



11/07

ROYAL ANGLIAN NEWS

Dec 07

COMMISSIONING

1. The following R ANGLIAN Warrant Officers have been selected for commissioning in 2008:

WO1 AJ Rainey: to 2 R ANGLIAN.

WO1 IJ Robinson: to 1 R ANGLIAN.

WO2 PG Jackson: to AAC.

POSTINGS

2. We have been notified of the following R ANGLIAN officer postings:

Lt Col SD Etherington from MS/QMG to DA Kampala in Jan 08.

Lt Col AM Wylie from Australian Staff College to SO1 ISTAR DCMT Defence Academy in Jan 08

Maj (for Lt Col 08) DGH Hunter from SO2 Queens MS Officers Combat to SO1 PM/DTL CBRN IPT in Jul 08.

Maj (for Lt Col 08) JA York from SO1 ISTAR HQ 52 Inf Bde to SO1 C CSD CJO Command Group Northwood in Apr 08.

Maj DA England to ICSC 12

3. Note that Maj DW Dawber TD, who assumes Command of EMUOTC in Apr 08, is not, as published in the last Newsletter, R ANGLIAN.

4. Maj DSJ Biddick has been selected to read for a Master of Philosophy at the University of Cambridge in the next academic year.

BATTALION ACTIVITIES

5. **1st Battalion.**

November has been dominated by a series of homecoming events. The first event was the Battalion's Service of Remembrance. It was the first time that the Battalion as a whole has been able to stop and remember our fallen. This very poignant day was made even more

emotional with the bereaved families attending. The final act of the day was the dedication of the OP HERRICK Memorial, which WO2 Freeman had built outside BHQ.

On 15th November the Battalion received their medals from Maj Gen Sutherell and Brig Lorimer. Over 2000 people came to watch the parade at Pirbright, and subsequently have a barbeque and take part in the Grand Charity Auction. Ross Kemp was the auctioneer and the aim was to raise £10000 in an hour. In fact a total of 92 lots were sold in 45 minutes and made £15000.

The culmination of the month were the Freedom Parades conducted in Norwich and Bury St Edmunds. These were preceded by a Welcome Home Parade through the centre of Guildford. Nobody knew what to expect during the parades or how many people would support them. But despite poor weather a great turnout came out to welcome home the Battalion. Hundreds came out at Guildford which was a surprise as we do not recruit from the area, but thousands lined the streets of Norwich and Bury St Edmunds. It was an amazing experience for everybody involved, marching through our heartland to cheers, applause and red and yellow decorating the city centres. The most moving sight for all was to see the veterans wearing berets saluting the young men as they marched passed. Bury St Edmunds was a true reunion and the presence of ex Vikings and those serving away from the Battalion, as well as a marvellous turnout from the wider Regimental family, greatly added to the atmosphere.

On top of this normal life had to continue. C Company entered a team in Cambrian Patrol and, after only two weeks training, won a Gold Medal. Planning continued for next year; the main events will be the conversion to Bulldog and taking on the Northern Ireland Public Order Commitment, as well as the normal ski camps, adventurous training, Combined Arms Tactical Trainers and Command and Staff Trainers. Everything is now set for 6 weeks leave, where everybody will make the most of their time and their Operational Bonus.

The memorial fund is continuing to grow. At the time of writing the fund stood at approximately £162000. The whole Battalion would like to thank everybody for the spectacular and continued support for the fund.

A (Norfolk) Company

Following an epic summer we are now enjoying a special and long awaited homecoming – the reunions with friends and family have more than lived up to expectations. For A Company, the elation of our return has been matched by the warmth of the receptions that we have received in our home counties, particularly Norfolk. Building on the successes of the Remembrance Day and Medals Parade, the Freedom Parade in Norwich was an unforgettable experience, made special by the incredible number who braved the cold to welcome the men home. We are extremely grateful to all those in the County (and many from further afield) who supported us, not only on that day, but throughout the tour. Special thanks go to the Eastern Daily Press who consistently placed the Company, and the remarkable stories of our soldiers, in the public eye. As well as the parade in Norwich our soldiers have been invited to various functions across the County where the hospitality and appreciation shown by all has been second to none. Notable amongst these events have been Private Rolph's invitation to lay a wreath on Remembrance Sunday at the Great Dunmow War Memorial, Private Duffy's invitation to dine with the Mayor of Colchester and a Charity Dinner in aid of the Vikings' Memorial Fund in Norwich attended by Lt Denning. Four A Company soldiers were also invited to turn on the Christmas lights in Beeston – a

small but significant sign of the status and respect that we are currently enjoyed in our home county.

