



CASTLE

JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ANGLIAN REGIMENT



December 2024





Editor: WO1 (Retd) S Armon

Contents

The Colonel of the Regiment	6	3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)	
Regimental Communications	8	<i>From the Commanding Officer</i>	142
Personalia	10	<i>From the Regimental Sergeant Major</i>	144
The Regiment	12	<i>1 (Norfolk and Suffolk) Company</i>	145
Regimental Matters	14	<i>2 (Leicestershire and Northamptonshire) Company</i>	154
60 Years of the Royal Anglian Regiment	18	<i>3 (Essex and Hertfordshire) Company</i>	162
Regimental Charity and Welfare	26	<i>4 (Lincolnshire) Company</i>	170
Mainly About People	30	<i>5 (Suffolk and Cambridgeshire) Company</i>	180
Regimental Heritage	32		
Regimental Museum	32	Regimental Band	195
Diary Dates	34	Library Reviews	197
Can You Remember?	36	Op GRAPPLE - 30 Years Anniversary	200
		Affiliated Cadets	204
1st Battalion (The Vikings)			
<i>From the Commanding Officer</i>	44	Regimental Association	206
<i>From the Regimental Sergeant Major</i>	45	<i>1 Company 5(V) Royal Anglian Regiment Reunion</i>	207
<i>A (Norfolk) Company</i>	47	<i>80th Anniversary of the Liberation of Venray</i>	207
<i>B (Suffolk) Company</i>	60		
<i>C (Essex) Company</i>	70	Branch News	
<i>D (Cambridgeshire) Company</i>	81	<i>Norfolk</i>	212
<i>HQ Company</i>	84	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	214
		<i>Lincolnshire</i>	216
		<i>Leicestershire</i>	224
2nd Battalion (The Poachers)		<i>Northamptonshire</i>	229
<i>From the Commanding Officer</i>	94	<i>Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire</i>	230
<i>From the Regimental Sergeant Major</i>	95		
<i>A (Lincolnshire) Company</i>	96	Deaths and Obituaries	233
<i>B (Leicestershire) Company</i>	99	Regimental Charity donation form	242
<i>C (Northamptonshire) Company</i>	101		
<i>D (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) Company</i>	105		
<i>HQ Company</i>	108		

Front cover: CSgt Craig Gordon protects the Colours at the Regimental 60th.

Rear cover: Poachers on parade at the Regiment's 60th birthday parade IWM Duxford.

Inside front cover: Ambush sprung.

Inside back cover: Cpl Shaun Roberts, Operation HERRICK 16.

Regimental Internet Website

www.royalanglianregiment.com

**The Colonel-in-Chief
HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO**





Battle Honours

Battle Honours on The Queen's Colour

Mons, Loos, La Cateau, Somme 1916, 1918, Marne 1914, Arras 1917, 1918, Aisne 1914, 1918, Cambrai 1917, 1918, Ypres 1914, 1915, 1917, 1918, France and Flanders 1914-1918, Neuve Chapelle, Macedonia 1915-1918, Gallipoli 1915-1916, Salerno, Gaza, Anzio, Palestine 1917-1918, Cassino I-II, Shaiba, Gothic Line, Mesopotamia 1914-1918, Italy 1943-1945, St Omer-La Bassee, Crete, Dunkirk 1940, Singapore Island, Normandy Landing, Malaya 1941-1942, Brioux Bridgehead, Yu, Venraj, Ngakyedauk Pass, North-West Europe 1940, 1944-1945, Imphal, Tobruk 1941, Kohima, Defence of Alamein Line, Chindits 1944, North Africa 1940-1943, Burma 1943-1945, Villa Grande.

Battle Honours on The Regimental Colour

Namur 1695, Blenheim, Ramilles, Oudenarde, Malplaquet, Dettingen, Louisburg, Minden, Quebec 1759, Martinique 1762, 1794, Havannah, Seringapatam, Corunna, Talavera, Albuhera, Badajoz, Salamanca, Vittoria, Peninsula, Bladensburg, Waterloo, Ava, Ghuznee 1839, Kelat, Cabool 1842, 1879, Moodkee, Ferozeshah, Sobraon, New Zealand, Goojerat, Punjaub, South Africa 1851-1853, 1879, Inkerman, Sevastopol, Lucknow, Taku Forts, Afghanistan 1878-1880, Nile 1884-1885, Tirah, Atbara, Khartoum, Defence of Ladysmith, Paardeberg, South Africa 1899-1902, Korea 1951-1952.



From the Colonel of The Regiment

I start this welcome to the 2024 edition of Castle by under-scoring the importance of this year for the Regiment. We celebrated our 60th birthday at Duxford in September, which was attended by our Colonel in Chief and a great turnout of veterans and serving soldiers. It was a landmark moment in our formidable history as a Regiment.

Over the past 60 years our men and women have served in every major campaign that the British Army has executed. Through an arc of history that has included Aden, Northern Ireland, the Gulf War, Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan, Iraq and Mali, we have forged a reputation for operational excellence, built on the bedrock of the professionalism, humility, and steadfastness of our soldiers. This is a history and operational pedigree that many of you reading this have contributed to. Thank you for your service, and for the sacrifices you and your families have made.

In 2024 the geopolitical and security challenges have increased from an already high baseline. Russian aggression has rekindled the purpose and power of NATO, and the UK has led the way amongst European partners to both reassure our allies and deter further possible aggression. The war in Ukraine



passed the 1000-day point in November.

Our Regiment has and continues to play a vital role in training the Armed Forces of Ukraine for their existential fight, with over 56,000 recruits and specialists now trained by the UK-led Op INTERFLEX mission. The crises in Ukraine, the Middle East and broader international tensions have continued to demonstrate the need for an Army that is rapidly increasingly its lethality and

adapting to the demands of contemporary conflict. Given this context, there will be no let-up in the demand upon our fine Battalions. They will continue to form part of the 'thin red line' that constantly serves to protect our nation, our people, and our allies.

This year my personal focus has been driving change and improvements in the way we structure and run our Regimental Family, with a key aim being to enhance the support we provide to our veterans. We must increase the cohesion and communication within our Regimental Family to do so, and an important step on this path has been to launch 'Royal Anglian Connect'. We now have 1,930 members on Connect as I write. I ask that you all embrace this tool and develop its use so links between our disparate groups are strengthened. Please use the QR code at the end of this introduction to sign up if you have not done so already.

