phone call asked 'where am I booked into?' Hello - you booked it!

Finally, to those of you who were not able to attend due to ill health or other commitments - enjoy the photographs. Now the bad news... we are doing it all again next year (deep joy). So see you 26 March 2011. Thank you for your support. Denis Watson, Reunion Secretary.

## Regimental Association



A great time had by all at the 2nd Grimsby Reunion.

## Regimental Association



**Boston Branch Get Together.**

### Boston Branch

The last six months has allowed the Branch to establish itself within the comfort of the Conservative Club, Main Ridge, Boston. The monthly social meetings held on the last Thursday night of each month have been well attended considering the winter weather; a monthly newsletter, full of snippets of information, has been produced, which will be forwarded to all branch members and will keep the local press updated. Within our membership we have a Divisional Secretary and a Caseworker for SSAFA and there are people from all walks of life that possess many skills, all able and willing to assist servicemen leaving the forces and looking for work. We have recently attracted the attention of our new local recruiter, Sgt Terry Waters and, with his help and support, hope to attract the attention of other Poachers from Skegness, the Coastal Strip, Spilsby, Horncastle and the villages from where we can enjoy their company in Boston for a social evening, or alternatively get a bus-load together to join them at their favourite watering-hole.

Six months ago we were very naive and optimistic; we were getting plenty of publicity and lots of interest and offers of assistance but, unfortunately, membership has remained low. As organiser, I have nothing but praise for those members that have attended our monthly social meetings. Obviously, we have to seriously think about this and come up with something positive – our aims are simple - to remain in keeping with the Association Constitution and provide welfare and support facilities for members and families of serving soldiers from our area.

We have the makings of a branch that is able and willing to undertake all the constitutional requirements; a comfortable venue and reasonable communications. We realise that many of the people we are representing are working, have had a tough winter and cannot make the meetings for whatever reason. Because of this, we are going all out to lobby members and potential members as to where and when they would like to meet and what aspects of social cohesion they would wish us to follow. To determine our immediate future, it is intended to hold a local re-union at the Boston United Football Club (details to be circulated); this will also be our first AGM and it will be an ideal opportunity to elect a committee, agree our immediate strategy and determine from members when and where the majority would be able to meet up on a monthly basis.

Our meetings have been very sociable; two of which were attended by our Area Secretary, Maj Bill O'Driscoll, whose support has been invaluable. John Butcher, a veteran member, is to be congratulated on his appointment as Chairman to the Skegness and District Branch of the Royal British Legion. He is, of course, a qualified parade marshal and will hopefully still be available to assist us (and

any other branch that needs his services) as and when necessary. Unfortunately we appear to have lost Mick (Mary) Walton through illness. As the local recruiter (he was a well known Battalion boxer) he was able to offer tremendous support via the local Recruiting Office and was instrumental as provisional Chairman and a founder member of the branch.

On a lighter note, several of our members and wives attended the Grimsby Poachers' Reunion at the Beachcomber Bar at Humberston. What a fantastic night out! We were all made thoroughly welcome, met a lot of old friends and colleagues and made many new ones. By the time of the next reunion, we hope to be forgiven for taking home so many of the raffle prizes!

As an addendum to this report, I would like to mention that on 31 March 2010, I enjoyed the privilege of attending the SSAFA Forces Help Annual General Meeting at the Petwood Hotel, Woodhall Spa, where I was delighted to meet Maj Gen REJ (Dick) Gerrard-Wright, the outgoing Branch President of the Lincolnshire Branch of SSAFA. I wished him well, as I am sure everyone in the Regiment would also.

The Branch encourages and welcomes any serving members to visit us while on leave, as indeed we would love to see any old comrades from other branches or wherever. In the case of family concern for a serving member, they are welcome to contact Colin Briggs (Organiser) on Boston (01205) 760086 to discuss their feelings in confidence. New members are, of course, always welcome.

### Colchester Branch

After being on parade once more at the Colchester Civic Service on Remembrance Day in November, we had another successful and enjoyable Christmas gathering at Colchester Rugby Club on 18 December.

The next event was our ninth annual general meeting held as always as close as possible to the date of our formation – this time on 11 April. After a minute's silence in memory of our soldiers lost in Afghanistan, the business went ahead; the committee agreed to carry on, the annual subscription stayed the same, finances and membership were reported as healthy, and plans were discussed for events ahead. The view was that the successful summer restaurant evening would continue (on a Saturday evening in July), and, a change, that instead of a Christmas function there would be an annual dinner in January. Matters being concluded, new subscriptions were extracted from members present, and all repaired for a drink and an excellent buffet lunch courtesy of Geordie Pattison and team.

Anyone wishing to join the Branch is most welcome – please contact the Secretary, Brian Davenport (01206-564919, [davenport@colchester1737.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:davenport@colchester1737.freeserve.co.uk))

Officers of the Branch: Chairman, Tony Downes; Treasurer, Martin

## Regimental Association



**Colchester Branch line-up.**

Brewer; Members, Tom Carr, Mick Henson, Geordie Pattison and Bob Potter.

### Leicester Reunion 4 December 2010

On Friday 4 December 2009, many ex Royal Anglians and Royal Leicesters gathered at the South Wigston Workingmen's Club for what is becoming more of a reunion and less of a social. In all, 200 people attended and met up with old friends and comrades alike. The younger elements from the Poachers were in fine voice and it was good to see that they have not forgotten the words to *The*

*Lincolnshire Poacher*. Our thanks once again to Denis Foran for the time and effort he put in organising the event. This is a very enjoyable evening with no frills and is growing in popularity and is open to all members of the Regimental Association. It will be held once again this year at the South Wigston Workingmen's Club on Friday 3 December 2010.



**A terrific night out at the Leicester Reunion on 4 December 2009.**

## Regimental Association



### The Royal Norfolk Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Norfolk)

*Maj John L Raybould TD (Retd) writes:*

#### Royal Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Regiments Memorial Dedication Thursday 30 September 2010

The memorials to the Royal Norfolk, the Suffolk and the Cambridgeshire regiments will be unveiled by Maj Gen Jack Dye CBE MC DL at the National Memorial Arboretum, Alrewas, Staffs at 1430hrs on Thursday 30 September 2010. The dedication service will be followed by tea in a regimental tent for all those attending. Association branches are arranging transport for those who wish to travel to Alrewas by coach.

#### Cyprus Memorial presentation

In March 2010, at the R Norfolk Regimental Museum, the memorial panel to Royal Norfolk Regiment members killed during the Cyprus Emergency was presented to Maj Gen Jack Dye CBE MC DL.

#### Memorial Honours brave men who died In Cyprus

After more than half a century a memorial honouring members of the Royal Norfolk Regiment who lost their lives in an almost forgotten conflict has been presented to the Regimental Museum in Norwich.

The panel was made by Diss craftsman Keith Rackham of HL Perfitt Ltd, who created a new memorial of eight magnificent slabs of granite etched with the names of each soldier, sailor and airman lost along with their Regiment and Regimental badges.

The £200,000 memorial was unveiled at the Old British Cemetery, Kyrenia, in 2009, where a wreath was laid on behalf of the Norfolks by Maj David Clarke.

Keith handed a specially made panel to the museum saying: 'It has been a great honour and a privilege to have been asked to make the memorial. The Cyprus Memorial is one of the most striking our firm has ever built. Now I am proud to be able to present this panel to the museum.'

It was accepted by Maj Gen Jack Dye CBE MC DL, a highly respected soldier who was company commander of one of the companies with the 1st Battalion in Cyprus.

'It gives me great pleasure to do this. It was more than 50 years since we were there but we have never forgotten our comrades. It is fitting their names will be remembered in our museum,' he said.

During the four-year Cyprus Emergency, the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines lost 28 men, the Army 274 and the RAF 69 men. The Royal Norfolk Regiment lost 11 men - most were on National Service.



Keith Rackham and Gen Jack Dye CBE MC DL.



Picture courtesy Derek James of the Eastern Evening News.

#### 'Holy Boys' Mark VE-Day In Norwich

Four generations of the 'Holy Boys' - soldiers wearing the badge of Britannia - gathered in Norwich to mark the 65th anniversary of VE-Day. Members of the 1st Battalion the Royal Norfolk Regiment D-Day Veterans were joined by soldiers from The Royal Anglian Regiment recently returned from Afghanistan. They were welcomed by Maj Gen Jack Dye CBE MC DL, President of the veterans association, who said: 'We follow your achievements with great pride.' He said it 'was amazing to think that 65 years on from the end of the Second World War in Europe, the surviving veterans were together again. It is a day of mixed emotions - one of joy and sadness.' Maj Gen Dye, a highly regarded soldier and officer who led his men in the fight across Europe following D-Day, before being wounded in a street battle in Germany a month before the war ended added: 'I celebrated VE-Day by coming home on a stretcher and seeing the lights on at night for the first time in five years.'

Today the veterans are in their 80s and 90s and the lunch was a time to meet old comrades, remember lost comrades and honour those serving in Afghanistan today. As they fought their way across Europe following D-Day in 1945, 20 officers and 260 other ranks lost their lives and more than 1,000 men were wounded. When the casualties are measured against the total strength of the Battalion, 36 officers and just over 800 other ranks, a clearer picture of the scale of the price the Norfolks paid for victory emerges. In June of 1944 they were fearless young soldiers running up blood-soaked beaches at Normandy to play their part in the final victory as they started their journey across Europe and into Germany. What followed was 11 months of fierce fighting during which the Norfolks proved time and time again they were men to be feared by the enemy and welcomed by the local population.

They were a vital cog in the massive war machine and are still heroes on the Continent. Those who didn't make it home are buried on foreign soil but they will never be forgotten and on Sunday both former and serving soldiers along with friends and relatives toasted their memory. We owe them a debt that will never be paid.

#### WO2 Alec Barr

WO2 Alec Barr died in the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital on 13 February 2010, after a long illness, two days before



WO2 Alec Barr.

## Regimental Association

his 85th birthday.

Alec served with Cadet Norfolk Artillery, Norfolk Army Cadet Force from 1938, and then, aged 16, from 1941 to 1943, with Norwich Home Guard, the Black Watch in Normandy soon after D-Day, 4th

Battalion the Royal Norfolk Regiment, 6 (V) Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment. He concluded his service, back where he started, with Cadet Norfolk Artillery, Norfolk Army Cadet Force, in 1978, a total of 40 years in uniform.



### The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Lincolnshire) and The Royal Lincolnshire Association



**The Flag is raised.**

#### Lincoln Branch Sobraon Lunch

On Sunday 7 February, the Lincoln Branch organized a Sobraon Lunch. This year marked the 164th anniversary of the Battle of Sobraon on 10 February 1846.

Prior to the lunch, a parade was held in Sobraon Barracks where the Royal Lincolnshire Regimental flag was raised by the Chairman, Cyril Key, to the tunes of the Regimental march played by the Band of Lincolnshire ACF.

114 members and guests including, the Mayor and Mayoress of Lincoln, Cllrs Mr and Mrs Grattrick, the City Sheriff and his Lady, Mr and Mrs Pennell, and the President of the Association, Lt Col S Bacon, sat down to enjoy a three course lunch. After the Loyal Toast, the Chairman recounted the events at the battle with special reference to the personal view of Hookum Singh, an enemy gunner who referred to the 10th Foot as they advanced in complete silence: 'As demons, evil spirits bent on our destruction'. The Regimental Toast, *The 10th Foot*, was drunk after which, the Mayor presented certificates of appreciation for their work in the branch to Mr R Chapman, Mrs A Chapman and Mr M Reams. The Chairman then presented both the Mayor and the Sheriff with copies of a book, *A history of the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment 'The Poachers'*.

A raffle was held, with a special prize being an embroidered



**Mr Reams is presented with a Certificate of Appreciation.**

## Regimental Association



The President, Lt Col Simon Bacon, centre; Col Geoff Newmarch at left.



The Chairman, Cyril Key, presents 'The Poachers'.

Regimental Crest in a frame, which had been stitched by Mrs Chapman.

Many thanks to the ACF band: they had been in attendance all day playing and entertained everyone finally with a concert of music that brought to an end a very successful and enjoyable celebration.



Smiles all round.

### Spalding Branch Sobraon Dinner 12 March 2010

The Spalding Branch, under the leadership of their new Chairman Mr Ken Willows, held a very successful Sobraon Dinner on Friday 12 March 2010. In all 48 veterans and their partners sat down to dinner which was held in the clubroom of Spalding United Football Club. In attendance was Maj Bill O'Driscoll the Area Secretary for Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire. In his after dinner reply to the Chairman he spoke about the importance of the Battle of Sobraon to the 10th of Foot and also thanked the members for their support throughout the year. After the meal and toasts there was a presentation on the Grimsby Chums who fought in World War One (The Grimsby Chums are unique in the fact that when all the other Volunteer Battalions in the country were given the nickname of *Pals Battalions* they were the only ones to be nicknamed *Chums*). The presentation was given by members of the Grimsby Branch who had travelled from the wilds of North East Lincolnshire to educate the branch members on what was an interesting and poignant reminder of what soldiers went through during this period in history.

