



# Royal Anglian News

May 2017

## Regimental Matters

London Gazette Extract Supplement No 1  
Apr 17

### Promotion

Major (Acting Lt Col) F J R Grounds to be Lt Col  
Dec 16

London Gazette Extract May 17

### IRC

Capt A C Peters Nov 16

### High Sheriff of Suffolk Visits RHQ

The High Sheriff of Suffolk, William Probert visited RHQ on 11<sup>th</sup> May to be briefed on the Regiment, with particular reference to Suffolk and to the volunteer support given to veterans by the Benevolent Charity. Our Regimental history and Museum showed the High Sheriff's close connections to the Regiment. His Great Grandfather, William Probert of 3 SUFFOLK joined 1 SUFFOLK in Middelburg, South Africa on 30<sup>th</sup> July 1900, in time for a major



Lt Will Probert as a Suffolk  
Officer c1900

action "Before the determined advance of the Suffolk Regiment, the opposition crumbled." "Lord Roberts wired: I am delighted to hear of your successful advance, and of the gallant behaviour of the Suffolks; please congratulate them from me." The High Sheriff was particularly interested in the Boer War display and the details of those known to have served with his Great Grandfather. William Probert survived the Boer war, served as Equerry to the spirited Princess Louise and retired as a Colonel.



Col Will Probert later in life  
c1930

## Diary Dates

June 2017

- 4 Chapel Sunday
- 5 - 9 Regt Battlefield Tour - Normandy
- 8 Founders Day - RHC
- 16 Regt Rep Event - Belvoir Castle
- 17 - 19 RTA Weekend

## Regimental Council Meeting May 17

Regimental In Pensioners Michael Reilly (left) and Dougie May with the Colonel of the Regiment Lieutenant Phil Jones (far right) and Colonel of the Regiment (designate) Major General Ralph Wooddisse (far left) at the May Regimental Council meeting, which was held at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.



Major Bob and Barbara Grenfell at Buckingham Palace for the Royal Garden Party



Major Bob and Barbara Grenfell at the Royal Garden Party in May 2017 as the guests of the Duke of Gloucester.

# Freedom of Gibraltar

On 19th February 2015 the Gibraltar Parliament unanimously resolved to confer the Freedom of the City of Gibraltar on the Regiment. The challenge for the Regiment was to respond appropriately, because exercising the honour by marching a Regiment through the streets of Gibraltar with Colours Flying, bayonets fixed and drums beating is quite a project. As a first step, the Colonel of the Regiment travelled to Gibraltar in 2016 and formally received the Freedom from His Worship The Mayor of Gibraltar, on behalf of the Regiment.



Happily, Army Headquarters were able to allocate a slot on Ex BARBARY SUN, a two week exercise in Gibraltar, to the 1st Battalion. So on 20 May 2017, on a gloriously sunny day, the Regiment exercised its Freedom of the City of Gibraltar for the first time. The two marching guards were based on A (Norfolk) Company of the 1st Bn, reinforced by other members of the 1st Bn, the 2nd Bn and the 3rd Bn – and all were magnificently supported by the Regimental Band. The City of Gibraltar was wonderfully welcoming, and kindly invited veterans and friends of the Regiment to the parade and to the Mayoral reception in City Hall. Her Worship the Mayor spoke kindly about the special links between Gibraltar and the Regiment, and the Colonel of the Regiment replied, presenting a token of the Regiment's affection, an appropriately framed and inscribed Regimental Helmet Plate, at the centre of which of course is our Cap Badge, the Castle and Key of Gibraltar.



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

## Live Fire Tactical Training

Continuing the progression of both marksmanship and tactical training in the battalion, C (ESSEX) Company have recently completed a Live Fire Tactical Training package in Brecon in preparation for Exercise WESSEX STORM in June and Exercise RATTLESNAKE in the United States in September.



## London District Athletics Championships

Congratulations to the Vikings athletics team who just won the London District Athletics Championships!



# 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

## Exercise AGILE POACHER

May has been dominated by Ex AGILE POACHER which has seen A and B Companys' exercising in Lydd for 2 weeks then transiting to the other end of England to Otterburn. The Lydd phase saw them conducting section level live fire attacks into compounds – and all the accompanying build up (ACMT, fire team attack). They conducted a 3 day blank company level exercise based on a contemporary operating scenario in Lydd's 'Rype Village' – lots of patrolling in the urban environment with some strike operations, ending in a company clearance of the whole village. Before that, they had spent three days perfecting their CQB and urban fighting techniques under instruction from instructors from IBS Brecon, including simunition shoots in the Redoubt in Hythe. Otterburn will see them conducting platoon and company level attacks incorporating some small buildings and a lot of additional firepower (fast jets, heavy machine guns, grenade machine guns, 81mm mortars) and should produce some excellent video. The final week in May will see everyone on a well-earned spot of leave!