Concurrently, our Companies are working hard to integrate and support local veterans' branches, with serving members attending Remembrance Day parades from Boston to Norwich and a strong showing of Regimental Family members at the 2nd Battalion's boxing night in November. We must increase the level of engagement going forwards



Major General DSJ Biddick MBE MC

to strengthen the ties between those who serve, those who have served, and those who have supported us all. As we look to the Battalions, I offer the following SITREP:

Our 1st Battalion are now fully established in Kendrew Barracks under the capable command of Lt Col Adie Thompson. He will be handing over to Lt Col Nick McGinley as they continue their new path as members of Land Special Operation Forces within 11 Brigade. The Vikings have been involved in Op INTERFLEX where they spent six months at Stanford Training Area training up 4,000 Ukrainian soldiers for combat on their front line. Our soldiers learnt a great deal from those combat experienced Ukrainians, some of which has informed our own training, in particular trench warfare. The Vikings have recently returned from Serbia and Romania where they trained alongside partner forces. They also supported UK commitments on Op LAZURITE at the beginning of the year, supporting the relocation of Afghans who have fought with us to the UK.

This summer Lt Col Jeff Bennett-Madge has taken command from Lt Col Ben Hawes who has moved on to become Military Assistance to Commander Allied Rapid Reaction

Corps, the Regiment's own Lt Gen Ralph Wooddisse. The year saw the 2nd Battalion playing a significant role as lead Battlegroup for NATO's Reaction Force.

They deployed as the tip of the spear and demonstrated credible capability under the noses of the Russian threat on Op LINOTYPER. From Kendrew Barracks to within touching distance of the Belarussian border, the Poachers made various front pages back in the UK. They subsequently deployed on Salisbury Plain to operate as enemy, up against the Royal Yorkshire Regiment and Scots Guards, proving to be an agile and tough adversary. More recently they supported 3 UK Div on Ex CERBURUS in Germany. Finally, the Battalion have exercised the Freedom of Uppingham in commemoration of the D-Day landings and even found time to enjoy some much-appreciated adventure training in North Wales.

The 3rd Battalion commanded by Lt Col Edward Mats have provided valuable support to Op INTERFLEX and the 1st Battalion by providing 13 individual reinforcements. This purposeful mission is vital for the Reserve, but equally for the Regular component, adding value and volume to their force. The Battalion deployed to the US as part of a US

National Guard exercise. 113 Steelbacks took part and demonstrated excellent combat proficiency, serving as great ambassadors for the British Army. Most recently, eleven 3 Royal Anglian soldiers mobilised and deployed to Kenya to operate as part of the British Army Training Unit's Force Protection team. Many soldiers from the 3rd Battalion continue to provide professional support to the regular Army and our 1st and 2nd Battalions, on operations, in training and in sports.

A couple of sterling brothers officers need to be singled out and thanked for their service to the Regiment over recent years. Firstly, Col Dick Harrold, who is due to finish his time as Colonel Heritage after six years. We are all grateful for his stewardship, ensuring our Regimental Heritage is preserved and, importantly, made more visible and public. We also say farewell to Col Peter Dixon for his work as Col Benevolence over an important and impressive span of 10 years. Peter has ensured that our people in need, distress and hardship are supported by our charity, or come to the attention of other service-facing charities. We greatly appreciate his hard work, advice and guidance over the years.

Finally, our thoughts are with the members of our Regimental Family who have lost loved ones this year. Following two recent and bitter losses, I would like to offer our condolences to the families of Cpl Shaun Roberts who died November this year, and Liam Love, who was killed in October. Sadly, there are many other Family members who have died this year. On behalf of the Regiment, I offer all the relatives and friends affected our sympathy and support.





Regimental Communications

Col Comms Colonel WJ Meddings OBE

I'm proud to have taken over as Deputy Colonel for Communications. I'd like to thank Maj Gen Olly Brown and the team for their fantastic work on getting the Royal Anglian Regiment message out across the Army and the UK. There are several areas of our branding and communication that you should be aware of, which the comms team will be taking forward over the next year.

First, the launch of Royal Anglian Connect gives the Royal Anglian family a platform to communicate with each other – potential recruits, serving soldiers, veterans and families. If you have not yet seen or tried the app I urge you to take a look. If you are struggling to find it, please get in touch with your chain of command or RHQ who can help. Royal Anglian Connect, which is used by several regiments across the Army, is a real step forward in building a community and supporting each other, whether that means running clubs, arranging reunions, finding jobs as you leave or looking after each other's welfare.

Second, if you are out representing the Royal Anglian Regiment you'll



want to be aware of our Regimental branding. From slide templates, to fonts, to signature blocks and business card designs, RHQ has all the formats

available for you to use to ensure we speak as a single Regiment when we speak or write.

Finally, I want to thank all of you who provide our comms team with images, videos and articles. I'm proud of being a Royal Anglian, and I'm proud to get our message out. Our Regimental strap line 'Strength from Within' is based on the quiet steadfast self-reliance and professionalism of our Regiment. It's something I've seen displayed by Royal Anglians on operations in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, Mali and on deployments across Europe over the last 25 years.

But to get the message out, and showcase what we do, we always look for content for our social media and our presentations. So please continue to share it. You will see members of the RHQ team visiting units to gather those photos and videos. Please support them. We have a great story to tell, so let's tell it.

I'm looking forward to sharing what we do with the public and each other. If you have any thoughts, please get in touch.

Royal Anglian Instagram

Our Instagram Account ([royalanglianregiment](https://www.instagram.com/royalanglianregiment)) is a dynamic comms channel that is fed directly from the Comms Officers in the battalions, and the Regt Adjutant at RHQ.

The content is generally aimed at a younger viewer and tends to be varied and fast paced. Our Instagram plenty of

video footage from exercises, range days and other eye-catching activity. We have a steadily growing audience of over 26.4k followers who are all interested in the Royal Anglian Regiment. This is an area where we are boxing well above our weight. If you are on Instagram and you aren't following us, take a look at: [royalanglianregiment](https://www.instagram.com/royalanglianregiment)



Royal Anglian Regiment Online Our Digital Channels



www.royalanglianregiment.com



www.facebook.com/TheRoyalAnglianRegiment



[@RAnglians](https://www.instagram.com/RAnglians)



[@royalanglianregiment](https://twitter.com/royalanglianregiment)



www.linkedin.com/in/royal-anglian-regt/



www.youtube.com/@royalanglianregiment

Connect with the Royal Anglian Regiment

The Royal Anglian connect App is now live and it gives the Regimental family a lot of new tools to allow them to keep up to date with local events and information about what is taking place in their areas. We are all aware of the positives and negatives of social media and there has been some large success with people creating groups and trying to share Regimental information.