**Regimental Association**

**Members of the Spalding Branch and their Ladies enjoy the Sobraon Dinner.**

**Obituary**

Frank Birkett was born in Grimsby on 15 February 1925 and died on 11 March 2010. He enlisted in 1943 and served with the Royal Lincolnshire, South Staffordshire and Worcestershire Regiments in France, Germany and Palestine, driving and maintaining vehicles until 1947. After the war he was chief buyer for Lucas and Girling.

From 1990 he was Chairman of the East Midland Branch of the Royal Lincolnshire and Royal Anglian Regiment Association until his death this year.



## Regimental Association



### The Suffolk Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Suffolk)

*Lt Col Tony Slater writes:*

We were very sad to learn of the death of Maj Hugh Merriam MC, in October 2009. Hugh was a great supporter of the Regiment, much liked and respected by those of us who came to know him in recent years and more significantly by that dwindling band of men who served in the 1st Battalion from D-Day onwards to the end of the War in Europe.

The Association Branches continue to be busy and carry out busy programs of events. It is excellent to welcome back a revived Ipswich Branch into the fold. A report on their initial meeting is included below. It has also been particularly encouraging to see how much support has been provided by the Branches over the last six months to the 1st Battalion during their recent tour in Afghanistan. It shows once again how strong our Regimental Association is in the counties and what an important part they continue to play.

A reminder to all our readers that the dedication of the memorial to the Royal Norfolk, the Suffolk and the Cambridgeshire Regiments will take place at the National Arboretum on 30 September starting at 1430hrs.

#### Ipswich and District Branch

*Peter Cracknell, Chairman, writes:*

In spite of its size and population Ipswich has not had an active branch of the association for a number of years. In late 2009 a group of veterans of the Suffolk Regiment and The Royal Anglian Regiment met and decided to form a new Ipswich and District Branch. If you live in the Ipswich area and were in The Royal Anglian Regiment or one of the forebear regiments (Suffolk, Royal Norfolk, Essex Regiments etc) then you are invited to join. The branch meets on the third Thursday of every month at the Labour Club, Silent Street, Ipswich at 7pm. Some of our members are returning back to the Regimental family after an absence of many years.

On April 10 an event was held at the Ipswich TA Centre to formally mark the formation of the branch. As well as Ipswich members, members from Felixstowe and Stowmarket Branches attended to welcome the new Branch into the Regimental family.

The Branch President, Col Dixon, welcomed all OCA members, their wives and invited guests, the OCA President Brig Calder and Area Sec Lt Col Slater. An excellent military display was supplied by local military historian David Empson.



**Mrs McClure cuts the cake.**

The branch's first honorary member, Mrs Lorraine McClure, mother of Ipswich-born Aaron McClure, killed in Afghanistan in 2007, performed the ceremonial cutting of the 'formation' cake. The cake was decorated with both the Suffolk and Royal Anglian badges and there were Minden Roses at the four corners. An excellent buffet was provided by the ladies of the Ipswich Branch and the camaraderie that was established between the three branches bodes well for the future. We intend to actively support all Association events and are looking forward to attending Minden Day as a branch for the first time.



**Friends celebrate with the new Ipswich Branch.**

## Regimental Association



### The Cambridgeshire Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Cambridgeshire)

#### The Cambridgeshire Regiment Memorial on the Suffolk Regiment Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum

Due to the sterling efforts of our Treasurer, Mr Gray-Esson, and members, the required donation has been nearly reached and, with further donations expected, will probably exceed the required amount. Donations have come from parish councils, local councils, local firms and other sources. The dedication will take place on 30 September and coaches are being arranged as car parking is strictly limited. All concerned must be congratulated!

#### Regimental Chapel

Due to the low interest rates the Trust has not been in receipt of much interest but is still in a satisfactory state. Two of the very old standards which are in a bad condition have been placed in caskets to be placed beside the altar. It was suggested that a Book of Remembrance be placed on a stand outside the Chapel entrance and there has been a suggestion from 1st Battalion Royal Anglian that they might be included in some form of memorial in the Chapel. However due to the lack of space this would be difficult and the disused chapel next door is to be investigated as a possible solution.

#### Col Wally's Book

Colonel Wally completed his book before his death in January and copies are now available, with cost varying depending on the binding. It has been agreed that a leather bound copy be presented to the Colonel-in-Chief, HRH the Duke of Gloucester, a cloth copy to the 1st Battalion Royal Anglian and a cloth copy to the Suffolk Regiment Museum and RHQ. A suggestion that the Association meet the cost of the books is to be put to the Association AGM in September.

#### Cambridgeshire Collection

The Land Warfare Museum at IWM Duxford is to be closed during the winter due to lack of funding. As a result local museums are to be investigated, for instance Ely Museum needs updating and there are possibly others where we could display our exhibits. The Guardians of the Collection have approximately £7,000 in fund.

#### Shoe Box Appeal

Following various fundraising activities, 28 people from Association Branches across the region met at the Cadet Centre Whittlesey on 27 January 2010 to pack shoeboxes with items to send to Afghanistan. The Chairman arranged for the premise to be available from 1900hrs and the Treasurer had arranged with a local supermarket to purchase sufficient goods to fill 105 shoeboxes.

Two of our member's wives provided tea and biscuits and soon a mini production line swung into action. Having collected a shoebox, filled with various items, they were then taken to a packing table to make secure, and then onto a labeling station and finally placed for dispatch. The following day, two members took 105 boxes to Peterborough Royal Mail depot for dispatch to D(Cambridgeshire)

Company 1st Royal Anglian Regiment.

An email has since been received from Maj Olly Brown, OC D Company, to advise that the shoeboxes reached Afghanistan and he sends his thanks to all concerned. Our thoughts remain with all service personnel serving in Afghanistan.

#### History of the Cambridgeshire Regiment Continued 1971 to 1999

D (Cambridgeshire) Company 6th (Volunteer) Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment was formed on 1 April 1971 as the official successor unit to the Cambridgeshire Regiment TA, handicapped by having no cadre on which to build, as did the other companies of the Battalion.

The Company started with a Company Commander, Maj Dick Shervington, (destined to become Deputy Honorary Colonel TA Cambridgeshire), a Wisbech Detachment Commander, Lt Chris Bull, a Regular Army Instructor, CSgt Danny Phillips and 120 vacancies. However with the untiring assistance and support of the Company's first Honorary Colonel, Stanley Aston, and of the County Committee Secretary, Lt Col Wally Badcock, the Company started to build.

Former Cambridgeshires, led by the then Cpl, later Maj, Dougie Burch, were quick to rejoin along with many young men new to the TA and the Company rapidly became the best recruited and most competitive in the new Battalion. In this it was greatly sustained by the practical and moral support of former Commanding Officers and old comrades. The invitation to wear the Cambridgeshire Regiment tie was gratefully appreciated and it continues to be worn by ex-members of the Company with pride.

Recognition by the civil authorities came early; the Company being granted succession to the Freedom of the City of Cambridge on 24 September 1972, the Freedom of the Borough of Wisbech on 31 March 1974 and the City of Ely on 27 March 1977. The spectacular ceremonial of these occasions was enhanced by the support on parade of all the Army Units in the county and of the Army Cadet Force. These civic honours were received by the Company with pride and as recognition of the Company's acceptance in the county as the successor unit to the Cambridgeshire Regiment, whose honours and traditions it was to carry into the future.

In 1992 the end of the Cold War brought about yet another reorganization of the TA, resulting in D Company celebrating its 21st Birthday with the announcement that it was to become No 3 (Cambridgeshire) Company, 5th (Volunteer) Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment.

In 1995 in a further reorganisation of the reserve forces it became D (Cambridgeshire) Company of the 6th Volunteer Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment until 1999 when it ceased operation.

#### Obituary

We are very sorry to record the death of Lt Col WF Badcock on 13 January aged 93. His obituary appears in this edition of *Castle*.

## Regimental Association



### Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire)

#### The Regimental Gallery - Luton Museum

The Museum Trustees aim to hold at least two events for this year. The programme is to include a repeat of the popular Cadet Day and an exhibition on the rather neglected Burma Campaign.

#### The Association Remembrance Parade and Reunion

About two weeks before the date of the parade, Maj Jones received news that because of MOD cuts there would be no 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment Corps of Drums for the parade. The Minden Band was off limits too, due to their notice of deployment to Afghanistan in their medic role. Maj Jones contacted Martyn Pearson, Chairman of the Honourable Artillery Company Old Drummers Association to see if he could help. Martyn contacted drummers from far and wide and the day was saved as without a Corps of Drums the parade would have been a disaster.

We were again very fortunate with the weather on Sunday 15 November 2009 as it was a sunny day, not a cloud in the sky, a little chill in the air and it stayed like it all day. Members arrived at Kempston and soon the TA Centre was filled with members and families. The bar was open and there was also free tea or coffee on tap and made available by 158 (Royal Anglian) RLC.

The parade follows the formula that has been perfected over the past years, as at 1145hrs the Standards and Wreath Laying parties proceeded by the Corps of Drums marched through the old barrack gates to take up their positions in front of the Regimental Memorial, the drums countermarching back through the gates to bring out the marching columns.

At 1150hrs the main columns marched out of The Keep and after a series of wheels came to a halt in front of the memorial. The Chairman's Party, which comprised Mayors of Bedford and Kempston, Divisional Commander of Bedfordshire Police and County Cadet Commander of Bedfordshire Cadets then joined the parade. A short service commenced. On the completion of the service the Chairman's party left by the same route that they had joined the parade to take up a position at the rear of The Keep for the march-past.

The parade led by the Corps of Drums marched to the rear of the Keep, giving a salute by detachments as they past the saluting dais, and then forming a three sided square at the rear of The Keep. The parade was then addressed by the Chairman who thanked everyone for a great turnout and parade. He then praised the Corps of Drums of The Honourable Artillery Company Old Drummers Association



The Standards on parade at the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment Association Remembrance Parade and Reunion at Kempston on 15 November 2009. The Royal Anglian Regiment Association Standard, carried by Mr Peter Ward, attended the parade for the first time.

## Regimental Association

for coming to the aid of the Association as without them the parade would have been difficult.

In-pensioner George Bayliss then presented to the Association, a bugle that plays *Reveille* and *The Last Post*, that he had purchased, and said a few words. The Standards were marched off the parade and the parade dismissed and members either went back to the TA Centre for their packed lunches or went to The Keep for their ticketed lunches. The Corps of Drums gave a fine performance of music in both venues. It was then time to head for home. Another great reunion.

### The Hertfordshire Regiment Association

It is with deep regret we report the death of our Chairman, Maj Peter Burgess, on 27 January 2010. The Harwood Crematorium was packed with his friends and colleagues at a service celebrating his life. Peter had been a committed member of the Hertfordshire Regiment Association and Lodge for many years, ably supported by his wife Josie who is in our thoughts at this sad time. At Peter and Josie's request Standard Bearers attended from the Hertfordshire Regiment Association, the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment Association, the Royal British Legion and the Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force.

Since the last edition the Association has been quite active. Our

autumn fish and chip supper was very successful and enjoyed by the 'full house'. The Regimental annual lunch in November was one of our most successful in recent years. It was held in Mayflower Place who provided an excellent meal. Over 75 members and partners attended and it was pleasing to have a party from the Hertfordshire Branch of The Royal Anglian Regiment Association. Col Kelsey bought us all up to date with activities of our Battalion.

Roger Francis, our Standard Bearer, has been very busy in carrying out his duties at Hailbury ABF Tattoo (June), Minden Reunion Day and Burma Star day (August). He was also present at Bishops Stortford Museum for an exhibition for World Wars One and Two and the Regimental Day at Duxford (September).

During the November Remembrance events he was present in Hertford at the War Memorial for Remembrance Parade, The Richard Hale School for their Remembrance and the Kempston Reunion. On 23 December he attended the funeral of LCpl Alan Drane, The Royal Anglian Regiment at Bury St Edmunds. He also joined the Royal Anglian trip to Normandy in June and carried out 11 duties. Well done Roger and thank you.

At the Association AGM on 24 March 2010 and after a great deal of discussion Col Keith Cockman agreed to become Acting Chairman for the next 12 months. This will allow members more time to consider the future of the Association.



## The Royal Tigers' Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Leicestershire)

### British Cyprus Memorial Dedication Weekend 7/8 November 2009

Col Michael Goldschmidt represented the Royal Leicestershire Regiment at the dedication of the British Cyprus Memorial (BCM) at the Old British Cemetery in Kyrenia on Sunday 8 November 2009. His father Ken had commanded C Company of the 1st Battalion in Cyprus 1956-58.

Michael was accompanied by his wife Margaret and others of the

Royal Tigers' Family who attended were: Howard Howes, Albert Cuthbertson, James Tebbutt, Raymond and Margaret Meacock (Margaret is the sister of Pte George Bott who was killed in a road traffic accident in Nicosia on 31 August 1956), Sheila Berry and Sheila McQuillan (who was at one time the fiancée of John Argyle who died of wounds on 1 June 1956, two days after a C Company three-ton lorry in which he was travelling towards Golden Sands Camp was ambushed by terrorists. Ptes John Attenborough and

A close up of the memorial stone showing the details of the 17 members of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment.