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# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

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## Battalion Patrols Competition

Well done to the members of 2 (Leicestershire and Northamptonshire) Company, led by LCpl Lloyd who won this years Battalion patrols competition.

The team patrolled over 20 miles in the arduous conditions of LEEK training area with full patrol kit, completing stands such as Section Attacks, CPERS, Recce, obstacle crossing, signals, casualty extraction to gain their winning points. With all patrol members completing in good order and high spirits 2 Company have won yet another Battalion competition. Well done team and all who took part.



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# Regimental Association

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## Maundy Thursday

Members of the Regimental Association were honoured to be invited to the Maundy Thursday Service at Leicester Cathedral. Capt Tim Wilkes, Chairman of the Royal Tigers Association and the Royal Anglian County Colonel for Leicestershire attended, and the Guard of Honour, was furnished by veterans of the Royal Tigers Association, the Coldstream Guards and the Grenadier Guards, under the command of our own Roger Jones, with whom both Her Majesty The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh had a brief chat.



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## 9th Grimsby Poachers Reunion

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The 9th Grimsby Poachers' Reunion was held at The Beachcomber Holiday Centre, on Saturday 25th March 2017. 350 serving and retired Poachers (with some family members) attended on the night. It was noteworthy and so good to see several of our former officers supporting the night, namely Brian Davenport, Mike Beard, Kevin Hodgson, David Napier to name just a few. Several of our former Regimental Sergeant Majors were also in attendance led by David Dunthorne, Alf Todd and David Goude to name but three. Proof if ever it were needed, that



the Grimsby Poachers' Reunion is for all and everyone is so, so welcome. Thanks to wonderful work by the committee of the late Denis Watson, Steve Chew, Lynne Tyas, June Watson, Pete Smith QGM, Dennis Powley, Tim Smith, Noreen Warrener and Tony Mallon, the event was a wonderful success enjoyed by all. After an Opening Tribute to former committee secretary Denis Watson, a minutes applause was held as tribute to Denis AND all our former Poacher comrades that we have sadly lost. The evening then progressed with an excellent buffet, a prize raffle that raised £750 on the night for Lincolnshire Air Ambulance and music for dancing into the 'early hours'.



# Pte Christopher Cox VC Kings Langley

## Achiet le Grand

On 18<sup>th</sup> March this year thirty members of D (Beds and Herts) Company paraded in Achiet le Grand to commemorate the Victoria Cross won by Christopher Cox 100 years earlier as the British defeated the



Germans during Operations on the Ancre. On Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> April the Acting Company Sergeant-Major, CSgt Newark, attended a ceremony in Cox's home town of Kings Langley along with representatives from Christopher Cox's family, town dignitaries, cadets and members of 3 R ANGLIAN, supported by the local population. Pte Cox VC had enlisted in September 1914 becoming a stretcher-bearer in the 7<sup>th</sup> Bn of The Bedfordshire Regiment. He survived the war and died in Kings Langley aged 69.

Christopher Cox was presented with the Victoria Cross by the King on 21 July 1917 at Buckingham Palace, being one of 32 Victoria Crosses presented that day. The photograph below shows him with Maud on returning to Kings Langley after the presentation ceremony - note his three wound stripes on the lower left cuff of his uniform.



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# 11th Bn Suffolk Regiment Commemoration

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The little village of Rouex in the Pas-de-Calais is a quiet backwater now but during the First World War it was the scene of heavy fighting – particularly during the Battle of Arras in April 1917. The Usine chimique Lesage (Chemical Factory) and the nearby Chateau Lesage are long gone and the area between the railway line to the North of the town and the River Scarpe to the South is now a residential area. The site of the chemical factory is now a car park and a small provincial supermarket. Behind the supermarket rough ground covers the remains of a vast complex of military bunkers and passageways unused and unseen for almost 100 years.

During the summer of 1992, a local resident, Jean-Louis Bulcke who was born in Douai, Northern France and still has family links in the area was erecting a new garden wall on his nephew's property in Rue Guy Lemaire, Roeux. The property is situated 200 metres to the North West of where the Chateau Lesage once stood. Also there is a large German bunker built in 1917 which has been incorporated into a neighbour's garden nearby. The digging of the foundation of a new wall at the nephew's former home very quickly revealed evidence of the areas' turbulent past.