So why should we download the Connect App?

Royal Anglian Connect is a free service that can be downloaded for your phone via the App store or Android Shop, and it can also be used on a desktop computer. It is safe and secure and can be customised to you the user.

The App offers you a news pinboard which is an area where news articles and up and coming events will be posted. It also informs you when friends past and present have invited you to connect.

The app excellently highlights the great work that goes on in our Regimental areas by listing the local groups and associations that can be joined and followed to ensure you do not miss an event that specific area.

The 'what's on' page of the app is a calendar showing you what events are

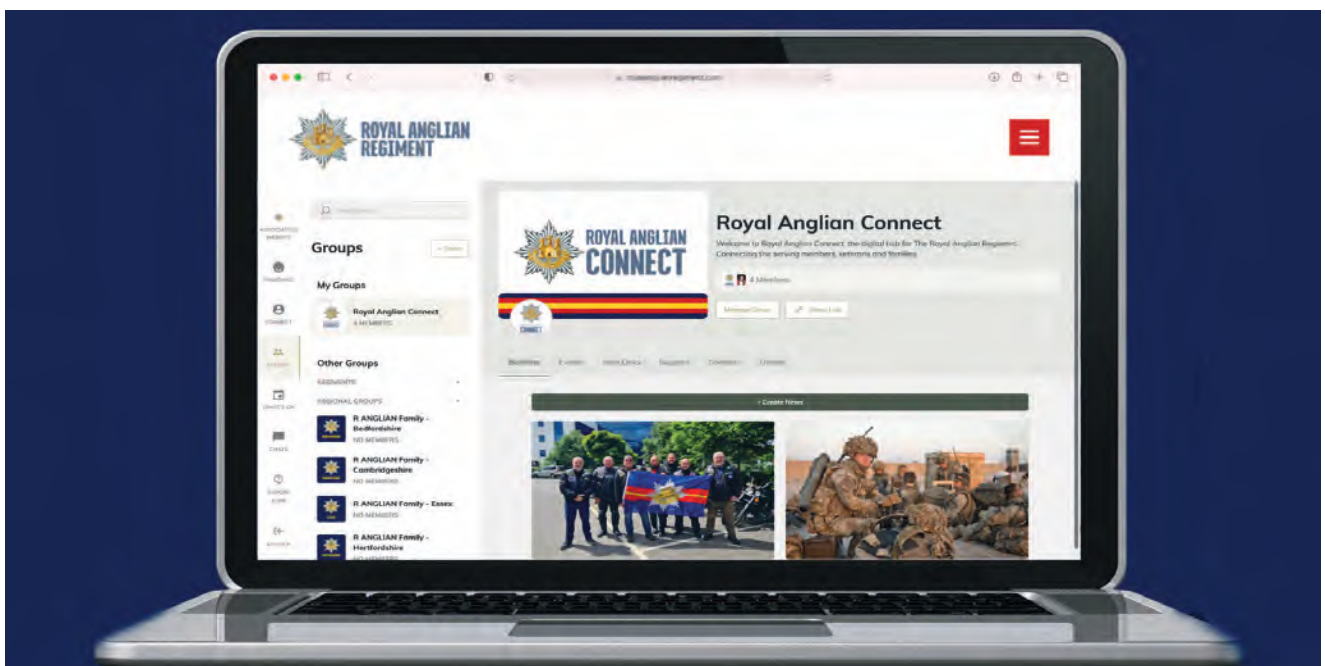
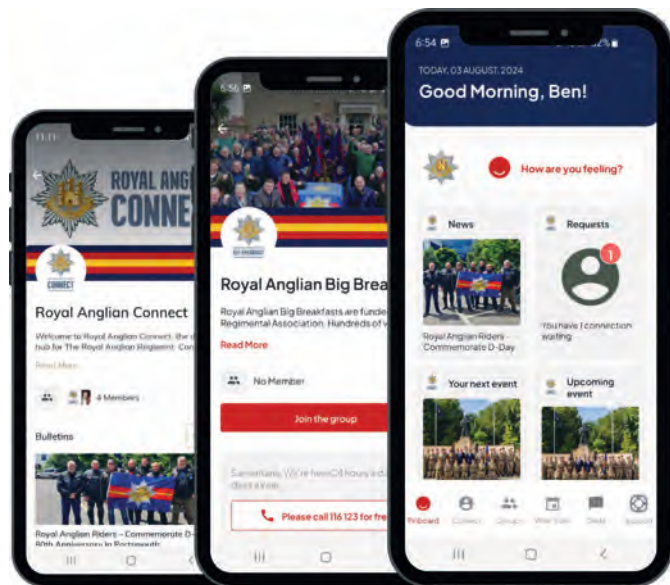
taking place throughout the year. This can be filtered to just your local area.

The ability to chat directly to friend's past and present is fantastic. You can also get involved with chat within the groups you have joined within the app.

The App is as good as those using it, and you have the complete freedom to create groups and post updates of local events anything that may be relevant to the Royal Anglian family.

There is a support page for anyone suffering with most issues and it assists in signposting you or others in the right direction towards any advice that might be needed.

For those keen to get even more involved, there is the opportunity to become an admin for the groups that are created. You will be able to drive content being uploaded and making sure events get listed.





Personalia

Notable Appointments

Lieutenant General Sir Ralph Wooddisse KCB CBE MC
to be Colonel Commandant The Queen's Division