## Regimental Association



**From left: Col Goldschmidt, Howard Howes, editor of *Cyprus Living*.**

Kenneth Hebb had died at the scene, and 17 others were injured). Unfortunately the family never all met up, so there is no 'team photo'.

The Remembrance Sunday Weekend comprised two main events. On Saturday 7 November about 200 people made a special visit to Wayne's Keep military cemetery in Nicosia, to which routine access is very difficult as it sits in No Man's Land between the Turkish and Greek sectors of the still-divided island. And that is the reason why the BCM was erected in Kyrenia, constructed in such a way as to be transportable to Wayne's Keep should in future years the political situation permit it. The 7 November visit was an officially-organised 'private visit' so that the relatives could visit their loved one's graves, many for the first time, and have some 'peace' time in the cemetery.

The party in four coaches (three from Kyrenia and one from the Limassol area) was escorted the last mile to the cemetery by British UN troops. Such are the strict restrictions that all photographs taken within the cemetery had to be taken by the UN personnel, using the visitors' cameras. Michael Goldschmidt placed poppy crosses beside the headstones of 15 of the Royal Leicesters who died in Cyprus 1956-58; the bodies of the other two who had died were repatriated to England.

On Sunday 8 November the BCM was dedicated at the Old British Cemetery in Kyrenia. This small cemetery is situated beside a dual carriageway in central north Kyrenia, and the Turkish Cypriot authorities had blocked off the road for several hours to enable the 500 or so attendees to be seated in the roadway. A full service of remembrance was held at 1230, conducted by the Anglican Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf, and attended by the British High Commissioner to the Republic of Cyprus (the Greek Cypriot Government). After the Last Post and Reveille, played by a Royal Marine bugler, 33 Service/Corps and Regimental wreaths were laid in order of seniority. By coincidence the wreath of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment was the 17th to be laid! Many of the ladies attending the event who were next of kin of those who had died in Cyprus were proudly wearing the Elizabeth Cross.

The BCM comprises eight granite columns, and the Royal Leicesters are at the top of the fourth column. The columns were made and inscribed by mastercraftsmen of HL Parfitt at Diss in Norfolk. As can be made out from the photographs of the memorial, the names of all 17 Tigers are among the 371 names on the BCM. Also on the memorial is the name of Lt DN Spurling RM (the son of Maj Gen John Spurling CB CBE DSO, the Royal Leicestershire Regiment) who was shot dead in the Troodos Mountains on 3 November 1958. Neville Spurling's nephew is Brig James Cowan OBE, the Commander of 11 Light Brigade and under whose command were 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment in Helmand Province in Afghanistan 2009/10.

### War Memorials to be Restored

The Leicestershire County Council is offering money to towns and villages to pay for work to return monuments to their former glory. The memorial in Ashby Road, Coleorton, will be the first to get a makeover. Ratby, Melton and Swinford are expected to follow. In Coleorton, loose base stones will be fixed, cracks repaired and

inscriptions restored, so people can read the names of the 25 local men killed during active service since the First World War. Coleorton Parish Council has been given £820 to carry out the repairs after the condition of the memorial was raised by village heritage warden John MacDonald. He said: 'The memorial has become rather overgrown in recent years and covered by weeds, lichen and dirt. The most important thing about a war memorial is that people are able to read the names inscribed on it.'

The Ratby memorial was dedicated 90 years ago by Field Marshal Douglas Haig, British Army Commander in the First World War. Parish councillor Carol Measures said: 'We are organising a rededication ceremony to mark the anniversary in November and want to make it pristine. It will cost more than £1,000 to get a mason to clean the marble and restore the lettering.'

The names on the memorial include that of Pte Christopher Gray, 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment, who was killed in Afghanistan, in 2007, aged 19. Pte Gray's mum, Helen, from Ratby, said: 'It's a beautiful monument right in the centre of the village. The bit cleaned up when Chris's name was added really stands out and we've been asking if the rest of the memorial could be cleaned.' The County Council would not say how much money was being set aside for the scheme.

The cash is being given out as part of Leicestershire and Rutland War Memorials Project, set up last year to record and research memorials and the people they commemorate. County Council Leader Cllr David Parsons said: 'We are the first county council to carry out a survey of this size and to respond to national calls for war memorial protection.'

Melton Town Estate will get money to revamp the Memorial Gardens, in Wilton Road. A rededication service will be held on Sunday, June 13.

### Last Post for the Hindoostan Dinner Club

The Hindoostan Dinner Club held its 40th anniversary and final dinner on 7 November 2009 at Devonshire Place in Leicester. Maj Gen and Mrs Pollard, and Col and Mrs Swallow, were guests.

In 1969 a small group of Tigers – Tom Marston, Mick O'Sullivan and Sandy Sanderson – suggested that as a way of keeping the Regimental spirit alive they should form a dinner club and model it on a Sergeants' Mess Regimental Dinner. This excellent idea was later endorsed by John Sheppard and the first dinner was held that year at the Saracens Head pub in Leicester. Sandy designed the club tie. Tom Marston was elected first President and a total of 14 attended. At subsequent dinners the numbers grew as members gradually retired after their service with the Colours. By 1975 the club had grown to 48 members.

Over the years the dinner has been held at many venues, including the TA Centre at Ulverscroft Road, the Pork Pie Library in South Fields, The Durham Ox Inn at Six Hills, the Albert Hotel in Curzon Street, the Sergeants' Mess at Glen Parva Barracks, the Hermitage Moat House in Oadby and for the past few years at Devonshire Place. During those years the club has invited many retired senior officers from the Regiment, including Cols Watson, Wilson, Heggs, Crumbie, Harris, Marriott, Creagh and Long, and Maj Dudley. Until 1980 the dinner was for 'men only', but then it was agreed that ladies should be invited as guests and the event became a dinner/dance. In recent years, as members got older, it reverted to a dinner.

To the 'founders', the aim of the club was very simple and very clear. It was to keep alive the name of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment and the traditions of the Sergeants' Mess by fostering the spirit of comradeship between all members – if they could have seen the final and 40th anniversary dinner, they would be very proud of their legacy. One of those founders has stood the test of time. John Sheppard DCM is a remarkable man and a former President of the club, who has given his time and unstinting loyalty to the club and to the Regiment.

Recently Roger Jones has presided over the club for 17 years. Trevor Taylor has been Secretary and Treasurer for 16 years and the 'engine' of the club, organising each dinner with efficiency, flare and enthusiasm. An unsung hero was Fred Norwich who typed out minutes of the quarterly meetings.

## Regimental Association



### Denis Foran at the Freedom of Loughborough Parade.

Three years before he died, Tom Marston wrote to say that he didn't want the club to end with a whimper; he wanted it to end with a bang while there were still a good few members alive to enjoy it. Hence this year's dinner was the last. The toast to Her Majesty The Queen was given by Mr Trevor Taylor and the toast to The Royal Leicestershire Regiment was given by Mr John Sheppard DCM. Following the toast to absent friends and comrades, Maj Gen AJG Pollard CB CBE DL addressed the club and read two passages from a book about the history of the Regiment. He spoke warmly about the club and its members and its importance in the lasting history of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment.

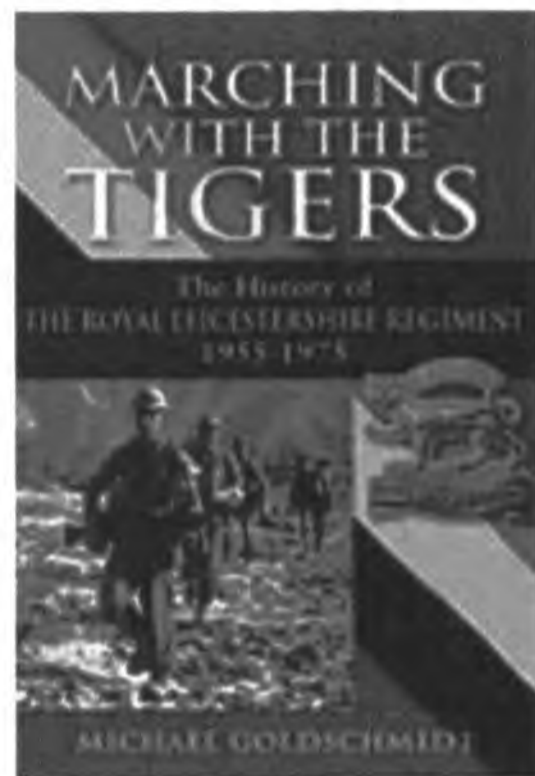
For 40 years the Hindoostan Club has been a very important part of the life of our Regiment and therefore it is sad that the time has come to bring its existence to a close, marked by the final dinner. For years to come, the Hindoostan Club and its founders will always be remembered with great pride.

### Freedom of Loughborough Parade

Mr Denis Foran, Standard Bearer of the Royal Leicestershire and Royal Anglian Regiment Association, attended the Freedom of Loughborough Parade on Saturday 10 April 2010, in support of 158 Regiment Royal Logistic Corps who had been granted the Freedom of the Town. Pictured with him are 2 Ex Royal Anglian Regiment Mayor's, Cllr Kevin Loydall, the Mayor for Oadby and Wigston who served with the 2nd Battalion and Cllr Roy Brown, Mayor of Charnwood, who served with the 4th Battalion.

### Marching with the Tigers The History of The Royal Leicestershire Regiment 1955-1975

This book, which was so well chronicled in the last edition of *Castle*, continues to receive excellent reports and reviews – sales are going well. It remains on sale at the Regimental Shop at RHQ and the Regimental Museum at Duxford. It is also advertised on the Regimental website. While the cover price is £30 it is available from the above locations for £18 (plus p&p). The book will also be on sale at Duxford on 12 September on which occasion the author, Col Michael Goldschmidt, will be present to sign copies.



## The Essex Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Essex)

In a recent circular to all members, our President, Col Dick Shervington, outlined changes in the staffing arrangements at Warley. These have been necessitated by military cutbacks and by the increase in the workload of Tony Jones, the Area Regimental Secretary.

Following a call for volunteers and a meeting with the Royal Anglian Regiment Secretary, Col Kevin Hodgson, Col Shervington agreed with Capt John Youles that he will take over the position of Essex Regiment Association Secretary. It was also happily agreed that Rosayne Jones would continue as our part time administrator dealing specifically with Association affairs. Rosayne is of course well known to us as a popular and well-informed figure in the Association.

Col Geoffrey Morgan continues as Chairman of the Chapel Committee, Maj John Hutchins is our excellent obituary writer, Lt Gordon Wren produces our *Eagle* Journal, Lt Geoffrey Green is our minutes secretary and Mr Brian Morgan organises our visit to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.

Two important events took place at our new Essex Regiment Museum in Chelmsford in January and February. On 24 January a 'Museum Preview' was arranged for all members of the Association. Chelmsford Borough Council and the Trustees of the museum welcomed visitors to what they described as a 'Morning of Celebration'. To the strains of the Essex Yeomanry Band Quartet, visitors were able to view all the new displays which they found



One of the new displays - Capt Souter at 'The Last Stand of the 44th'.

## Regimental Association



Ian Hook, Keeper of the Museum, explaining the exhibits.



Col Dick Shervington and Col Julian Lacey with the Duke of Gloucester at the Memorial Rose Bed, Warley.

very impressive. Ian Hook and his staff have done an outstanding job and should be congratulated.

The official opening took place on Thursday 25 February when His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Anglian Regiment, visited the new development. After inspecting all parts of the work with Keeper Ian Hook and Chairman



The Duke of Gloucester unveils the memorial plaque.

of the Trustees, Capt Tim Simmons, showing him round our Museum, the Duke took tea with some of our major donors before unveiling a commemorative stone plaque.

Following his visit to the museum His Royal Highness called in on the Chapel at Warley where Col Geoffrey Morgan showed him round, not only taking in the aspects of our Regimental history preserved there, but emphasizing that the Chapel is still very much in use and showing off the splendid new altar frontal.

The Museum Appeal stands at £116,000 which means that we have now reached our 'essential' figure. All those who have seen the new museum have been unanimous in their praise for the high standard of both building work and our displays.

### 4/5th Essex (TA) Branch

*Mick Chapman, Branch Secretary, writes:*

Our 3 (Essex) Company (5 Royal Anglian) 'Past & Present' Reunion was held at the TAC at Chelmsford on Sunday 18 October with over 80 attending, both members and potential members. The bar was soon doing a good trade as old yarns were swapped and news exchanged.

Col CAF Thomas TD DL addressed the assembled multitude, welcoming all those attending before introducing Col RA Shervington TD DL, President of the Essex Regiment Association, who went on to explain how the new Branch came to be formed and how everyone fitted in. Former CSM of 3 Company, Dave Davies, had produced a magnificent colour display of the lineage of Territorial Service in Essex to show how we were all related.

