



Veterans for the Homeless

The death of Rob O'Connor, who had been sleeping rough on the streets in Chelmsford, highlighted the problem in the city to an all new level.

His death came after a night of freezing temperatures - so since then, Chelmsford's residents have taken a stand against people on the street.

But one group – Veterans for the Homeless – has decided to take action themselves and have spoken out about the number of ex-forces on the street.



“There's over 7,000 veterans recorded as living on the street,” Nick Austin, a former member of the Royal Anglian Regiment, from Wickford, explained.

“When you are in the army it's not easy, but it is simple.

“You have always got food, a bed, you are always being told what to do – you have to say yes – so you have got quite an easy life.

“When you come out, then that's the hardest part.

“You have to make decisions for yourself, you don't have food on the table like you had every day, because that all comes out of your wages.

“When you come out of the army you have got to find all that yourself.

“Especially with all the wars that have been going on. Soldiers come out, they may have post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), they are on the streets and some of them are too proud to say anything and want to come off the streets.”

Veterans for the Homeless began as the brain child of Matt Page and a team of mixed veterans in Norwich earlier in the year.

And now the group are organising an event in Chelmsford to raise awareness of the problem.

The group held a 'Sleep Rough' event in Norwich on February 3 where they slept on the streets over night.



They managed to raise around £2,700 as well as helping an ex-policeman who was sleeping rough.

That first 'Sleep Rough' event aimed to help inspire other veterans to do the same, with Nick Austin organising Chelmsford's own version due to be held on Saturday, March 24.

“We were already organising the Chelmsford event when we heard about [Rob’s death],” said Nick Austin, from Wickford.

“In our day and age, there should not be any homeless people. There is supposed to be about

288,000 properties that are sitting empty in England and 130,000 homeless people.

Regimental Matters

London Gazette Extracts - Feb 18

Regular Commissions

- Maj D T Crosbie Nov 17
- Maj T G Hearne Nov 17
- Maj W S Ottridge Nov 17
- Maj S Thomas Nov 17

MSM

- WO2 B Shropshire

Diary Dates

2018

April

- 1 Chapel Sunday - Warley
- 12 Regt Benevolence Committee Meeting
- 12 Spring Diss Dinner
- 18 Mobbs Memorial Match - Northampton
- 25 Almanza Day
- 28 Regt Band Concert - Northampton

May

- 6 Chapel Sunday - Warley

1st Battalion (The Vikings)

Vikings In Nigeria

The Viking Enduring Training Team have reached the half way point of their deployment to Nigeria. The team have been split between Jaji and Makurdi; providing tactics, battlefield first aid and counter IED training to the Nigerian army. These soldiers then take the training and use it when fighting Boko Haram in the north east of the country.



C (Essex) Company

Soldiers from C (Essex) Company are currently deployed on a Force Protection task in Kenya as part of the British Army Training Unit Kenya. Aside from their daily duties of protecting the key military infrastructure and personnel, the soldiers have found time to participate in some key local engagement. The soldiers planned and delivered a training package to the locally employed G4S security personnel focussing on search, ID and threat awareness.



2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

Potential Non Commissioned Officer Cadre

A huge congratulations to all those that passed PNCO 1801 course through some very testing conditions in Sennybridge. The Poachers have had a very strong showing and displayed the command and leadership required by an infantry JNCO to lead our soldiers in the most demanding conditions.

Whilst the rest of South Wales was sleeping, potential NCOs from the Queen's Division launched a deliberate attack onto Farm 16 and then conducted an arduous Casevac up the infamous Travelator Hill on Sennybridge training area.

This marked the culmination of PNCO 1801 here at QDC. A huge congratulations to those that passed.

This is where your leadership and command journey starts. Find your style and become strong in it. Remember what an honour it is to lead Infantrymen and enjoy the ride.

Top student and distinction- Pte Whiles 2nd Bn

Distinction - Pte Webster 1st Bn

Distinction - Pte Morley 1st Bn

Distinction- Pte Sutton 2 PWRR

Soldiers soldier - Pte Neale PWRR

A special Sergeant Majors award goes to Pte Tshabalala (2nd) for completing the course at the age of 39.



Pte Whiles receiving his Top Student award



3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

Exercise Steelback Thunder

In February all Companies of the Steelbacks took part in Exercise Steelback Thunder. The weekend, devised by the Battalion training team focused on Operations in Built-Up areas, and utilised the training village at Eastmere on the Stanford Training Area in Norfolk.



