



09/12

ROYAL ANGLIAN NEWS

OCT 12

1. **1<sup>ST</sup> BATTALION**

For most of the Battalion October has been spent returning from operations and taking an initial period of leave but many Vikings remained in theatre for the majority of the month. C (Essex) Company arrived home on 24 Oct and the final elements of D (Cambridgeshire) Company returned to the UK on 28 Oct, completing the Battalion's contribution to Operation Herrick 16. For those still on the line, October proved to be a busy month with a spike in insurgent activity, most noticeable in C Coy's area of Kopak. With only days remaining, C Coy raised its tempo to counter the threat and set favourable conditions for their impending handover. It proved to be a sprint finish for many tired bodies but the remaining Vikings rose to the challenge in the no-fuss professional manner which had served them so well throughout the previous six months.

Back home, news that the Battalion will be moving to the Adaptable Force under the Army 2020 ORBAT has set the next medium to long term challenge and a move from Bulford in the coming two years now seems likely. Though this may not be the news that was hoped for, it is too early to fully appreciate the relative merits that this change will bring. For the meantime we look forward to the Medals Parade in Bulford and the Homecoming Parades in early November back in our home counties – I expect they will all be fantastic occasions and an opportunity for the Vikings to express our immense gratitude for the support received this year.

2. **2<sup>ND</sup> BATTALION**

October has been a climactic month for The Poachers in all respects. The long preparation for our six-week exercise in Kenya, named Exercise ASKARI THUNDER, has finally concluded and the first troops are ready to depart on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October.

Training has continued up until the very last moment to ensure that every possible opportunity to perfect and refine our infantry skills is taken advantage of. The Battalion Second-in-Command led a Rehearsal of Concept meeting in which every stage of the exercise was discussed, explored and analysed in detail; B (Leicestershire) Company went to the Brecon Beacons for two days of further arduous physical training; and the Motor Transport Platoon have continued to load soldiers onto Landrover driving courses to get as many of our troops as possible ready to drive and command the vehicle that will be our work horse in Kenya.

The finale of our collective training has been a week-long pre-Kenya exercise in Thetford called Exercise RESOLUTE POACHER. All five companies deployed to Stanford Training Area for five days of confirmation training in platoon-level tactics including deliberate raids in the middle of the night, advancing to contact to clear the enemy from an area, route marching across country and how to live and thrive in the field. This was all complimented by the excellent support elements of the Battalion at A1 Echelon and Exercise Control (EXCON) who gained valuable experience in how to keep over 300 men fed, watered, co-ordinated,

resupplied and fighting fit while in the field.

This month has also been graced by a number of prominent dignitaries visiting the Battalion. In addition to the training, Exercise RESOLUTE POACHER hosted a large visitors and media day in which VIPs from all over our recruiting area came to see an impressive display of infantry skills by soldiers from D (Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire) Company which was aired on BBC News.

The following week Kendrew Barracks was officially named by our Colonel-in-Chief, His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO. A name plaque recognising Major General Sir Douglas Kendrew KCMG CB CBE DSO\*\*\* (1910-1989) now takes pride of place at the main gate and was unveiled in a ceremony also attended by the Colonel of the Regiment, Major General Jones CBE; the son and daughter of General Kendrew, Mr Tim Kendrew and Mrs Marcia Abel-Smith; the Commander of 49 Brigade, Brigadier Nickerson; the Commanding Officer of Kendrew Barracks, Lieutenant Colonel Lonnen MBE; the Commanding Officer of The Poachers, Lieutenant Colonel Johnson and members the Royal Tiger Association, including veterans of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment in which General Kendrew served.

Kendrew Barracks itself will not be sitting empty while the Battalion is in Kenya. Captain Lee Wahorn, having recently taken over command of Headquarters Company, will be leading the Rear Operations Group (ROG) in our absence. The ROG will look after the welfare of the soldiers' families while we are away, keep the Battalion's daily routine running, continue to assist the builders in their final refurbishment of the site and help prepare the way for our return in December.

It has been a long and demanding task to get The Poachers Battlegroup finally ready for Kenya. But now that the day has come we are ready and eager to deploy and put our training to the test. We leave the UK content that our loved ones will be taken care of and confident that we are ready for the challenge ahead.

### 3. **3<sup>RD</sup> BATTALION**

Returning from Germany and Ex LEOPARD STAR 03 in the early hours of the final morning in September the Battalion has launched into October without so much as a pause for breath.

Operations:

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It gives me great pleasure to say that the 32 Steelbacks who supported both 1 R ANGLIAN and other operational commitments have now returned safely to the UK and are busy with preparation for their medals parades on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012. Each and every one has represented the Battalion in a good light and no matter what task they have been given, no matter how different it has been from that which they thought they would be doing they have to a man excelled. I would like to be the first to publicly thank all 32 and I look forwards to them returning to the fold in early 2013, after some well earned Post Tour Leave. With this troops now back we are looking at the possibility of having our first Christmas in nearly 10 years where all members of the Battalion are at home and with their families, an achievement to be celebrated in so much that it truly highlights the incredible level of support we are providing the Regular Army.

Training:

Battalion Headquarters saw the month in with a visit from the Microsoft Office Sharepoint Server (MOSS) team. With an intent to convert us Luddites into a internet / intranet savvy bunch they had their work cut out, however through their hard work and the dedication of our new MOSS guru, Mr Dave Allaker the Battalion now has a MOSS presence to rival any regular Battalion.

Much of this previous month had been dedicated to community engagement, in line with GOC Sp Comd's direction, the Battalion has been at the very forefront of this activity. The Commanding Officer was at one point the senior Army representative in the counties of Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. The proverbial fruits of these labours are now coming to bear with the counties pulling together some excellent signing events, supported by the Battalion. The 11<sup>th</sup> of October saw this occurring at Endeavour House, Ipswich, the flagship headquarters of Suffolk County Council. On a fine, bright, autumn day the Commanding Officer was present for the Suffolk Community Covenant signing complete with the military wife's choirs and displays from each of the Services it was genuinely heartening to see level of support the council is dedicating to Service Persons and their families. The very same day saw Capt Ginns (PSAO C Coy) having his recent hard work and endeavour formally recognised with a lunch for the exemplar members of the TA at the Victory Services Club in London. Capt Ginns has worked tirelessly to reinstate Leicester and Northampton to their former glories and seen much success in both recruiting and also the rebuilding of some of the run down infrastructure.

The month of October saw two key events in the Battalions yearly diary, Ex POLAR BLUEBELL and Ex STEELBACK CADET. The former is the opportunity for members of the technical arms notably the REME to test their skills in a Bde context. OC LAD Capt Russell, reported back that the specialists from 3 R ANGLIAN had acquitted themselves with aplomb during this exercise. Ex STEELBACK CADET is an opportunity for 3 R ANGLIAN to help a number of the local Cadet units in planning and running a large scale weekend exercise. This year hosted by E (Essex) Company and planned by their OC Maj Adrian Coulson it saw over 100 participants allowing cadets exposure to the next level of soldiering and a number of instructor the chance to practice their lessons on a different audience. The Deputy Commander 49 (E) Bde paid the event a visit on the Saturday evening and left suitable impressed with both the activity and organisation enabling it to occur.

As a final point all in the Battalion would like to congratulate the CO on his recent success at the No 2 board, while he will remain in post until the new year it would be fair to say that his time here has left the Battalion in a significantly better place then when he arrived.