The new Branch tie was available for purchase for the first time and the design of alternate wide blue and green stripes separated by narrow purple and gold stripes (representing Royal Anglian, Territorial, Essex and 3rd East Anglian respectively) was well received by members. The design and production of a Branch



Col Geoffrey Morgan and Col Dick Shervington with the Colonel-in-Chief at the Regimental Chapel Warley.

## Regimental Association



**Col RA Shervington TD DL - President of the Essex Regiment Association addresses members at the Past and Present Reunion.**



**Colonel CAF Thomas TD DL addresses members of the Past and Present Reunion.**



**Too many cooks - Phil Ball and his hard working catering team at the Past and Present Reunion.**

polo shirt was suggested and this matter was referred to the next management committee meeting.

After much chivvying the group was separated from the bar and mustered outside for the obligatory group photograph taken by Dave Davies on the entrance steps to the TAC. Not to be outdone, Andy Cullen, another former CSM of 3 Company, rounded up all the members of 8 Platoon for another photograph.

Our thanks go to Phil Ball and his dedicated team of cooks and bottle washers for a superb curry to help soak up the beer and to the OC of E (Essex & Hertfordshire) Company 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment for use of the TAC.

Members also supported the Essex Regiment at the November service at the Regimental Chapel on Sunday 1 November when the



**Cdt Sgt Steven Fisher with his father, Maj Tony Fisher.**

new Altar Frontal was dedicated; and at the Service of Remembrance at Chelmsford Cathedral and Salamanca Lunch at the County Hotel held on Tuesday 3 November.

Members of the Branch management committee were pleased to make a personal contribution towards the sponsorship of Royal Anglian cadet, Sgt Steven Fisher, for his Gold Duke of Edinburgh expedition, sailing round the west coast of Scotland, where the cadets gained full Royal Yachting Association Day Skipper or Competent Crew certification.

Looking forward into 2010 the Branch is planning to hold an evening event at the Warley TAC on 16 October – probably a disco



**Former CSM Andy Cullen with members of 8 Platoon.**

## Regimental Association



**Past and Present Reunion at the Chelmsford TAC - 18 October 2009.**

with a fish and chip supper. All Royal Anglian and Essex Regiment Association dates have been advised via the Branch Newsletter, the KFS.

The Branch continues steady growth. Membership has passed the 100 mark but sadly we have lost World War Two Monte Cassino veteran Ken Bond, who passed away in January. Ken was one of the founder members of the Branch and, as a member of the old 4th Essex Association, embraced the concept of the new Branch wholeheartedly, as he put it 'melding youth and age'.

The latest edition of the Branch newsletter, the KFS, was produced with improved print quality and colour content and has been well received by members. The Branch also extends congratulations to our Chairman, Capt John Youles, on his recent appointment as Regimental Secretary of the Essex Regiment Association and wish him well in his appointment.

### Thurrock Branch

*Ken Hay MBE JP, Branch Secretary, writes:*

The six months under review commenced with our annual Branch lunch at which we were pleased to entertain the Mayor of Thurrock and her Consort, our Regimental President, Col Dick Shervington, and Inga, and our Area Secretary, Major Tony Jones and Rhonda. It's not a spectacular 'do' in any sense, but its small and homely, we like it that way and, more important, our guests seem to like it too. The following Sunday, I had the privilege of attending the last (?) Service of the Normandy Veterans Association in Westminster Abbey in the presence of the Duke of Gloucester. And, in this vein, I attended the annual ceremony at 8.32pm on Platform 8 of Victoria Station on 10 November commemorating the arrival of the Unknown Soldier from France on 10.11.20 – a simple but memorable tribute and well worth attending.

On 1 November, a contingent of the Branch were pleased to attend the monthly Warley Chapel Service but, this time, with a difference as it was the occasion of the Dedication of the new Altar Frontal and what a beautiful job the ladies of the Royal School of Needlework have done for us. Speaking of the chapel, I am pleased to say that our Branch is always well represented at the monthly services and the RNA Brentwood do us proud in endeavoring to outnumber us, and sometimes succeeding, but I think it is a pity that more

members of the Essex do not join us, particularly as we repair to Blenheim House afterwards which provides a great opportunity to get to know each other.

On this note, we feel sure that there must be at least a few retired members of the Royal Anglians in our South West corner of Essex whom we would welcome to join us on the third Wednesday of each month at The Foxhound in Orsett. We meet at 11, we eat at 12, well some of us. Why not come and see if you like us?

In December Jim Stephens and I were at Wootton Bassett for the 'homecoming' of LCpl Drane, meeting Maj Tony Jones down there. It's quite remarkable how an unorganized event can be so orderly and impressive and I would urge anyone who is in the vicinity, when still another fatality comes home, to attend – it is a lasting memory. We had intended to attend his funeral in Bury on 23rd but the diabolical weather and forecast prompted me, as the driver, to shy at the thought of being stranded on the M11 on the way home by snow and ice. Our intrepid Standard Bearer, Brian Morgan, proved to be of sterner stuff and carried our Branch Standard at the service and the burial and got safely home. In late January, however, Jim and I, with Sid Rosier, went up to Burwell for the funeral of Pte Robert Hayes and it was touching to see LCpl Drane's fiancée there. So sad – will it never end. Seemingly not, for we have another two funerals in April. But it is good to hear that the Vikings are coming home shortly and we look forward to seeing them at one or other of their scheduled Parades in June.

My Branch has continued to give good representation at the annual functions to which we are invited. Battle of Britain, Burma Star, Orsett and West Thurrock Memorials, parading our Standard as often as is possible.

We finished the half-year under review with our annual task of 'eagle-stuffing'. This is not to say that we have suddenly taken to taxidermy but the 650+ members and others who receive their copy of *The Eagle* may not stop to realize that the magazine, together with the various enclosures, have to be packed and I am pleased to say that it is Thurrock Branch members, with I think three others, who perform this duty each year – and are pleased to be of service.

In welcoming home the Vikings, the veterans of Thurrock Branch of the Essex Regiment Association salute all those serving in The Royal Anglian Regiment, our heirs and successors.

# Regimental Association

## Regimental Association Branches

### Norfolk

**HQ The Royal Norfolk Regiment Association and the Norfolk Branch The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Norfolk)**  
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 TA Centre, 325 Aylsham Road,  
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 Tel: (01603) 400290  
**President:** Maj Gen JCB Sutherell CB CBE DL

### Gorleston and Great Yarmouth Branch

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### Norwich Branch

Lt Col P F Garman,  
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### King's Lynns Branch

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### Suffolk

**HQ The Suffolk Regiment Old Comrades Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Branch)**  
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 Suffolk IP33 3RN  
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 (01284) 752394 (Wed only)  
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## Regimental Association

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### Leicestershire

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## Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC

### Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire ACF

*Lt Col Chris Sharwood-Smith,*

*Deputy Commandant, writes:*

Since the autumn Beds & Herts cadets have been busy preparing for the celebration of 150 years of the Cadet Forces and involved in a range of activities around the two counties.

Colonel Ian Macleod, Commandant Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force said: "We are delighted to be celebrating 150 years of this fantastic movement. The Cadet Forces offer such great opportunities for thousands of young people across the UK. We are encouraging people to find out more through Cadet 150 – come along and Live the Adventure!"



**Dunstable Cadets prepare their Christmas gifts.**

Working with Support our Soldiers, LCpl Rhiane Lindsay, 16, has taken the lead and coordinated the Detachment's efforts to provide troops with some items that will give comfort over the Christmas period. LCpl Lindsay says "The unbelievable job they are doing out there is close to all our hearts and we want to help in any way we can, showing support to those that inspire us".

Support has been overwhelming with over 20 boxes made up of goodies sent to Afghanistan to reach the troops before Christmas.

The Detachment saw a break in their training which provided an opportunity for them to write letters to accompany the gifts as a further sign of support to help raise morale. LCpl Kyle Burgess, 15, told us "It's too easy for the general public to forget what our servicemen and women are doing for us hundreds of miles away. Now it's time to show them our support, especially at the time of year that is all about giving and caring".



**Col Ian Macleod OBE, Comdt Beds and Herts ACF.**

Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Commandant, Colonel Ian Macleod, has been appointed OBE in the New Year's Honours List after devoting much of his life to the ACF

His service started in 1965 when he first joined Hitchin Detachment. By the time he was 17 he had achieved the rank of Company Sergeant Major. He subsequently became an Adult Instructor at Hitchin and after six years was commissioned and transferred to Letchworth Detachment. He returned to Hitchin as Platoon Commander and by 1983 was Company Commander for 2 Company and subsequently Battalion Training Officer. Following a County re-organisation in 1988 he returned to a now enlarged 2 Company as Company Commander, transferring to County Headquarters in 1994 as County Training Officer with responsibility for running the annual training programme for the County.

In 1997 he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and took up the post of Deputy Commandant, then being appointed Commandant in the rank of full Colonel in 2004. In 2007 he was appointed Commandant Designate of the soon to be amalgamated Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire ACF, overseeing the complex transition of two Counties into one.

Besides directing the affairs of Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire ACF, Colonel Macleod, who lives in Bedfordshire, runs an international insulation company specialising in draught-proofing products.

A fitting reward for 45 years service to the ACF



**Cdt Sgt Chaplin receives her BTEC award from the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire.**

It has been another bumper year for cadets taking the BTEC First Diploma in Public Services award in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force. This has been on offer to cadets since 2001.

The number of cadets completing the full award has been rising steadily each year. There are currently 54 Beds & Herts cadets registered with the Cadet Vocational Qualification Organisation at Frimley, working towards the award. In fact CVQO recorded last year that 22 of our cadets received BTEC awards.

On 8th December the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire, Mrs Janie Wentworth-Stanley, attended our Hertford Headquarters and, besides other awards, presented eight cadets with their Level 2 BTEC Public Services Diplomas.

The High Sheriff of Bedfordshire, has chosen Cadet Company Sergeant Major Liam Barton as Sword Bearer

Liam carried the High Sheriff's Sword of Office at a service at St Paul's Church, Bedford, marking the opening of the judicial year. The High Sheriff is the Sovereign's representative in the County for all matters relating to the judiciary and the maintenance of law and order. The High Sheriff was so pleased with Liam's turnout, bearing and help that she attended the Detachment in November to award him the High Sheriff's Badge.

Liam who lives in Houghton Regis and joined the cadets when he

## Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC



**Cdt CSM Liam Barton carries out his duties as Sword bearer for the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire.**



was 12 says "It was a great privilege to be asked to carry the High Sheriff's Sword of Office. The great thing about being a cadet is that you never quite know what you will be doing next."

A Hertford Army Cadet put her first aid training to good use as she dashed to the rescue of a young woman having a fit on her bus. Anne-Marie Twigg (left) was on her way to college when a fellow passenger sitting a couple of rows in front of her collapsed as the vehicle stopped at a bus station. The 17 year-old, who lives in the Oxlease area of Hatfield, placed the

woman in the recovery position and called an ambulance to the scene.

Gary Sanderson, East of England Ambulance spokesman said the woman in her 20s, was taken to the QE2 Hospital after the fit as a precautionary measure. It is not clear what caused the woman to collapse but it is believed she could have been diabetic.



**Beds and Herts Cadets prepare to celebrate Cadet 150.**

### Cambridgeshire ACF

#### Her Majesty was well Amused!

Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force Corps of Drums starred in the first ever Victorian Military Tattoo held at North Fort, Weymouth on 19th and 20th September 2009.

Following an outstanding performance at the Rorkes Drift concert in Wales earlier in the year, 23 cadets and 9 instructors were highly recommended to attend this musical extravaganza which even included the high honour of playing before 'Queen Victoria' and 'Prince Albert'! Our contingent represented the 30th Regiment of Foot – our direct ancestors from the Victorian era.

The group were involved in the four main parades held each day, and took an active part in the 'Sunset Ceremony' held on Saturday evening as well as entertaining the crowds with a magnificent static display during Sunday afternoon. The youngest cadets on parade were just 13 years old - and five of the cadets were playing at their first ever public performance.

The purpose of the event was to provide an educational and historically interesting spectacle of military life in Victorian times; and to raise funds for the charity 'Help for Heroes' to support our brave servicemen and women currently serving abroad in the harshest of war conditions.

The 30th Regiment of Foot was formed in 1702 and originally saw service as Royal Marines (entitled the 1st Regiment of Marines) and changed back to being an army Infantry regiment in 1714. The County title of 'Cambridgeshire' was added in 1782. Today the traditions of the Regiment are remembered through a strong affiliation honoured by Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force.

Commanding Officer of the Corps of Drums, Captain Lynn Herriot, was full of praise for the cadets. "This has by far been the biggest and most prestigious event our Corps of Drums has taken part in to date" she said. "The Cadets rose magnificently to the occasion and provided music of exceptional standard and quality. We are



**Cambridgeshire Corps of Drums with Queen Victoria and Price Albert (Vicky and Keith Biddlecombe).**



**Cambridgeshire Corps of Drums march back from a parade**

## Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC

extremely proud of them”.