The Medals Parade on 15 November was a happy occasion and enjoyed by all. We are very grateful to Major Tony Ferrier, who served with the Royal Norfolk Regiment during the Second World War and endured imprisonment as a POW in the Far East; and also to Maj Gen John Sutherell for kindly presenting medals to the Company for operational service in Afghanistan.

Having returned home we now have time to reflect on the happy memories that we have of the two men we lost in action - Private Chris Gray and Corporal Daz Bonner. As well as the Battalion's act of remembrance in Aldershot, Corunna Platoon was invited to a Remembrance Service held in Ratby, Leicestershire, where they marched through the Village and laid a wreath at the war memorial in honour of Private Chris Gray. Private Gray's name was unveiled on the memorial as the first inscribed since the end of the Second World War - a fitting tribute.

Finally, at the time of writing, after 6 weeks in camp following the end of the tour, the Company is looking forward to a long and well earned Christmas leave. We hope 2008 is a more peaceful year for all.

B (Suffolk) Company

B (Suffolk) Company started November in style by staging a Company party for all members and partners on board the MV Golden Jubilee, a Thames party boat. A jubilant atmosphere surrounded the evening, the first time the Company celebrated a successful return home from Afghanistan as a whole.

The focus for November has been the Medals and Freedom Parades, with all members trying to revise rusty drill skills. The sheer scale of turnout by friends, family and associates at these parades filled the hearts of all ranks.

In conjunction with the parades, the Company has continued fund-raising activity for the Memorial Fund. 7 Platoon were "chartered" for 2 days of beers, BBQ and fence painting in Sergeant Woodrows' Hertfordshire estate, raising one thousand pounds for the fund. 5 and 6 Platoons completed a sponsored one thousand kilometre row in Guildford city centre, again raising thousands as a result of kind donations from passers-by. All ranks now look forward to a quiet December on leave, catching up with friends and family after a hard year.

C (Essex) Company

The month of November brought a chill to the bones of C (Essex) Company after being back from Afghanistan for just a few weeks. One of the events C Company attended was a football match at Chelmsford FC. Lieutenant Powell took 30 soldiers to Chelmsford for the day where they were given a three course meal in the executive suite with the Deputy Mayor, other local dignitaries, and the managers of the football team. The Vikings got to watch the football and were given free drinks much to some of the soldiers satisfaction. At kick off we walked onto the pitch with the team and a minutes silence was held for the fallen Vikings. The soldiers then walked off the pitch to a standing ovation from the crowd. This was the first time the Company had experienced the public's support for their hard work in Helmand; however, it wasn't to be the last time the Company saw how much their hard work is appreciated.

The Company party was held this month on a boat of the Thames. Private Gibbs and Private Harris led the C Company dance team and subsequent 'dance off' in which Corporal Willan showed his talents on the dance floor. We even got to see the infamous 10 Pl Inkerman "Thriller" dance routine, as choreographed by Private "twinkle toes" Gibbs.

Lt Sam Perrin and his Cambrian patrol team deserve much praise for their performance in this year's Cambrian Patrol. After 6 months in Helmand and only two weeks preparation, the team did a fantastic job. Testament to their hard work and determination, the team achieved one of only four gold medals awarded this year.

The RCMT selection was run in the Wales this month; the candidates were subjected to medical tests and 4 days of walking in the hills. With atrocious weather and constant assessment the Company showed itself at the top of the pile with three of its number coming in the top four students of the course.

One of the highlights for the Company this month was the Medals Parade. It was a great chance for the families to come down and see the whole Battalion and a selection of weapons and kit used in Afghanistan. The parades through Guildford, Norwich and Bury St Edmunds were a great success. There was a very big turn out for all of the events and thousands of pounds were raised for the Memorial Fund. It was fantastic to see young and old supporting our soldiers in their thousands.

D (Cambridgeshire) Company

In the month since returning from Op Herrick, D Company has continued to keep itself occupied, mainly busying itself with post tour administration and looking forward to the activities of the New Year. Naturally the main focus has been on the Homecoming and Freedom Parades, with the resultant drill that this has required. Without wishing to add to what has already been said, all three parades have undoubtedly been the highlight of the month. But that is not to suggest that there have not been other activities too. D Company also set up the support weapon stands for the Medals Parade. The platoons have been having social events and soldiers from the Company travelling up to the Peterborough vs Dagenham and Redbridge football match on Tuesday the 6th of November.

The focus for Company Headquarters (and indeed the platoons) remains on the new soldiers coming to the D Company Induction Cadres starting in the New Year. Training is already planned to bring the new soldiers up to speed in their new roles in the lead up to Easter leave. The conversion to Bulldog is also being planned. As well as all this, the Company is saying goodbye to several members. Major Calder is moving to take the job of Battalion Second In Command, being replaced by Major Barry; Company Sergeant Major Taylor is moving on to be replaced by Company Sergeant Major Snow and Colour Sergeant Hopkin has handed over the Company Quartermaster Sergeant stores to Colour Sergeant Thurston.