Promotions

Major to Lieutenant Colonel

Maj NJP McGingley

Captain to Major

Capt A Clancy
Capt HFJC Johnston
Capt A Mattin
Capt DW Rawdon
Capt TOB Reid

Lieutenant to Captain

Lt RA Seel
Lt DG Brown
Lt P Philips

WO1 to Captain on commission

WO1 S Seaton

Second Lieutenant to Lieutenant

2Lt SA Milton
2Lt JJ Wansbury
2Lt W Woolhouse

Officer Cadet to Second Lieutenant

OCdt MME Emmett
OCdt SS Irvine

OCdt J Davies

OCdt E Needham
OCdt C Solon
OCdt H Young
OCdt A Savage
OCdt R Folan

On Retirement

Lt Col JCJ Wright
Maj MJ Ielden
Maj M Brunsdon
Capt C Thompson
Capt FA Eaton

Colour Sergeant to WO2

CSgt S Garrett
CSgt B Hilton
CSgt H Murphy
CSgt A Barclay
CSgt Steel
CSgt Laws

Sergeant to Colour Sergeant

Sgt S Cox
Sgt C Goodwin
Sgt C Gordon

Sgt J Quelch

Sgt L Whitehouse
Sgt L Flower
Sgt Foley
Sgt Young
Sgt Watts

Corporal to Sergeant

Cpl Ridgeway
Cpl R Davis
Cpl M Lingley
Cpl J Maslen
Cpl P Meehan
Cpl Froggatt
Cpl Pike
Cpl Gray
Sgt (Sub) Williams
Cpl Wiles
Cpl Wall
Cpl Ward Mansfield
Cpl Baker
Cpl Lingley
Cpl Wormal
Cpl White
Cpl Storrie (PWRR)
into A Company 2 RANGIAN



*Please note this list is based upon information provided to RHQ
over the course of 2024 and includes some key appointments
which are of interest to members of the Regimental Family*

Honours and Awards

Poulter's Prize winner

Cpl Jonathan Finch, 1st Battalion

LSGC

Sgt AC Bone
CSgt D Kimpton
Maj AE Eaton
Sgt DA Harrison
WO2 EE Rawdon
Sgt WB Browning
Sgt EDB Charrington
Sgt JA Rowland
CSgt SR Warburton
Sgt DJ Hemmings
Maj ND Barron
Sgt SJK Boot
CSgt RD Dixon
WO2 AJ East
Sgt N Foley
Maj MR Garner
Pte S McDermott
Cpl R Mulley
Cpl SL Rodway
Cpl JR Smith
Cpl BA Tovee
Sgt TM Young
WO2 D Craycraft
CSgt DA Hughes
Major WR Hoy

LCpl JP Morris
Maj JE Powell MBE
Cpl SW Wormall
CSgt JM Herring
Cpl SN Hunter
LCpl J Ramsden
CSgt SG Stanley
Cpl GW Tshabalala
CSgt CJ Wade
Sgt RL Burgess
CSgt AC Evans
Maj TJW Green
CSgt DW Jakubas
Sgt MN Mayes
LCpl AWB Mulenga
Cpl DA Peck
Maj JM Walters
Sgt AP Hazell
CSgt MT Prescott
WO2 D J Smith
CSgt CA Steel

1st Clasp

Capt SC Hale MBE
Capt CJ Holmes
WO2 CM Marsh
Lt Col A Briggs
WO2 NC Jarvis
WO2 LG Meadows

Lt Col MC Melia

2nd Clasp

Capt DT Granfield
Maj AL Buff
WO2 AM Ellis
Maj K Main
WO2 IJ Snow

Volunteer Reserve Service Medal

Cpl CK Clements
Cpl DSC Keay

1st Clasp

Sgt JA Pike
Lt Col KE Spiers

2nd Clasp

WO2 KM Davidson
Sgt JA Pike

3rd Clasp

Sgt RA Stone
Maj P Chilvers
WO2 DM Nash

Efficiency Decoration (Territorial) 1982

Maj JC Allcock OBE



The Regiment

Colonel-in-Chief

HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO

Colonel of the Regiment

Major General Dominic SJ Biddick MBE MC

Regimental Counsellor

Major General SL Porter CBE

Honorary Chaplain to the Regiment

The Reverend Paul Whitehead

Assistant Honorary Chaplains to the Regiment

Cambridgeshire: The Reverend Alan Jesson

Bedfordshire: The Reverend Stephen Smith

Deputy Colonels of the Regiment

1st Battalion: Brigadier GB Foden

2nd Battalion: Colonel WJ Meddings OBE

3rd Battalion: Brigadier RFL Lyne

Senior LE Officer

Major K Main

College of Colonels

Chairman of Regimental Trustees: Mr DJ Till

Colonel MS: Brigadier GB Foden

Colonel Communications: Colonel WJ Meddings OBE

Colonel Recruiting: Brigadier RFL Lyne

Colonel Heritage: Major S Card

Colonel Cadets: Brigadier RFL Lyne

Colonel Veterans: Brigadier OCC Brown

Regimental Trustees

Colonel of the Regiment, Mr DJ Till, Lieutenant Colonel BD Weston, Major PD Connolly, Captain RWH Colgan, Captain SC Lane, Lieutenant Colonel R Bredin MBE and Regimental Secretary. Secretary: Assistant Regimental Secretary

County Colonels

Norfolk:	Lieutenant Colonel MA Nicholas MBE DL
Suffolk:	Lieutenant Colonel MH Wenham
Essex:	Colonel CAF Thomas TD DL
Cambridgeshire:	Lieutenant Colonel D Denson TD
Lincolnshire:	Lieutenant Colonel SJ Bacon
Leicestershire:	Captain TR Wilkes
Northamptonshire:	Lieutenant Colonel RHL Blomfield MBE TD
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire:	Major JN Whatley DL

Regimental Museum

Chairman of Trustees: Major S Card

Trustees: Colonel NH Kelsey OBE TD, Lieutenant Colonel ACE Marinos, Lieutenant Colonel ADW McArdle OBE TD, Lieutenant Colonel A Powell MBE, Major T Dormer TD, Captain PR Randall, JMH Naylor, M Latter, Deputy Regimental Secretary and Regimental Secretary.

Alliances

Australia	The Royal Tasmania Regiment
Barbados	The Barbados Regiment
Belize	The Belize Defence Force
Bermuda	The Royal Bermuda Regiment
Canada	Sherbrooke Hussars
	The Lincoln and Welland Regiment
	The Essex and Kent Scottish
	The Lake Superior Scottish Regiment
Gibraltar	The Royal Gibraltar Regiment
Malaysia	1st Battalion Royal Malay Regiment
New Zealand	3rd Battalion (Auckland (Countess of Ranfurly's Own) and Northland) Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment
Pakistan	5th Battalion The Frontier Force Regiment
South Africa	First City Regiment
	Regiment de la Rey

The Regiment is affiliated to the Worshipful Company of Poulterers

The Regiment is affiliated to *HMS St Albans*

Civic Honours

The Regiment has been granted the Freedom of:

Barking and Dagenham, Basildon, Bedford, Boston, Brentwood, Broxbourne, Bury St Edmunds, Cambridge, Celle, Charnwood, Chelmsford, Cleethorpes, Colchester, Corby, Dacorum, Diss, Dunstable, Ely, Gibraltar, Grantham, Great Yarmouth, Grimsby, Harborough, Harlow, Harpenden, Haverhill, Havering (formally Romford), Hertford, Hinckley and Bosworth, Huntingdon, Ipswich, Kettering, King's Lynn, Leicester, Lincoln, Lowestoft, Luton, Newham (formally East Ham), Northampton, Norwich, Oadby and Wigston, Peterborough, Redbridge (formally Ilford), Stamford (honorary status), St Neots, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Sudbury, Thurrock, Uppingham, Watford, Wellingborough and Wisbech.