A particularly rousing moment came on the final parade when the assembled re-enactors gave ‘three cheers’ to Cambridgeshire Corps of Drums for the invaluable part they had played over the weekend. They then left the event late Sunday afternoon to a massive round of applause from everyone present.

Speaking after the weekend, event organiser Major (Retd) John Hurst, formerly of The Connaught Rangers, said ‘It has been a joy to work with Cambridgeshire ACF. The whole Corps of Drums have been spectacular in their performances and County Drum Major John Shaw and his cadet Drum Majors could not have been more helpful’

### Army Cadets win National First Aid Awards

Cadets from Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force became champions at the 12th Cadet Forces National First Aid Competition, which took place at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst on Saturday 10th October 2009.

Teams representing every branch of the cadet services took part in the UK’s largest and most ambitious youth first aid competition. In all 32 teams competed in 4 separate national competitions. The event also included the Inter-Services Young Adult Competition.

Tasmin Smith (16) from Cherry Hinton, Abbie Bowen (17) from Waterbeach, together with Jodie Page (17) and Hannah Brady (15), both from Ely, made up the all female junior team. Hannah, in her first ever Competition, produced a faultless performance in the individual test scoring the maximum points on offer. Fellow team member Jodie also did well in the individual round taking second place. The team worked exceptionally well together and were fully focused on the challenges they faced. All their hard work paid off as the team walked away with the National Champion Shield and



From left: The winning team Hannah Brady, Abbie Bowen, Jodi Page and Tasmin Smith.



From left: Young Adult runners up Alix Lovell, Amber Bradbury and Zoe King.

the London Cup, as the Combined Services Champions.

Zoe King (18) and Amber Bradbury (17), both from Ely, along with Alix Lovell (19) from Haddenham made up the Young Adult team. Putting in an excellent performance they came away with a well respected 2nd place.

As Regional, and now the National and Combined Services Champions, the team will be hoping to continue their success as they go on to the Young Grand Priors competition held in Rugby early next month.

The teams were coached by Sergeant Major Instructor Les Edwards and Under Officer Dave Gaskell at the Cadet Training Centre at Waterbeach near Cambridge. Speaking of the success Les said ‘The whole team put in a first class performance and we are extremely proud of all of them. They put in a lot of hard work and thoroughly deserve their win.’

### National Success for Two St Neots Cadets

Two St Neots Army Cadets won top awards at the National Swimming Championships held at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst – the British Army’s prestigious officer training college.

Chris Nicholls (15) from Yelling and Ewen Dymott (16) from Croxton, both won their places in the Eastern Regional Competition back in September. They were the only two cadets representing Cambridgeshire at Sandhurst.

Chris, an army cadet for just over 3 years and a student at Longsands Community College, captained the Eastern Region Junior Boy’s team. He achieved a gold medal leading the team relay to victory as well as individual silver for front crawl. He was also placed 4th in butterfly, one of the most demanding strokes.

Ewen, an army cadet for over 3 ½ years who holds the rank of cadet Corporal, and also a student at Longsands Community College, captained the Eastern Region Senior Boy’s team. He achieved an individual gold medal for breaststroke and a bronze leading the relay team.

Teams of cadets aged 13 to 18 from all over the UK competed in various swimming disciplines and medals were hotly contested. ‘I am very proud of both my cadets’ said Sergeant Tony Bolton, St Neots Detachment Commander. ‘To have qualified and to have taken part is marvellous; to have won numerous medals and lead their respective teams is nothing short of brilliant’



National Medal Winners Chris Nicholls and Ewen Dymott.

## Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC

### Lincolnshire ACF

#### Army Cadets 150 Anniversary

Lincolnshire, along with other army cadet forces worldwide launched the celebration of the raising of the Cadet Force with a Cadet 150 display at the Waterside Centre, Lincoln on Wednesday 17th February.

At the Waterside Centre was a team of instructors and cadets, with the youngest cadet of today and an older ex cadet from years gone by who still has an association with the cadet force, ready to discuss the changes in the training from that of 60 years ago.



**Cadet 150 recruiting group.**

#### Band At Rorke's Drift Concert

The Regimental Band Travelled to Brecon, Wales, on Thursday 18th February to participate in the annual Rorke's Drift concert on Saturday 20th at Theatr Brycheiniog. This is the 13th year that this high profile concert and training weekend has been held in the Brecon area.

All day Friday and Saturday were spent in rehearsing in instrumental groups and a complete band ready for the concert. Over 100 musicians then filled the stage and entertained the capacity audience of 400 with music from Regimental Marches, National Anthems, Nights at the Proms and musical shows.

Monday was a day of instrument maintenance and free time to pack their kit and equipment and, after a busy weekend, the band made their way home after breakfast on Tuesday.

#### National Cross Country

Lincolnshire cadets were victorious at the National Cross Country event on the 20th March when they represented the County and Eastern Region at Warcop, Cumbria.

Cdt Elizabeth Bryan of Bourne was a member of the winning Intermediate Girls Team and in 5th place as an individual runner. In the Intermediate Boys Team Steven Scupham of Spalding was a member of the winning team and 4th place as an individual. To round off their success Thomas Cook of Grantham was a member of the winning Senior Boys Team and took the Bronze for 3rd place as an individual.

They were presented with their team winners' medals and National Championship Badges by Major General Malcolm Wood CBE, Chairman of the Army Cadet Force Association. Tom Cook was also presented with the Senior Boy's Bronze Medal.

Maj Chris Wilkinson, Eastern Region sports co-ordinator, awarded the Eastern Region Cross Country Colours and Lincolnshire with the Eastern Region Intermediate Girls and Senior Boys winners shields for the Regional Championships 2010. Eastern Region was also the overall winners of the 2010 National Championships.

#### Remembrance Day Parade

Members of 1 Company were on parade on Sunday 9th November for the Remembrance Service at Lincoln Cathedral to pay their respects to those who have served their county and country.

The parade assembled on a bright sunny day in front of the Assize



**1 Company on Parade.**



**The Band on Parade.**



**Maj M Radford MBE takes the salute.**

Court in the Castle Grounds, comprising of two groups, each comprising an Officer, Sergeant Major Instructor, adult instructors and over 60 cadets.

After forming up and inspection, the contingents and banner parties marched to the Cathedral for the service led by the County Regimental Band.

Parade Commander was Maj David Spraggins, Officer Commanding 1 Company and parade Sergeant Major was CSM Instructor Keith Leitch.

When the service was over the parade re-formed outside the Cathedral and marched back to the Castle where Major Mike Radford MBE, Cadet Executive Officer, was granted the privilege of taking the salute at the march past as this was to be his last parade in Dress uniform.

#### Lord Lieutenant Awards

The Lord Lieutenant of Lincolnshire, Mr Tony Worth, presented

## Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC



### Recipients with the Lord Lieutenant and Col T Richmond.

three certificates of Good Service to members of the Lincolnshire ACF on Saturday 27th March at their Headquarters at Sobraon Barracks, Burton Road, Lincoln.

The three recipients were Sgt Maj Instructor Amanda Edwards of Sobraon Detachment, Sgt Maj Instructor Keith Leitch of Newport and Sgt Instructor Michael Lewis of Washingborough.

Sgt Maj Edwards enrolled into the Army Cadet Force on 18th October 1987 and has progressed through the ranks to that of Sergeant Major, qualifying for the Army Cadet Force Medal in October 1999 on completion of 12 years service. She has also been awarded the First Clasp to the medal for completion of a further six years service.

Sgt Maj Leitch enrolled on 23rd July 1989 and has also progressed through the ranks to Sergeant Major Instructor and qualified for the Army Cadet Force Medal in July 2001 on completion of 12 years service. He has also been awarded the First Clasp.

Sgt Lewis enrolled into the Army Cadet Force on 9th October 2009 having completed 5 years service as a cadet at North Hykeham Detachment and attaining the rank of Cadet Staff Sergeant, despite serving with a physical disability, having sustained an injury to his leg while playing rugby at school.

It is for their devotion and dedication to service to the youth of the County that they were recommended for and granted this award by the Lord Lieutenant.

### Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland ACF (LNR ACF)

#### LNR ACF Cadets try out their new weapon during TA Weekend

Eleven senior cadets from C (Tiger) Coy, LNR ACF were invited by C Coy 3 R ANGLIAN, to join them on their recent Patrols Exercise at Yardley Chase. The exercise RAMPANT TIGER was based on fieldcraft and infantry skills.

Most of the cadets were integrated into the TA sections, working alongside the TA soldiers under TA section and platoon commanders, with ACF instructors providing specific ACF guidance. In addition, a separate force of cadets, were tasked with providing an Enemy Force for the duration of the weekend.

As a member of this enemy force Cdt Cpl Summerfield became the first LNR Cadet to fire the new L98A2 weapon during an attack on the Friendly Forces on the morning of Saturday 6th January 2010. Her LNR 'first' was swiftly followed by the other cadets as they engaged with their own weapons. When interviewed later, Cpl Summerfield had nothing but praise for the new weapon, commenting "It is so much easier to fire than the old GP Rifle, as it is semi-automatic"

The weekend continued with a variety of section and platoon-level skills during Saturday, with recce patrols during the night. The weekend ended with a 0500 hrs Platoon Assault on enemy positions that had been located by the patrols.

The cadets performed excellently throughout the weekend. Captain Ashford, C Coy, LNR ACF's Training Officer commented "At times, it was all but impossible to tell the cadets from the TA soldiers, such was the level of skill and fitness that they showed all weekend. Indeed, as I was observing the Platoon Attack phase of the exercise from the Fire Support Group location, the only way I knew they were cadets was the fact that they weren't wearing helmets. I was very proud of the way in which they conducted themselves." Major Neil Bevin, OC C Coy 3 R ANGLIAN Regt, also praised the cadets highly, adding that "it was great to have links between us, especially as we shared the TA Centre at Ulverscroft Road."

The cadets and adult staff who went on the exercise would like to thank C Coy 3 R ANGLIAN for looking after us so well and for giving us a great weekend.



Cadets on Exercise Rampant Tiger.

## Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC

### Royal Anglian Army Cadet Meets Her Majesty The Queen



**Cadet Sergeant Major Sam Troop, LNR ACF, meets HM The Queen at the Palace.**

Cadet Sergeant Major Sam Troop of Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Army Cadet Force met the Queen during an Audience at Buckingham Palace. He was one of only 26 cadets who travelled from all over the UK for a series of events to launch Cadet 150, the 150th anniversary of the cadet movement. Sam, a member of A Company, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Army Cadet Force said "There are 47,000 army cadets in the UK and only 7 were privileged to go to the Palace - I was thrilled and felt extremely proud when I received the news. I had an absolutely brilliant day, it was a once in a lifetime experience that I will never forget".

Her Majesty The Queen welcomed the cadets and chatted to them all individually. Sam was asked what other celebration his County were going to undertake and he told her about the 1,000 plus Parade and Open Day taking place in June this year at North Luffenham.

After lunch with officials at the Ministry of Defence, he walked to Downing Street with the other cadets to have their photographs taken outside No 10. Defence Minister, Kevan Jones, and Minister for Young Citizens and Youth Engagement, Dawn Butler, joined the cadets, bringing with them the exciting and unexpected news that they were to be given an exclusive tour inside the famous building.

First stop was the Cabinet Room where the cadets sat around the cabinet table while learning the history of the house. From the Cabinet Room the party moved to No 11 Downing Street where Mrs Maggie Darling, wife of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, welcomed them warmly and showed them round the Chancellor's residence.

The final engagement of the day was an evening reception at Lancaster House, hosted by the Ulysses Trust and the Council of RFCAs, in support of the unique Cadet 150 expedition to Lesotho in Southern Africa in July. Guests included Vice Chief of the Defence Staff and HRH Prince Seeiso, High Commissioner for Lesotho.

Sam's mum said "We were very proud to hear that Sam had been chosen to go to Buckingham Palace and meet the Queen and Prince Phillip. It has been a once in a lifetime opportunity for him. The cadet force has been an outstanding experience for him, and we have been delighted by the opportunities Sam has been given, the new skills he has learnt, and the way it has helped him to develop into the young adult he is today."

### Royal Anglian Cadet excels on Canada Exchange Visit

Cadet Connor Aldrich, of Wellingborough Detachment, LNR ACF has recently returned home after completing a seven week trip of a lifetime to Argonaut, New Brunswick, Canada. He was one of only twelve cadets in the Country who were selected to attend the course; quite an achievement when you consider that there are 40,000 army cadets countrywide.



**Connor receives his award.**



The fundamental aim of the course was to improve and build leadership skills, self-confidence, initiative and the ability to relate to others. To this end a major part of the visit was based around adventure training and methods of instruction and a weekly exercise for two or three days.

A week long cultural visit to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where shopping, horse riding and white water rafting, as well as sight-seeing in the Bay of Fundy and Prince Edward Island, were just some of the activities on offer.