During the April 1917 Arras offensive the British Front Line just to the West of Rouex was held by 101st Brigade, 34th Division. On the 28th April 1917 the Division attacked the German lines to their East. In the village, the 11th Suffolks attacked the area of the old chemical works and the chateau. The 10th Lincolns were on their right and the 15th Royal Scots beyond them with the River on their flank. It was a difficult day. The initial attack faltered in the face of strong resistance and of the 17 officers and 610 men of the 11th Suffolks who went into the assault 7 officers and 325 other ranks became casualties. Of those 103 men were killed.

Jean-Louis' nephew's former home on the modern day Rue Guy Lemaire was built dead centre to the 11th Suffolk line of attack – "near the chemical works". Shortly after starting the work in his nephew's garden, Jean Louis came across the remains of a British soldier. The body was in a contorted position and there were a number of artefacts in the immediate vicinity. These included a British helmet, a 'Cambs Suffolks' shoulder badge and a spoon on which the number '7203' had been scratched. Also a pocket watch was found that still showed the time at 4:45am. Given the attack started at 4:25am the soldier had faced the danger of enemy fire for 20 minutes before he was killed.

Subsequent research of the 11th Battalion Suffolk casualties in Rouex revealed 79 'missing in action'. Of these Lance Serjeant Charles William Stevens of A Company proved to be a likely match for the man found by Jean Louis. His regimental number was 17203 which matches with the number on the spoon – '7203'. Lance Serjeant Stevens enlisted into the Cambs Suffolks in December 1914 and CWGC records show that he was the son of Susannah Louisa Stevens of Cavendish Road, Mill Road, Cambridge and the late Charles Stevens formerly of Swaffham Bulbeck, Cambridgeshire whose ancestors were five generations of blacksmiths from that village. Lance Serjeant Stevens was 42 when he was killed and he left a widow, Susannah Jane Stevens of 18



Cyprus Road, Cambridge. He was also father to a son and three daughters.

Jean-Louis and his English speaking friend Maurice Vallat who sadly died last August confirmed the soldiers identity via the 'Walking the Battlefields' Cambs Suffolks online archive. Using this information Jean-Louis and Maurice found a link to Colin Fakes of Hauxton. Colin is the grandson of Lance Serjeant Stevens and in 2011 had been instrumental in the re-dedication of a WWI memorial found in a damaged state in the cellar of the former Methodist Church in Mill Road, Cambridge - now called Romsey Mill. Charles William Stevens' name is commemorated along with 13 others. This project was publicised on the internet and Colin's name and contact details were quickly discovered. In April 2013 Colin received a phone call from Maurice in France who said, "we have found your Grandfather". Colin's mother, Ida was the youngest daughter of Lance Serjeant Stevens. Colin subsequently visited the site of his Grandfather's action in France with Jean Louis as a guide. He described the experience as a "sad but incredible pilgrimage". 28th April 2017 was the 100th Anniversary of Lance Serjeant Steven's death during the Battle of Arras.

A memorial service on the 30th April 2017 saw the village of Rouex come to a halt to remember the sacrifice of the Suffolk Regiment 100 years previously. After a Remembrance parade at the village's war memorial, a further memorial to the Suffolk Regiment was unveiled overlooking the scene of intense fighting during the Arras offensive. The service was attended by Lt Jack McCurley, Second in Command of B (Suffolk) Company, The Vikings, who laid a wreath at the new memorial to the Suffolk Regiment's fallen.



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# Job Vacancy

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## Vacancy for a Deputy Commandant Norfolk Army Cadet Force

A vacancy has occurred for a Deputy Commandant in Norfolk Army Cadet Force, based at Dereham. The County ACF comprises 26 detachments, with over 650 Cadets and Cadet Force Adult Volunteers on strength.

The post of Deputy Commandant is a voluntary appointment. However, the successful applicant will be eligible to receive remuneration in the form of Volunteer Allowance (VA) for full days attendance and certain other allowances for subsistence and travel when on ACF duty in accordance with ACF Regulations and within the limits advised by their Commandant.

Candidates must hold or have held a Land Forces commission.

It is a requirement under the Disclosure and Barring Services Code of Practice that this position requires an “Enhanced Disclosure” prior to appointment.

The Secretariat (7 Bde MS) reserves the right to contact an applicant’s current Commandant (or Commanding Officer in the case of Regular or Army Reserve applicants) to ask for a reference where this is deemed necessary.

Application forms and a job description may be obtained from the RFCA website: <http://www.earfca.org.uk/rfca/vacancies/>

## Offer Of Discounted Tickets for the Royal Norfolk Show

The organisers of the Royal Norfolk Show have kindly extended a discounted ticket offer for tickets for the Royal Norfolk Show 28-29 June 2017 to all members of the Regiment, veterans and their families. An advertising flyer is attached. The offer runs live from now until 27 June. If used in an e-shot or website the following link should be inserted:



<https://rmaa.ticket srv.co.uk/index.php/norfolkshow>