Regimental Locations

Regimental Headquarters

The Keep, Gibraltar Barracks, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3RN

Tel: 01284-752394. Mil 94205-2001

Website: www.royalanglianregiment.com

Shop online: www.royalangliandirect.co.uk

Regimental Secretary: Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) JCJ Wright

Email: john.wright335@mod.gov.uk

MD for Charity and Veterans: Major I Robinson MBE

Email: ian.robinson@royalanglianregiment.com

Deputy Regimental Secretary (Communications and Heritage): WO1 (Retd) S Armon

Email: steve.armon.rhq@gmail.com

Assistant Regimental Secretary (Finance and Benevolence): Mr M Goldsmith

Email: mark.goldsmith101@mod.gov.uk

Regimental Adjutant: Captain HIM Di-Lieto

Email: harry.di-lieto100@mod.gov.uk

Chief Clerk: Mr SR Dunning

Email: stephen.dunning782@mod.gov.uk

Records and Benevolence Officer: Mrs J Laidlaw

Email: joanna.laidlaw118@mod.gov.uk

Regimental Area Secretary 1 (County Engagement and Veteran Support): Captain (Retd) G Good

Email: gavin.good103@mod.gov.uk

RHQ Area Office

Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire

The Keep, Gibraltar Barracks,

Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3RN

Tel: 01284-749317

Regimental Area Secretary 2 (County Engagement and Veteran Support): Major (Retd) TJ StC Brown

Email: timothy.brown133@mod.gov.uk

Tel: 07970 050163

Clerk: Mrs A Godbolt. Email: anne.godbolt100@mod.gov.uk

RHQ Area Office Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire

Kendrew Barracks, Cottesmore, Rutland LE15 7BL

Tel: 01572-812241 Ext 7161

Regimental Museum

Royal Anglian Museum, Duxford Airfield,

Duxford, Cambridgeshire CB22 4QR

Tel: 01223-497298

Curator: Melissa Kozlenko

Email: royalanglianmuseumcurator@outlook.com

Website: www.royalanglianmuseum.org.uk

Battalion Locations

1st Battalion

Lieutenant Colonel AR Thompson MBE

(des: Major (for Lt Col 2024) NJP McGinley)

Kendrew Barracks, Cottesmore, Rutland, LE15 7BL

2nd Battalion

Lieutenant Colonel JW Bennett-Madge

Kendrew Barracks, Cottesmore, Rutland LE15 7BL

3rd Battalion

Lieutenant Colonel E Matts

Army Reserves Centre, Blenheim Camp,

Newmarket Road, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3SW

Regimental Representatives

Infantry Training Centre (Catterick): Lieutenant H Davies

Infantry Battle School: Captain R Ledsham

Land Command and Staff College: Major D Mackness

Cambridge University OTC: WO2 FTRS C Marsh

East Midlands University OTC: WO1 (RSM) E Rawdon

RMA Sandhurst: CSgtL Demurier



Regimental Matters

Corporal Shaun Roberts



Cpl Roberts on Op HERRICK 16.

The Regiment regrets to inform you of the death of Cpl Shaun Roberts, 'Robbo', who passed away on 1 November 24 following injuries sustained whilst off-duty supporting the Queen's Division Training Team, where he was training soldiers to become Junior Non-Commissioned Officers.

Robbo was posted into the 2nd Battalion in 2023 having served with the 1st Battalion since 2007. During his service Robbo served in a number of roles, but is best known as a sniper and reconnaissance operator. He deployed several times to Afghanistan, completing two tours of Op HERRICK and two of Op TORAL.

He was Mentioned in Dispatches for actions undertaken on Op HERRICK 16 which paid testament to his courage, bravery, and professionalism during a most demanding tour. Beyond operational tours, Robbo also deployed on many exercises with both Battalions where he demonstrated his prowess in the field time and time again; he also excelled in training others, an activity

that he was passionate about.

Robbo was well humoured and fun to be around, and he was a consummate professional. Well known for always wearing his Accuracy International hat, he was the perfect example of what the younger soldiers viewed as a reconnaissance specialist and sniper.

Widely known and loved by those with whom he served, the loss of Robbo is widely felt. For those serving soldiers and officers that need support, the Chain of Command is stood by to assist.

For those veterans who may be affected, you are urged to get in touch with military charities and the Regimental Headquarters who will be able to signpost you toward sources of support.

Robbo leaves behind his loving wife Ellys, and much-loved children Leo, Evalyn, Sebastian, and Elysia. Letters of condolence should be sent to: Mrs Roberts, c/o The Adjutant, Second Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, Kendrew Barracks, Cottesmore, Rutland LE15 7BL.

The Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Regiment Memorial Cassino, Italy 16 Years On

by Paul Hooton

Sixteen years have passed since I arranged for the erection of a memorial to the 2nd Battalion Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Regiment which was later unveiled by the Regimental Association when visiting the battlefields of Cassino in May 2008. As time marches on the future upkeep of the monument concerned Jacqueline and myself.

I decided to visit the Beds & Herts Museum at Wardown Park in Luton. After speaking to John Maddox, Chairman of the Regimental Museum Trustees, he advised me to contact Major Tim Brown, Area 2 Regimental Secretary, to raise my concerns. Tim was most helpful, and hence this article.

2024 being the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Cassino we attended the Royal Engineers' memorial service close to the site of our own Memorial, and we laid a wreath in memory of the men of



Paul Hooton maintaining the Memorial during his October holiday!



The CWGC Cemetery in Cassino, the Abbey in the background

the 2nd Battalion who never came home. Alas, our Memorial was not looking its best. Time did not allow for a clean-up, so we decided to spend the first morning of our main holiday in October attending to it. This turned into a major task and took all day.