On the Graduation Parade, Connor was awarded the prestigious "Trooper Corey Hayes Award" for the Best Cadet in Bravo Company. This is a very special award which was presented to him by the parents and brothers of Trooper Hayes who died in Afghanistan in 2004. Connor said "I am extremely proud to have been honoured with this award. The Canadian cadets were a fantastic bunch of guys and girls and by the time I left it felt like I had known some of them for years".

His performance was such that he has recently been selected as the Best Cadet to act as a UK Staff Cadet during the same course this year. This is an outstanding achievement and his mother, Mrs Genevieve Aldrich said "We are so proud of Connor. I can't believe that he has been given the opportunity to return for another seven weeks this year. We have a lot to thank the Army Cadet Force for".

### Another Royal Anglian Cadet represents the Cadet Force in Canada

Last summer Cadet Lance Corporal Nick Blunsom, of Talavera Detachment, A (Steelbacks) Company was given the opportunity of a lifetime; he was lucky enough to be one of only fourteen cadets to be selected to represent the ACF in Canada on the Cadet Leader Instructor Marksman course.

The first week was spent getting to know their surroundings, settling in to their accommodation and easing into the course. After this they started the course proper. As well as spending a few days each week at the range, they also took part in many other activities including sports days, sightseeing, shopping, field exercises and cultural visits. A month into the visit and the whole week was devoted to lessons on how to teach different techniques and plan lessons - skills that would stand all the cadets in good stead throughout their ACF life.

The main events came towards the end of the visit when the competition shooting began in earnest at Blackdown Camp, a

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**Nick Blunsom with pals at Niagara Falls.**

seven hour coach ride away. The first competition was the Ontario Rifle Association Shoot, which was a warm up competition before the main event and enabled the cadets to familiarise themselves with the set up. As an added bonus, they also found time to visit the nearby Niagara Falls. Next came the National Cadet Full-bore Competition and finally the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association Meeting. This is the biggest shooting competition in the whole of Canada and lasted for a week.

One of the highlights was a special dinner that was held for the winner of the Dominion of Canada Rifle Association. It was held at the Chateau Laurier, one of the top hotels in Canada, and LCpl Blunsom was one of only six cadets invited to go. In his own words - it was amazing!

He said after the trip "If I could do it all again I would, even with the six o'clock wake ups, the maple syrup on everything at breakfast (including the bacon!) and the millions of mosquitoes (even in the showers). It was an incredible, once in a lifetime experience and I made such amazing friends".

And Major David Slessor, the County Shooting Officer, said "This is a remarkable achievement by Cdt LCpl Blunsom. He did exceedingly well on the visit, placed 9th out of 46 on the course and 2nd out of the 14 ACF Cadets. If he continues to shoot well at the trials in March it is likely that he may be selected for the National Team which will be competing in the Channel Islands."

### Ski Cadet 150

*SSMI Kris Cross writes:*

We departed Tigers Road & Gibraltar Barracks at about 1100 Friday morning; after a long drive, a few short stops and a couple of movies on the coach, we made it to Valle Di Fassa by 1400 on Saturday afternoon. The crisp fresh Italian air was a nice change from 27



**Exercise Ski Cadet 150 – on the piste.**

hours of ripe cadet coach smell! We went straight down to the Ski Hire Shop and kitted out with boots, skis, poles and helmets before returning to the hotel where the cadets were squared away to their rooms to unpack and grab a much needed shower.

Our first full day on the snow and we were kitted up and on the coaches by 0830. As soon as we reached the slopes everyone scrambled around to get their boots on and skis ready to go. The cadets were split into groups of new and experienced skiers and within 30 minutes all the groups had dispersed across to the different ski lifts to hit the snow. The cadets were treated to a fantastic first days skiing; the weather on the mountain was great, the snow was pretty much perfect and the slopes were wide with plenty of room.

On Tuesday evening we all went tubing - flying down a slalom course in a big rubber ring at speed. There were a few near misses and lots of snow flying down from the spectator area as the cadets powered down the course. The adults had a go too - let's just say they weren't as quick as the cadets, but were equally as funny to watch as their thrust to weight ratio wasn't an advantage in this instance. Suffice to say, everyone had a really good time.

By the middle of the week the weather had deteriorated slightly and it was fairly overcast. This made it a little difficult to see the rise and fall of the slopes; but we still managed and the cadets were really coming along with their skills - they seemed to have no fear - unlike some of the instructors.....! On Wednesday, several of the groups progressed to the second mountain. There was a steep gondola ride to the starting point but it presented many more challenging runs. With blue (easyish), red (challenging) and black (hold on to your pants) runs aplenty it was a tough but fun day.

On the penultimate day of skiing, the snow had continued throughout the night and morning which left us with lots of fresh snow and poor visibility. However, in the spirit of LNR ACF "If it ain't raining we ain't training" everyone carried on as normal. That evening we headed in to Moena, the local town to take the cadets outdoor ice skating; unfortunately the warm weather in the town had thawed the ice and so we were unable to skate. A quick change of plan and a spot of shopping made up for it!

The final day dawned dank and wet with lots of sleet and rain but we all headed off to the slopes determined to have a good 'assessment' day. The snow didn't stop and visibility was no more than 5 to 10 metres in most places, but we all battled through and the cadets were able to successfully complete their various tests. Sadly, we had to call it a day after lunch and headed back to the coaches. We helped a few people push their cars out of the eight inches of snow that had fallen that morning; we then left the slopes for the last time with our snow chains firmly attached to the coach wheels!

Back at the hotel everyone cracked on with their packing ready for the journey home before popping into the village to return our ski kit and browse around the souvenir shops and supermarket to stock up on snacks for the trip home. After an evening meal, Lt Col Pat Long hosted the Awards & Presentations evening before everyone retired reasonably early, ready for the long journey home.

It was a tough but very rewarding week and I can safely say that everyone had an excellent time. It was impressive to see how quickly the cadets developed their skiing skills over the six days we spent on the snow and their conduct and behaviour both on and off the slopes was exemplary.

Roll on Ski Cadet 2011...

### Norfolk ACF

#### National Recognition for Local Boy

Russell Bradnam 18, from Harpley, the County Cadet Regimental Sergeant Major and a member of the Sandringham Platoon of Norfolk Army Cadet Force, has been presented with a certificate of Good Service by the County Commandant, Colonel David Hedges. A limited number of the certificates are awarded nationally each year to cadets who have shown an outstanding commitment to the organisation and who have displayed a high level of achievement.

Russell joined the Cadet Force in August 2004 and has excelled at all aspects of Cadet Force life. As a senior Master Cadet, Russell instructs younger members of the organisation in a variety of

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**Cadet RSM Bradnam is presented with his Certificate by Col David Hedges.**

subjects and is always prepared to go the extra mile to enable them to achieve. In September 2007, along with other members of the Sandringham Platoon, he visited the Gallipoli battlefields in Turkey, scene of the loss of the 5th Norfolks under Captain Frank Beck, the Sandringham Land Agent.

He has been involved in both local and national community projects and has raised funds for The East Anglian Air Ambulance, Help for Heroes and the Army Benevolent Fund. Having recently gained his Duke of Edinburgh Silver award, he is now working towards Gold.

Colonel Hedges said of him "Cadet RSM Bradnam is a highly motivated and thoroughly dependable cadet who has become an excellent example to all those who have come to know him."



### Local Boy to Assist The Queen's Lord Lieutenant

17 year old Cadet Sergeant Ryan Turton, of the Sandringham Platoon, was appointed as Norfolk Army Cadet Force's first Lord Lieutenant's Cadet at a ceremony in Norwich on the 4th of March. The post, although common in other counties, has not been awarded in Norfolk until now. A total of three positions will be appointed annually with the Army Cadet Force, the Air Training Corps and the Sea Cadet Corps each providing a representative.

The appointment will involve assisting Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant at formal military events. The cadet attending will be decided by the service involved, whilst tri service events, such as Remembrance Day, will see all three in attendance.

Strict selection criteria saw the ACF candidates being interviewed for the post. Apart from being classed as an outstanding cadet, the holder must be able to complete the full year long appointment whilst remaining a serving cadet. Asked for his comments he said "I am very excited and honoured to have been chosen and can't wait to start my duties".

A keen athlete, Ryan has been successful in representing Norfolk at regional athletics and is also playing rugby for his school, Smithdon High School, Hunstanton, where he is attending 6th Form. After his time with the cadet force, Ryan is interested in becoming a Police Officer; until then he intends to support the Cadet movement by becoming an instructor and passing on his knowledge to other youngsters.

## Suffolk ACF

### Aaron McClure Trophy March and Shoot Competition

*Lt WJ Sabin writes:*

The annual March & Shoot trophy competition, named in memory of former C Company Suffolk Army Cadet Aaron McClure, was held at Rock Barracks, Woodbridge, just prior to Christmas 2009. A team from each of the eight C Company detachments competed for the trophy which last year was won by Ipswich Guards, Aaron's former detachment.

The trophy was introduced following the death of 19 year old Aaron, who was killed in action whilst serving with the 1st Bn The Royal Anglian Regiment in Afghanistan in August 2007.

The trophy was won by the team from the Queen's Royal Lancers Detachment who are based at Holywells School, Ipswich. The winning team members were Team Leader LCpl Parrish, LCpl Walkinshaw and cadets Nobil, Garnham, Lizzi, Parish and Turner.

Aaron's mother, Mrs Lorraine McClure, braved the wet chilly Sunday morning to present the trophy, which is a statuette of a soldier in full combat gear, to the Winning Team along with individual medals.

Aaron spent many years with the Ipswich Guards Detachment based at the TA Centre, Yarmouth Road, Ipswich. A popular and dedicated cadet, who led by example, he was an inspiration to the younger cadets and a fine example of the calibre of cadet produced by Suffolk ACF.



**Mrs Lorraine McClure presents the Aaron McClure Trophy.**

**Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC**

Royal Anglian badged adults and cadets with, from left: WO2 Stephen Neal, Regimental Secretary and Maj Chelsea Hall

### **City of London & North East Sector ACF**

#### **Presentation of Freedom of the London Borough of Havering to The Royal Anglian Regiment**

On 24th March 2010, Royal Anglian badged adults and cadets from the City of London & North East Sector Army Cadet force attended at Havering Town Hall to form a Stairguard, whilst members of The Royal Anglian Regiment were awarded the Freedom of the Borough.

### **Gresham's School CCF**

*Maj Gates writes:*

The contingent has continued to be very busy this year with expeditions to the Lake District, the Peak District and the Yorkshire

Dales as well as local walking in Norfolk and kayaking along the coast. Considerable numbers of cadets have achieved Duke of Edinburgh Awards at Bronze, Silver and Gold levels with a range of expeditions in different parts of the country.

The Army section has continued to enjoy a selection of fieldcraft exercises, making good use of the Thetford areas as well as excellent opportunities to see Infantry hardware on Ex STEELBACK CADET. The REME section has embarked on some interesting new projects and the RAF section has taken record numbers flying this year. The Royal Navy section has developed its afloat training on the Norfolk coast as well as kayaking in the school pool and on the broads.

The contingent has been highly successful in shooting competitions once again, building on the triumph of Bisley 2009 when it brought home an impressive array of silverware including the Ashburton Shield.

The contingent looks forward to welcoming Air Marshal Harper as Inspecting Officer at the Biennial Review in May. Sincere thanks are extended to all those who support the contingent in so many ways.

### **Oundle School CCF**



Oundle School Cadets on their annual Joint Services Adventure Training Ski Camp in the Swiss Alps February 2010.

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### Kimbolton School CCF

*Lt Col Susan E Camp, Officer Commanding, writes:*

This year has been, at times, a difficult one. We looked forward to getting our new A2 rifles in November but, having handed back our old rifles then, we have only just (as of March 25th) received the new ones. This, inevitably, has made the Army Section training difficult and has required much imagination on the part of my officers to maintain pertinent training targets.

The monetary cutbacks have also, along with all units, had a huge impact on our training and we were sad that this year's Ex Cadet Stretch at Cambridge University OTC was cancelled. We will keep our fingers crossed for better news next year.

Nevertheless, Kimbolton's cadet numbers swell year by year, with excellent 'top-end' retention, so much so that I am now in the fortunate position of increasing my Army and RAF establishment.

I am delighted that two of my senior NCOs from last year, Oliver Jolley and Jack Harvey, have both accepted sponsorship from The Royal Anglian Regiment through Sandhurst. I wish them well.

We held our annual CCF dinner (The William Ingram Dinner, named after the founder of the CCF at Kimbolton) in February

and were delighted to welcome Brigadier AP Williams OBE as our Guest of Honour.

RSM Dave Gridley and I had the opportunity of taking a small group to Duxford during February halfterm to visit the Land Warfare Hall and had a very interesting introduction from Mr Andy Murkin, as well as seeing the site of the new memorial and having the chance to see the plans. With my cadets having raised nearly £4,000 towards the Memorial Appeal, I look forward to, perhaps, having the opportunity of attending the Dedication Ceremony in September.