Museum News

This month I have had a visit from Andy Murkin, a previous Curator, to go over education and information for the new Royal Anglian Museum website we are planning. It was very informative and gave me idea of things to do for future airshows and events as well.

On the less glamorous side of museum work I have changed all the pest traps as well as taken the tiger skin out and cleaned it. The batteries have all been changed in the monitors as well so we can ensure the proper the temperature readings in the cases and the objects there are taken care of according to best practice. In future there may be a night that the building will be open that we do some proper cleaning which I'm sure the museum would benefit from.

This month we have had a donation from the Botterill family of Pte Simon Botterills' medal. The family was truly grateful that we took the time and effort to spend with them. I was also very grateful to meet them and hear about their brothers' life. I am hoping to display the medals temporarily in the future.



Now that the Trustees have approved the gallery revamp, I am working with the Imperial War Museum to do all proper procedures such as risk assessments and statements for opening each case, as well as getting names of contractors to provide quotes and programmes written for the cases to be changed.

As far as education, I have been asked to have a cadet visit and plan to start doing these more regularly, I am really excited about hopefully taking a more active role in educating cadets and welcome any ideas from RHQ for teaching opportunities.

I have been talking to the Volunteer Coordinator here at the Imperial War Museum about volunteers in anticipation of perhaps having more help for both collections work during the week and any Airshow. I have also been working on a proposal to start having more presence at airshows, which in the future could be amplified. Jimmy Naylor and I have identified vehicles which would have been used by the regiment to spread our presence out of the museum, and we will also be going through the handling collection to identify gaps in the kit that we can now ask RHQ for.

I have also been working with the Cambridgeshire Regiment and Lt Col Tony Slater, so that I can take custodial care of his on site collections and he is working through cataloguing some items here in the volunteer office from time to time.

Cambs Utd v Luton Town Fundraiser

Regimental Benevolent Charity Fundraising Event

The Regimental Family might like to be informed of a very successful fundraising event which took place on Saturday 3rd March 2018. The event was part of an all-year season of 100th Anniversary of

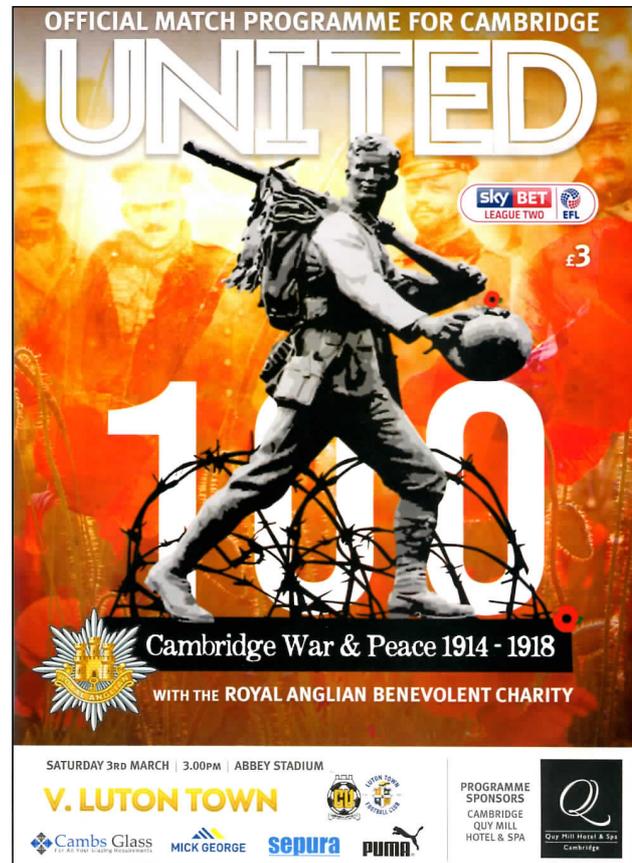
Cambridge War & Peace 1914-18" events kindly being organised by Vanessa Burkitt, a successful Cambridge based jewellery retailer and entrepreneur, and most generous benefactor of the Regiment. Saturday's event was based around the fierce local derby between Cambridge United FC and Luton town FC. Soldiers from the Royal Anglian Regiment recruiting support team met with the Commanding Officer of Cambridge UOTC and a number of his cadets on Saturday at The Cambridge Glass Stadium. The frozen conditions limited our plans, which had included a half-time re-enactment of the famous "Christmas Truce" football match and a display of the Cambridgeshire ACF Corps of Drums, but conditions didn't allow these to go ahead.