In 2019 the Regiment conducted a Battlefield Study to the very same site led by Tim Brown to mark the 75th anniversary of the actions of the 2nd Battalion. A short summary of the night of 11th/12th May 1944 follows:

2300 hrs 11 May 1944 - Operation Diadem - the final battle to break the Gustav Line begins.

0200 hrs 12 May 1944 - 2nd Battalion (part of 4th Division) start to

cross the Gari River and then advance to their SL, the Cassino to Sant'Angelo Road.

The site of the Memorial was chosen as it was the Forming-up Point (FUP), where the Companies arrived during the early stages of the attack and can be easily seen from the main road. Two officers and 72 other ranks were casualties during the initial assault.

The situation in the 4th Division sector was deteriorating by the hour. 28 Brigade's assault on the left had stalled just after its crossing of the river, this in turn added more pressure to 10 Brigade's bridgehead perimeter which would see the 2nd Battalion out in front virtually alone for over 24 precarious

hours. Unable to advance due to lack of armoured support and being subjected to heavy artillery, mortar and machine-gun fire they would have to wait patiently while the Royal Engineers completed their Bailey Bridge (*Amazon*) allowing the much-needed armoured support and 12 Brigade into the bridgehead. *Amazon* Bridge opened at 0500 hrs but it was still some time before the leading elements of 12 Brigade would cross it and then pass through the 2nd Battalion positions to push the perimeter out a further 800 yards. With their many casualties the 2nd Battalion would reorganise itself whilst waiting for orders.

16th May 1944 - Orders received to attack and capture Points 50 (Masa



Regimental Matters

DeVivo) and 58. Point 50 - 1830 hrs attack launched. Standing in front of and with your back to the Memorial you are looking in the direction of Point 50. 16 years ago you could see the hamlet of Masa DeVivo. The new University buildings have changed this view in recent years. Ten officers and 92 other ranks fell during the Point 50 assault. The 2nd Battalion's efforts in breaking the Gustav Line were now at an end. If you visit the Beds & Herts museum at Wardown Park, you can view the Terence Cuneo painting depicting the scene of this attack.

The 2nd Battalion's War Diary tells us of the heavy cost in lives lost while attacking the Gustav Line in May 1944. The Cassino War Cemetery tells of the ultimate price paid. With this in mind we will endeavor for as long as we are able, to ensure the Memorial is maintained in good order with assistance from RHQ as a fitting tribute to those men of the 2nd Battalion who remained forever in Italy.

Lest We Forget.



Officers' Dinner Club



The Officers' Dinner Club met on Friday 1st November 2024 when 106 officers past and present dined together at the

Army and Navy Club, The RAG, in St James' Square.

We were fortunate to be able to entertain

six distinguished Regimental Guests, three officers from the Worshipful Company of Poulterers and three members



of the Bank of England all of whom have lent great support to the Regiment, particularly in recent years.

The Colonel of the Regiment, Major General Dom Biddick, presided and gave a very informative speech about the current state of pan-global defence following a recent trip to the United States, before summarising the exploits of our own three Battalions. Of particular note he mentioned our 60th Anniversary this year, and the special day held on 1st September to mark that occasion at the Regimental Memorial, Duxford. He paid tribute to all those who have worn the Regimental cap badge while serving in every operational theatre to which the British Army has deployed since 1964, and in particular to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice and to our veterans many of whom still bear scars from their time in service.

It has become the norm for a group to put together a "themed Table", and this year Brigadier Roger Brunt did just this. Out of a possible 24 Officers who served in Cyprus on a UN Tour in 1984, the former Adjutant successfully gathered 23 retired Officers at one table to mark the 40th anniversary of that tour, which included two who made the trip all the way from Australia!

A brass ensemble from the Band of the Royal Yeomanry entertained us throughout dinner with a fabulous arrangement of well-known tunes. The young Poacher Officers got very carried

away when the Lincolnshire Poacher was played but had clearly been having choir practice as they were in very good voice, and sang heartily knowing all the words to every verse much to the amusement of all, not least General Olly who joined in.

Mr Vice, 2nd Lt Adam Bevan, proposed toasts to HM The King, our Colonel in Chief HRH The Duke of Gloucester, and following his speech General Dom toasted the Regiment before everyone made a move for the bar which remained open until midnight. The RAG looked after us extremely well, and we are most grateful to all the

staff there for taking such good care of us.

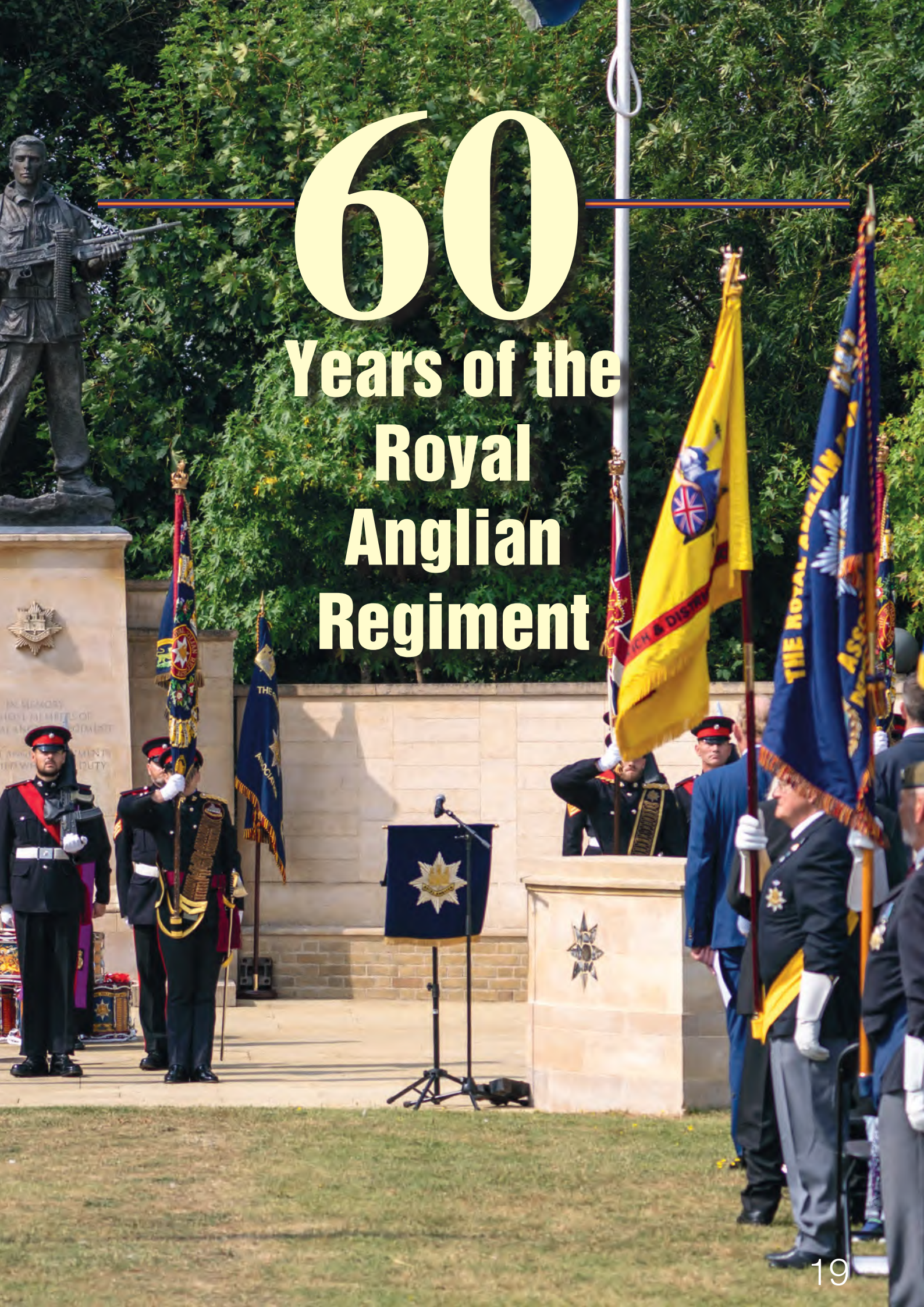
Next year's dinner will take place on Friday 7th November and Regimental Bulletins as well as information on the Regimental App, Connect, will run from early September. The ticket price includes a champagne reception on arrival, a 4-course meal with wines, followed by coffee and port. The Officers' Dinner Club generously subsidises the cost of the evening through subscriptions paid to the Regimental Charity. A full list of those Officers who attended is set out below.