The main thrust, of course, of this year's training is Cadet 150 themed – celebrating the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Army Cadet movement. I was absolutely thrilled that our Head Boy, Barnaby Spink, who is not only one of our four platoon sergeants playing a vital role in the Army Section but also a Lord Lieutenant's Cadet, had the great honour of being chosen as one of the two representatives for East Anglia to attend the Royal Audience at Buckingham Palace to mark the start of the celebrations.

Kimbolton CCF are also delighted to be taking part in the Cadet 150 Church Parade at Ely Cathedral on June 6th, organised by Cambridgeshire ACF.

### Stamford Endowed Schools CCF



**RN Section Leadership Weekend at RAF Wittering.**



**Anzac Day at the grave of Sgt Thomas Hunter.**



**Annual Inspection Day March Past.**

**Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC****Oakham School CCF  
Centenary Inspection***David Taylor writes:*

Oakham School CCF celebrated its Centenary on 6th May. The Contingent has come a long way since the days of an OTC in 1910 when preparations for the Great War were beginning in earnest.

The day passed off in excellent fashion with the Colonel-in-Chief as the Guest of Honour alongside Brigadier David Clements MBE as Deputy Colonel of the 2nd Battalion. The Guard of Honour was presented as the Minden Band performed the Royal Salute whilst a Spitfire and Hurricane from the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight flew overhead. It is worth mentioning that the timings provided by the Flight were kept to within 5 seconds – testament to them being as efficient and reliable today as they were 70 years ago.

The backdrop to the parade included a Harrier cockpit to represent the local RAF bases at Cottesmore and Wittering, and a Rapier system from nearby 16 Regt RA. The focus of the day, however, was most certainly Royal Anglian and Leicestershire Regiment.

Once His Royal Highness had lunched and signed a scroll to commemorate the Centenary, Cadet Sergeant Major Oliver Davey (alongside Nigel Lashbrook, Headmaster) took the Guests of Honour around a carousel of stands including the 25m Range, First Aid, Leadership Tasks and Climbing Wall, before watching the final round of the Recruit Tug-o-War competition and presenting the inaugural "Gloucester Trophy" to the winning section. As always, the Review culminated in a choreographed Section Attack demonstration which ended with a low fly-past by two Harriers from RAF Cottesmore.

The day will be remembered by cadets, staff and some 80 invited guests who were able to enjoy the ceremony and the stands, and to reminisce about 'good days and bad' from their time in the post War CCF. A note of thanks is due, as ever, to the staff and senior cadets whose determination and commitment to making the Centenary celebrations such a success was outstanding. We are, for sure, set fair for the next 100 years. Lt Col Andy McCombe, too, whose masterminding of the entire day was quite brilliant, deserves special mention.



**Maj David Taylor welcomes the Colonel-in-Chief.**



**The Colonel-in-Chief inspects the Guard of Honour.**

## Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC

### Cambridge University Officers Training Corps (CUOTC)

It has been a busy year at Cambridge University Officers Training Corps (CUOTC) and the main challenge has been providing interesting training to the cadets without distracting them too much from their academic studies. We certainly feel that we have met that challenge and no more so than in the format of this year's Annual Camp, which took place in Germany.

But before we embarked upon that venture, the Corps, in conjunction with the University Air Squadron and the University Royal Naval Unit, presented an evening of military, classical and swing music at St John's College, as part of Cambridge 800, the celebration of Cambridge University's 800 years as a seat of academic learning.

The event was a spectacular evening set in the glorious grounds of St John's, with the Minden Band, the RAF's Shades of Blue Band, the Band of the RAF Regiment and Drummers from the Royal Marines providing a wide variety of music. Coupled with a display by the RAF Flying Falcons Parachute Team and flypasts by the University Air Squadron and a Douglas Dakota from the Battle of Britain Flight, the whole performance was rounded off by a spectacular fireworks show synchronised to Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture. It was a fantastic evening's entertainment.

No more than a week later we found ourselves back in the TA Centre preparing for the move to Germany. Taking coaches via the Eurotunnel, we soon found our way on to the autoroutes through France and Belgium. Only when we reached Holland did we incur a minor setback to the plan, when one of the coaches broke down. However we managed to limp into a MacDonald's restaurant, of all places, where a frantic team of "chefs" managed to serve substantial amounts of Big Macs and McFlurries!

Finally reaching Haltern Training Area we found a simple but comfortable camp, within easy reach of the training facilities, which would serve as an excellent base for the next two weeks. What really helped was the weather, which was very hot during the day, but essentially meant that we lived in dry conditions.

Our first few days were spent on passing MATTs and carrying out grouping, zeroing and the APWT on the nearby ranges. We then found ourselves on coaches again, winding our way up to Bergen-Belsen where we were quite brilliantly hosted by 7 Armoured Brigade. After a brief introduction to the Brigade in the marvellous Officers' Mess of the 9th/12th Lancers, we moved out on to the training area to move through a series of stands displaying all the kit and equipment within the Brigade.

The Regiment was admirably represented by a team from the Poachers, who produced an excellent hands on display of infantry weapons. We were also able to meet up with two old friends of the OTC; former RSM, Capt Andy Rainey and WO2 Darren Farrell,



RSM Jay and CSM Smart on the ranges.



The Poachers assist CUOTC.

who had served with us as Infantry Wing PSI.

We were then hosted in outstanding fashion at an evening hog roast, where the cadets were able to meet the young officers from all the units in the Brigade and really find out what life in Germany is all about. Meanwhile the older and bolder (and rounder) made a beeline for the desserts table! The whole day was a superb way of showcasing the Desert Rats and there is no doubt that a number of our cadets are now keenly interested in an Army career.

The following morning we paid a sombre visit to what remains of Belsen Concentration Camp, walking the route to the camp that the internees would have taken from the railway station. We were all humbled to see the conditions that so many people were forced to live in and it was shocking to realise the number of prisoners that died there.

We returned to Haltern and immediately went into an FTX, initially focussing on patrolling skills. We then hopped on to the coaches again and spent two fascinating days at the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (CATT) at Hohn where the complexities of armoured warfare were demonstrated on what can only be described as the world's biggest playstation. Once again the cadets adapted brilliantly to the situation and the replays of the exercises were extremely interesting.

Back again at Haltern we then put the platoons through their paces with a force on force TESEX, which really honed tactical skills and inevitably led to a highly competitive spirit. We finished the military aspect of the training with a Commanding Officer's competition, the finale of which was a challenging race, made all the more difficult by a heavy downpour.



CATT Briefing.

## Affiliated ACF, CCF and UOTC

We rounded off camp with a day's adventurous training at Bodensee and a day's cultural visit to Munster. We then boarded coaches yet again and headed back across the continent to the Eurotunnel and ultimately Cambridge and Norwich. We all enjoyed camp and recognise the immense efforts made by many people who helped make it so enjoyable.

With the end of camp we moved into summer activities, which included attendance by a number of cadets on the ROTC programmes in the USA and EX KAYAK BLUE which takes place in France.

The start of the new academic year naturally meant that we put all our efforts into recruiting new cadets from our three universities and delivering our Military Leadership and Development Programmes 1 & 2 (MLDP1 & MLDP2). Again we achieved a good recruitment figure, although the demands of degree courses, ultimately the main priority for the students, make recruitment extremely challenging.

The moratorium on MTDs came right at the end of our recruiting drive and provided an extra challenge, but we saw a strong turnout from both new and existing members of the OTC, which meant that

training could continue. Even into the New Year we saw a good attendance across the board and training culminated in our Spring Exercise at STANTA where we were able to make use of the new Afghan village training facility.

The Regiment continues to support our programmes, whether by providing skill-at-arms instructors to train our recruits or by sending DS to help with our exercises or MLDP2 exam. All three battalions have played their part in this and the cap badge has had the best possible exposure to the OTC as a result.

Personnel changes have been limited; Capt Matt Sumners has departed for Australia to be with Laura during her assignment out there. WO2 Darren Farrell, as already mentioned, has returned to the Poachers. Both of them are sorely missed and we wish them the very best. We welcome Capt Mark Brazier who has come to us from the Third Battalion to replace Matt Sumners. In spite of an influx of new cap badges on the training staff, there is still a strong Royal Anglian presence and long may it continue to return The Regiment's investment.



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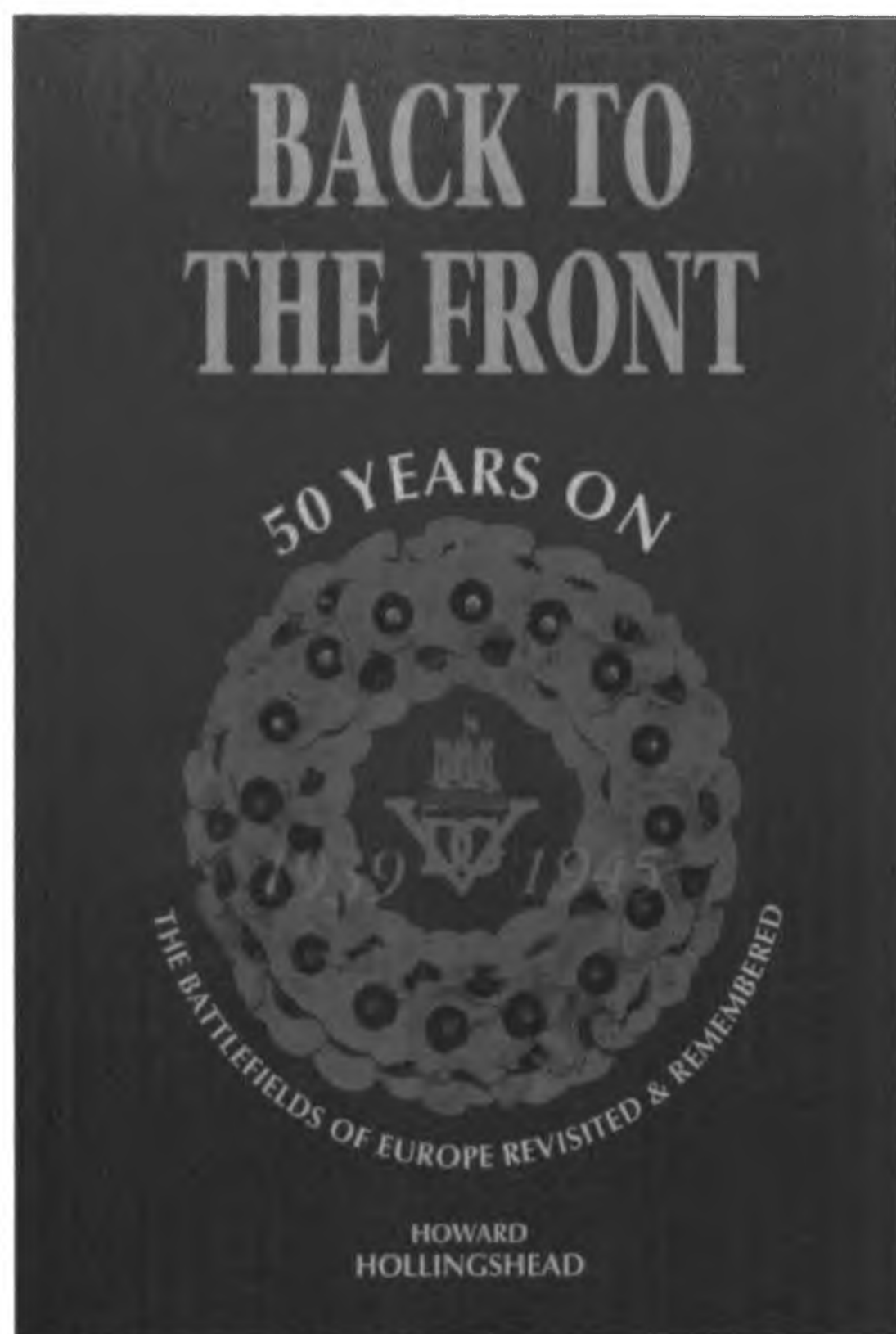
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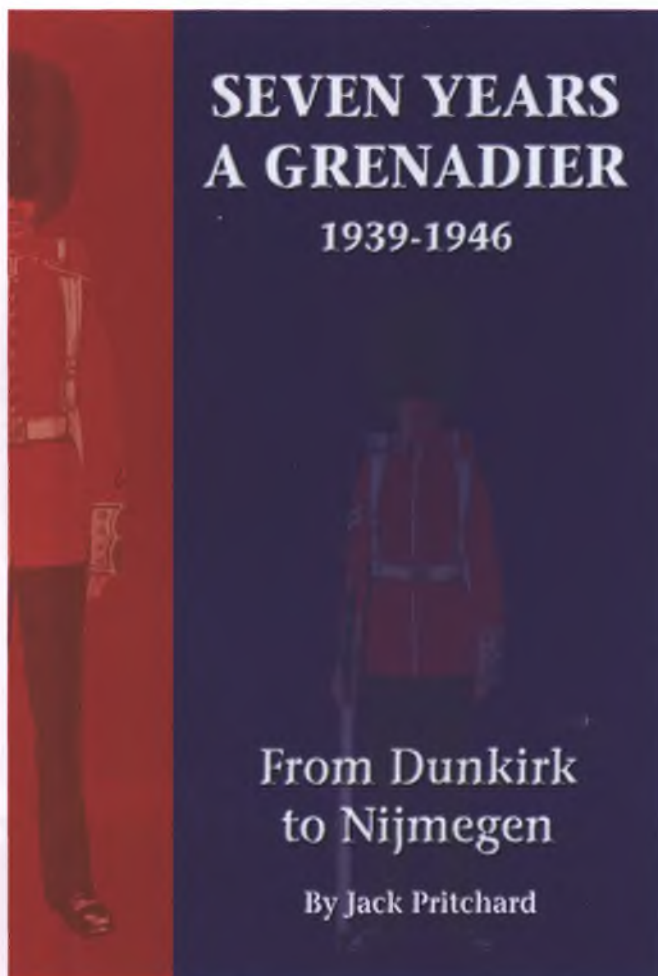
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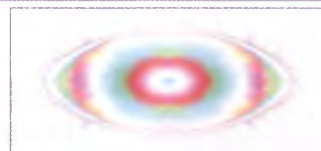
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Suddenly you find your clothes no longer fit in the comfort zone and slowly you slip up the sizes - in the name of comfort of course - now where is that couch...?