However, the recruiters and cadets mixed with the home and away fans, collecting over £700 for the Royal Anglian Benevolence Fund. Local heroes, three

young children, were identified, who were linked to WWI or more recent campaigns serving local families, carried out the match ball, and the crowd fell respectfully silent as the last post was played prior to kick-off.

There is an aspiration to re-visit the Glass Stadium with a fuller programme, which may include Regular and Reserve members of the Regiment as well as the Corps of Drums of the Cambridgeshire ACF, in the warmer months. Those soldiers from the Regiment present were: Capt S Durrant, Sgt J Duckett, Pte K Drimmie and Pte N Young.

Our deepest thanks to Vanessa Burkitt and the Commanding Officer of Cambridge UOTC for their support and to all those who contributed to a successful charity event.



Bedfordshire Regiment Burial

On Thursday 15 March 2018, a burial party from The Vikings, led by Capt Matt Tovey, conducted a re-burial of an unknown soldier of the Bedfordshire Regiment at the Orchard Dump CWGC Cemetery at Arleux-en-Gohelle near Arras in France. The soldier was killed in 1917 in the fighting around Arras most likely during April in the Second Battle of the Scarpe. At this time, 3 Battalions of the Bedfordshire Regiment, 1st, 4th & 6th Battalions, were part of a 9 mile wide attack by British & Commonwealth forces attempting to force German attention away from the failure of a larger French attack in Champagne. The losses suffered by the Bedfordshire Battalions were



significant and the following are an indication of losses in one day, 23rd April, inflicted. 1st Battalion lost 11 Officers and 320 Other Ranks and 4th Battalion lost 18 officers and 315 Other Ranks. On the 28th April the 6th Battalion was only left with 58 All Ranks who were not wounded or killed. It is perhaps worth remembering that The Bedfordshire Regiment had been expanded to 21 Battalions during WWI. It suffered 18,894 casualties, killed, wounded and missing, and of those losses, more than half, 9,773 fell upon the 1st & 2nd Battalions.

Due to the intensity of the fighting and the huge artillery barrages, it was often impossible to identify fallen soldiers and they were only identified by regimental insignia and buried as an unknown member of a specific Regiment. At this time there is a steady unearthing of human remains throughout the former WWI battlefields during routine construction work after which the remains are recovered by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) team. CWGC conduct extensive research in an effort to identify soldiers including the use of forensic DNA testing. This can, in some cases, lead to identifying living relatives who are then identified and invited to attend a full military burial. Unfortunately this was not possible for our Bedfordshire soldier but nonetheless he was awarded an honourable and respectful burial by Capt Tovey's burial party.

Regimental Benevolence

Presentation of Cheques

Lt Col Matt Woodeson, CO of the 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks) gave a presentation and received cheques on behalf of the Royal Anglian Benevolent Charity at the Anglia Café and Motel at Washbrook. A cheque for £5k was received from the ladies of The Chosen Charity shop in Holbeach. They run the shop on a voluntary basis and donate to local causes, they have made the Regiment one of the causes to support. Mrs Jill Pannell who works for Barclays Bank made a presentation of £1k, she is allowed to choose a charity to support and she kindly picked ours. Mr Harold Payne along with his colleague Peter Morris run the Anglia Heroes and Veterans Fund, they organise trips for veterans to Normandy, support military charities and blue light services and each year make a presentation of £10k to our charity. We are grateful to them all.



Left to Right: Pauline Beilby, Maj Bob Grenfell, Jane Dean, Sheila Hodges, Peter Morris, Lt Col Matt Woodeson, Jill Pannell, Harold Payne, Dorothy Holbrook and Mary Cooper.

Regimental Bulletins

This month RHQ has sent the Regimental family 12 Regimental bulletins, which will also be available on the Regimental Website:

- Bulletin - 22/18 Death of Colonel Paul William Denny Brian Wright
- Bulletin - 23/18 Death of Brian Wright
- Bulletin - 24/18 Death of Ray Ball
- Bulletin - 112.3/17 Regt Battlefield Tour May 18
- Bulletin - 25/18 Death of Maj T D G Townley MBE
- Bulletin - 26/18 Death of Kenneth Stone
- Bulletin - 27/18 Death of Robert Huxtable
- Bulletin - 28/18 Regt Benevolent Charity Fundraising Event Mar 18
- Bulletin - 29/18 Death of Joe Joseph Bandmaster of the 2nd Battalion
- Bulletin - 30/18 Death of JW Hack
- Bulletin - 31/18 Regt Benevolent Charity Fundraising - Cpl Terry Buckley 2nd Bn
- Bulletin - 32/18 Lt Col John Stanhope Collings-Wells VC - Centenary