Royal Anglian Regiment Dinner Friday 1st November 2024				
Top Table 1 Maj Gen DSJ Biddick MBE MC Mr Mark Goodwin Lt Col AR Thompson MBE Maj IJ Robinson MBE Mr Ayyaz Ishaque Lt Col JCJ Wright Col MS Woodson Mr Terry Thurlley Lt Col NJP McGinley Mr Ronnie Robinson	Top Table 2 Maj Gen OCC Brown Mr Paul Kelly Col BD Weston Lt Col JW Bennett- Madge Lt Col GJR Hudson Col WJ Meddings OBE Col PC Moxey Maj D Granfield Lt Col R Bredin MBE Mr Nick Hamilton	Table 3 "Poachers UNFICYP 40" Brig RM Brunt CBE Brig DJW Browne MBE Brig AP Deed OBE Brig A Behagg MBE Col NG Burrell Col RE Harrold CVO OBE Lt Col BHM Davenport Lt Col K Hodgson OBE Lt Col MJP Beard Lt Col RA Knox Maj TP Beighton	Maj RJ Brown Maj SJ Westmacott Maj RGA Cope Maj FR Antolik Maj BA Foster Capt CR Webster Capt SH Branch Capt P Zmitrowicz Capt DG Goude MBE Capt AGW Ward Capt SJ Langley	Table 4 Maj JM Walters Maj JR Tracey Maj TOB Reid Maj ROM Edwards Maj CLM Miles Capt TP Lister Capt MJN Andrews Capt T Hardiman Capt DA Kitchen Capt GH Waterfield Capt DB Coyle
Table 5 Col GJ Goodey MBE Maj S Thomas Maj D Broomfield Maj DT Crosbie Maj PRA Lenthall Maj SM Broomfield Capt BJ Howes Capt EA Williams Capt LRG Talkington Capt TA Clark	Table 6 Col NH Kelsey OBE TD Maj S Card TD Maj T Dormer TD Maj GP Walton TD Capt DK Marsden TD Maj JJ Ginns Maj PD Connolly Maj J Inch Maj SR Poulter Capt JM Ding Capt AR MacLeod	Table 7 Maj JR Snodden Maj WS Otridge Maj WG Pickering Maj JL Robinson Maj JA Martin Maj TJStC Brown Capt SR King Capt AJ Rainey MC Capt WD Willdridge Capt KA Forsyth Capt B Humphreys	Table 8 Capt RW Simmons Capt PA Phillips Capt EM Porter Capt HJ Gurney Capt HJR Browne Capt WC Bagnall Lt GS Chapman Lt JJ Wansbury Lt HR Bussandra Lt SJ Barke 2nd Lt CP Morgan-McDermott	Table 9 Capt MP Wilman Capt J Heal Capt RJ Smith Capt C Boffey-Rawlings Capt JIG Peel Capt HIM Di-Lieto Capt JNH Kelly Capt J Horvath Lt CJ Mitchell 2nd Lt AJ Bevan (Mr Vice)



Regimental Matters





60

**Years of the
Royal
Anglian
Regiment**



Regimental Matters



Members of the Regimental Family gathered at Duxford on Sunday 1 September to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Royal Anglian Regiment.

Members of all Battalions past and present descended on Duxford for what was a fantastic and very warm day. The day was filled with fun and laughter along with plenty of stories being told.

The yearly Regimental Gathering held at Duxford is already firmly in many people's diaries but this year, as we also celebrate the 80th Anniversary of D-Day, when our forbear Regiments achieved the impossible it felt all the more special.

The Colonel of the Regiment addressed the crowd and gave an update of what the battalions are currently up to, as well as publicly announcing the *Royal Anglian Connect* app which is part of the



60 Years of the Royal Anglian Regiment

wider plan to invest in the welfare of our veterans going forward. There was a two minutes silence held as we remembered our fallen and there were veterans, families and cadets in abundance to help celebrate the formation of the Regiment. It was fantastic to have our Colonel-in-Chief present for the day enjoying the festivities with his Regimental family.

There was plenty of beer and refreshments available as well as entertainment for the families. Watching serving members of the Regiment try and out-do each other on the buckling bronco was very entertaining.

A special thanks goes to WO2 Glen Keeble who again set up and stripped down all the moving parts that helped deliver our people such a fantastic day.

Also, a huge thank you to all who attended the day.