I have long believed that all diets work - people simply do not stick to them. As far as I am concerned the formula is simple. Eat fewer calories than you burn and you will lose weight...or the alternative...burn more calories than you eat. Neither, on the face of it, are attractive propositions to the middle aged...ok upper middle aged...and the generously proportioned.

In my case I felt there was one choice. If I still wanted to eat reasonably well, enjoy the odd tippie and still keep the weight down - I needed to burn more calories...Simples!

I have a 10-mile drive to work every day. Could I really do that on a bicycle? At my age? I used to cycle five miles to school but that was 40 years ago!

Well I sure gave it a go. Nice bike and all that and most of the way it was fine. Out in the open air on a summer's day, really quite refreshing and just enough cycle paths to keep me away from the maniacs.

Took me an hour - average speed 10mph.

On the flat I was running a fairly comfortable 12-15mph but the problem with the run from Kettering to Rushden in Northants is the hills. Quite a number of them, not staggeringly steep, but most of them a mile or more long. That's quite a slog for my tired old legs and although I managed it, after a dozen or so trips each new uphill stretch was becoming a demoralising sight.

Realistically, if exercise is not enjoyable, you aren't going to stick to it - so some sort of 'adjustment' to my plan was needed.

I had heard of pedelecs - cycles that have a battery and electric motor to aid pedalling - so a hunt round the internet for the available possibilities was in order. There is a

**Whichever mode you are in, a sensor decides how hard you are pedalling and dials in motor power as necessary**

surprisingly wide range out there.

In the end I went for the German made Kalkhoff Pro Connect for a number of reasons.

- It seemed to be a solidly built machine with many upmarket features such as Shimano brakes and gears.

- The distributors are in Loughborough, not too far from Kettering if I needed support in the future.

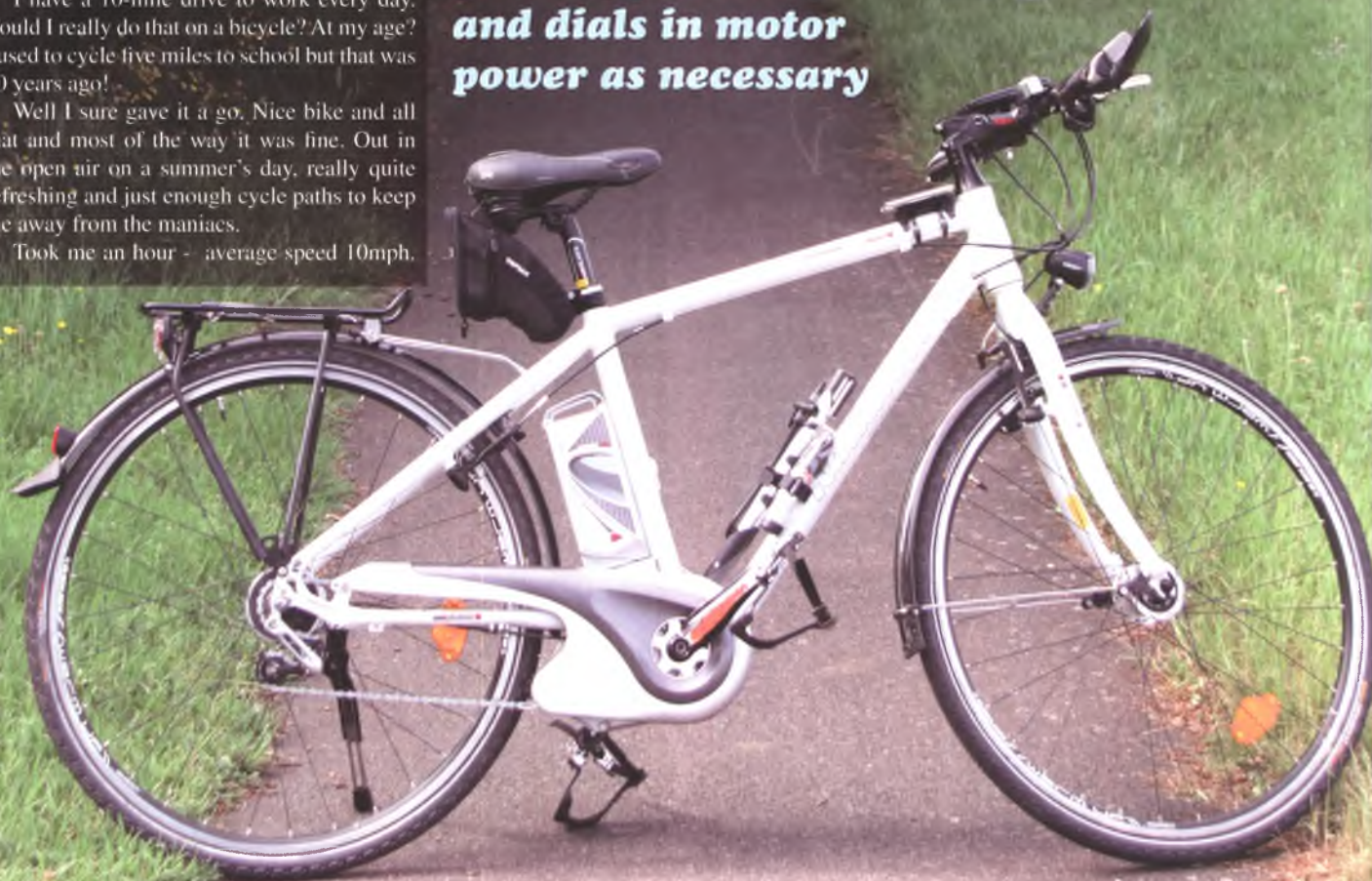
- It looked like an ordinary bicycle.

- It had fantastic reviews from a seemingly endless stream of satisfied owners.

## Green

Plus it's relatively 'green' with a low carbon footprint (tyreprint?) - if that's your thing - and the saving on petrol at today's prices is not to be sniffed at!

The Pro Connect seemed to be the basic model in the Kalkhoff range. Eight speed hub gears (I fancied trying this change after the derailleur gears on my standard bike) V-brakes, and a power assist which offered



eco, standard and high power. Basically the difference is the percentage of extra effort that can be supplied by the motor when you are pedalling. Whichever mode you are in, a sensor decides how hard you are pedalling and dials in motor power as necessary. Hence it realises when you hit a hill and gives you a boost when you need it most. There are other models in the range (including e-bikes which also have a twist grip for more control of the power) - a 27-speed derailleur (like a normal road bike with three chainwheel cogs at the front and a cassette of cogs at the back, the chain being moved to different cogs to change gear), a more mountain bike-styled machine with hydraulic disc brakes, plus others - many designed specifically for women riders.

Pedelecs can be ridden like a normal bicycle with the power switched off, and a reasonable ride it is too, if slightly heavy at nearly 22kg (which is light for a pedelec).

### State of the art

The power boost comes from a Panasonic brushless electric motor powered by a state of the art lithium manganese rechargeable battery. Replacement batteries are not cheap at a touch under £400, but a battery should still be perfectly serviceable up to around 500 full charges - in my case that could be getting on for two years. One recent independent test saw no decline in capacity at all over six months of 'fairly intensive all-weather use'.

New battery technology means batteries no longer have a 'memory'...in other words recharging from half charged is half a charge when adding up the 500 charges lifetime and does not affect the battery in a detrimental way. A full charge takes a few hours and the cost is estimated at a few pence. A full charge can get you up to 50 miles or so, I assume at the eco level. After my 10-mile route with the big hills and using a variety of power levels, my battery was still showing 80% or so. For the technically minded the Panasonic power system is 250W and the battery is 26V 10AH.

The basic advertising slogan for most pedelecs is that they 'flatten out hills' - the very thing I was really aiming for. And yes,



Simple...power button for on/off...mode button for low (eco)/medium/high power.



The battery locks into place and is removed with a key.

it does just that. Hills that had me struggling along at 6mph I was sailing up at 12-15mph. Regulations\* at the moment regarding

pedelecs mean that they can only offer motorised assistance up to 25kph - a tad over 15mph. More than that and you are in 'motorbike' territory with the resultant need of a crash helmet, licence, insurance etc. As it is, a pedelec requires no more than a normal bicycle. (Electric bicycle insurance is available if you would feel more comfortable with it).

Have I defeated the object of burning calories and therefore becoming fitter in the process? I don't think so. In fact I think I probably put in pretty much the same effort with a resulting higher average speed (albeit for a shorter time - I cut my commuting time from an hour to 45 minutes - less on a good day!). Also I am less prone to envisage those awful hills and take the easy option - the car - although time will tell if that changes...more to come in the next edition.

RP

\*Quote from Wikipedia Electric Bicycle Laws (European Union)...Electrically-assisted cycles are usually classified as either pedelecs or e-bikes. Under European Union regulations adopted in the UK in June 2003, only power-assisted cycles meeting the pedelec classification are considered to be pedal cycles. The maximum power allowed in the European Union for (pedelec) electric bicycles is 250 W, with a maximum assisted speed of 25km/h. To meet the pedelec specification the electric motor must be activated by the rider's pedalling effort and the power must cut out completely whenever the rider stops pedalling. Control of the motor by pedalling is often the key difference between a pedelec and e-bike.



Almost mandatory for commuting, lights, mudguards, a sturdy rear rack and kick stand are all included.

### The Bike

Kaikhoff Pro Connect 2010

Price: £1,895

### Accessories

Extra Charger: £125

Replacement battery: £395

Replacement chain: £10.21

**Additions:** Straight handlebars with angled bar ends (standard were too swept back for my taste); saddle that I had got used to on my other bike; toe clips, pump and bags, iPhone and iPod mounts and mirror.

### Supplier

50Cycles

Unit M Little Moor Lane

Loughborough, Leics LE11 1SF

Tel: 0800 0288 116

Web: <http://www.50cycles.com>

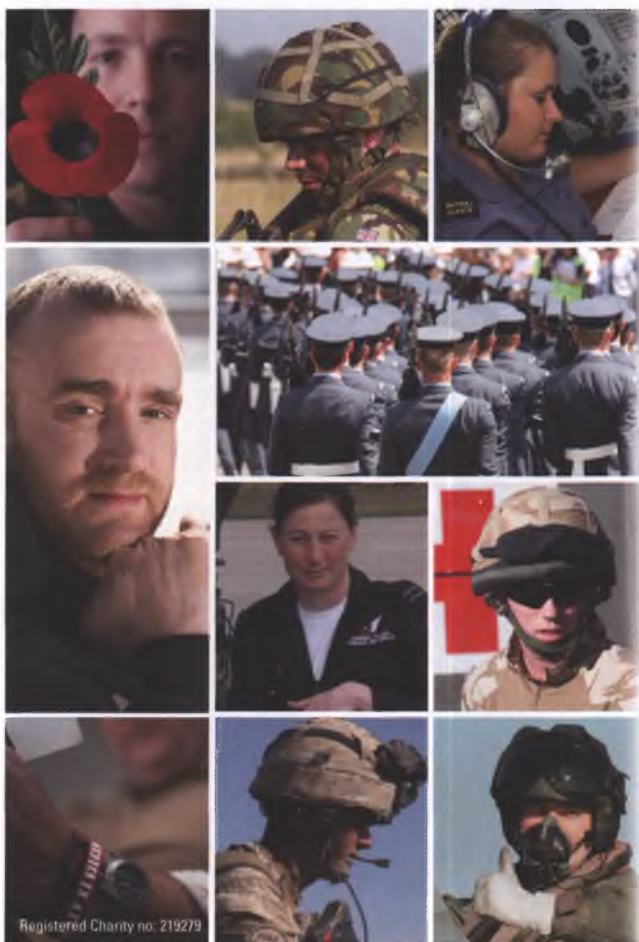


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