In all, the period since returning from Afghanistan has proved to be far busier than initially expected! In spite of the hectic schedule, the members of the Company are obviously enjoying the opportunity to see their friends and relatives and are looking forward to coming back in the New Year, refreshed and ready to begin training

6. 2nd Battalion

EX UHLAN EAGLE has been the main focus of battalion efforts this month. This three week deployment to Poland was the culmination of all the theoretical exercises that we have conducted since our move into 7th Armoured Brigade. The exercise saw the Battalion being put through a number of real time missions to assess how our plans worked when translated into reliable and viable actions on the ground.

The weather throughout managed to hold off and the ice age that Poland had promised on initial exercise recess luckily never set in fully. However, although not as bad as expected, the weather was 'interesting' at times but both commanders and soldiers managed to conduct themselves with humour throughout.

The Battle Group Headquarters planned three main missions; however Headquarters 7th Armoured Brigade would never have been content to just let the Battle Group do these. Therefore numerous additional contingency plans were thrown at the planning team, ranging from hosting VVIPs to setting up Brigade Prisoner of War cages. The length of this exercise and the resources provided from Brigade allowed us to integrate well with our attachments. As some of these attachments will deploy with us next year, this was more than beneficial for Operation TELIC 12.

As always the soldiers performed extremely well and seemed to enjoy the opportunity presented by being part of an All Arms Battle Group. The chance to work closely with armour, artillery and engineers, as well as seeing other elements, has meant that the soldiers have come away with a much greater understanding of battle group operations. The chance for people to get photos of themselves on various armoured vehicles was also appreciated!

The return to Trenchard Barracks has allowed the Battalion to start gearing up for Christmas leave. The driving and training courses that are necessary for the New Year are still continuing, with the addition of five Mastiff vehicles to our current fleet until mid-December to allow for familiarisation.

The Battalion continues to compete in Brigade and Army sporting events with Major Alex Hawley recently coming third in a Brigade cross country event. The Rugby Team captained by Captain Ben Hawes played against 4 SCOTS in the German Army Cup; this was close run but sadly resulted in a loss for the Battalion. The team will however continue to compete for the shield and future fixtures have yet to be announced.

As December comes on we are now looking forward to seeing the German Christmas Markets and some of the soldiers and families have been exploring the local skiing to be had at the weekends.

7. 3rd Battalion.

Following the recovery from Kazakhstan and the previous months training, things have been quiet for the Battalion on the training side. The Battalion has, however, been represented in all nine Counties for the Armistice Day Parades. The Adjutant and Regimental Sergeant Major planned and ran the Memorial Parade in Leicester, whilst the most notable event was the new parade at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford. Brigadier Groves organised the event in conjunction with Captain Devitt. The Parade was widely publicised on television and within the local press. It was also a chance for members of 10

Platoon to receive their medals for their deployment to Kabul. All our personnel are now back from operations; this is a first for the Battalion as we have traditionally had members deployed year round.

November also saw the Battalion team enter the Cambrian Patrol. Exceptionally the team managed a very well deserved finish. This is a massive landmark from recent years where the team has failed to finish at all.

One of the most enduring memories of November will be the Vikings' Medal and Freedom Parades; the Battalion supported where we could. It was a proud moment for the whole Regiment and the warmth of the reception both in Norwich and Bury St Edmunds, shows how much the Regiment is regarded within Norfolk and Suffolk and, indeed, further afield.

The Battalion looks forward to the traditional Christmas weekend. It will be a weekend of celebration and some physical exertion. The pool at RAF Honington is booked and the Battalion look forward to seeing WO2 (SPSI) Jewell 'cutting around' in just a pair of speedos, whistle and flip flops.

In the New Year the Battalion will begin the defensive operations phase of training and, as a result, will deploy on Ex First Defence. This is a defensive exercise on Stanford Training Area. Also the Battalion will continue to provide support for the Second Battalion and prepare to send a cohort of men to them in order to deploy on their forthcoming deployment on Operation TELIC.

FREE TRAVEL WITH FIRST EASTERN COUNTIES BUSES: A REMINDER

8. In recognition of the 1st Battalion's outstanding achievements in Afghanistan, First Eastern Counties announced that all members of The Royal Anglian Regiment will be permitted unlimited free travel on its buses throughout Norfolk and Suffolk (the only counties where First Eastern operates). This generous offer started on 22 Nov and finishes on 31 Dec. It is valid for serving members of the Regiment on production of a British Army ID card.