Regimental Matters



60 Years of the Royal Anglian Regiment





Regimental Matters



60 Years of the Royal Anglian Regiment





Regimental Charity & Welfare



by Assistant Regimental Secretary
Mark Goldsmith

General

The welfare of those currently serving, former members of the Regiment/ Forebear Regiments and their families, remains one of the main priorities for the Regiment. To highlight this the Regiment has now employed a Managing Director for Charity and Veterans on a part time basis to help review how the Charity supports the Regimental family.

The Regiment receives around £120K annually from the Day's Pay Scheme contributions and aims to spend the equivalent amount by awarding Benevolence grants to those in times of hardship, need or distress. A big thank you on behalf of the Colonel of Regiment and the Regimental family to all those who currently making contributions to the Day's Pay Scheme. If you are not paying into the Day's Pay Scheme, then please consider speaking with your RAO on signing up.

Grants

The Regiment continues to award grants to those in times of hardship, need or distress. During the application process RHQ approaches other military charities for additional funding. This is known as almonisation. This ensures the applicant

has the best chance of meeting their individual needs. The almonised figures are outlined below.

• RHQ Grants	£82.1K
• ABF Grants	£39.3K
• RBL Grants	£14.5K

• Total Cases	88
• Grants Awarded	62
• Declined	26

Outreach

Regimental Headquarters has no outreach capability to complete casework. A grant is made annually to the ABF, who on behalf of RHQ awards grants to charitable organisations who support the Regiment and provide caseworkers. Casework delivery is identified in the chart (above). The annual grant to the ABF is currently set at £13K.

The chart highlights our dependence on other outreach providers. Particularly thanks must be given to SSAFA and RBL who have supported RHQ in 91% of the applications received. If you identify a

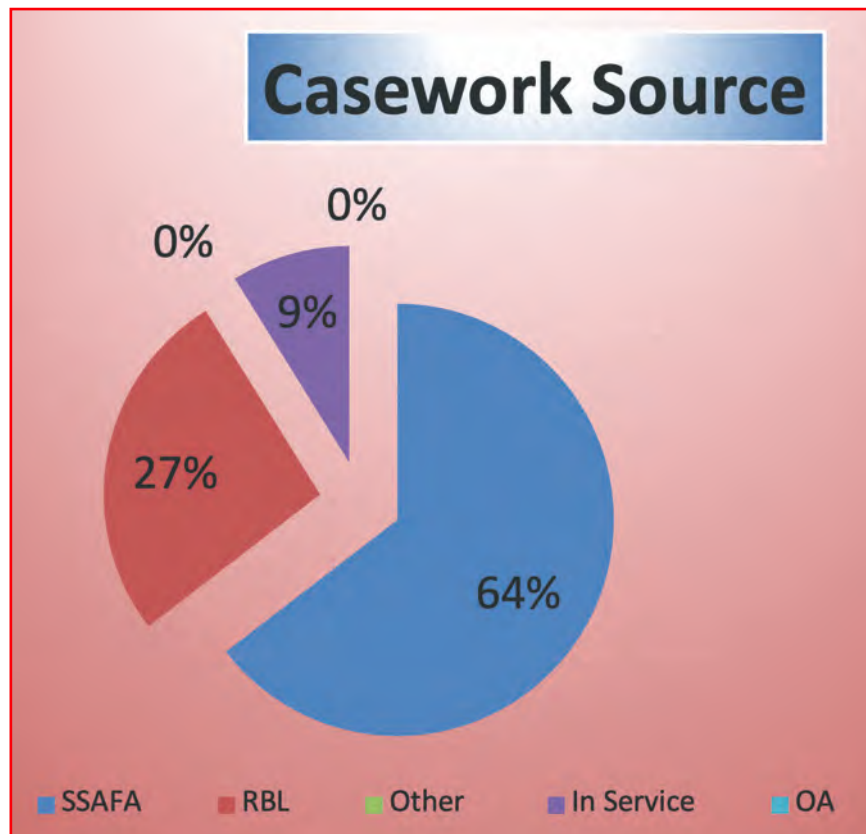
veteran who you believe may be in need of support please contact RHQ who will be able to advise / assist.

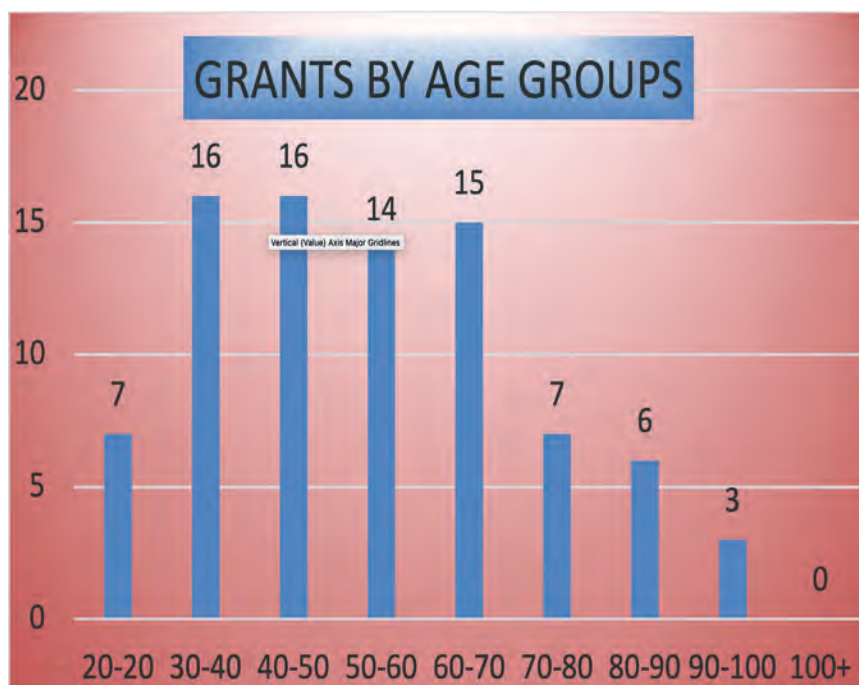
Declined cases

All applications received by RHQ are scrutinised by the Benevolence Committee to ensure each request meets the charities criteria for payment. Whilst every effort is made to award a grant wherever the criteria allow, some cases are unfortunately declined. The common causes for applications being declined are funeral costs, care home costs, savings above a set threshold and when no hardship, need or distress is identified.

Trends

Since joining RHQ in July 2021 I have seen the age groups of those we are supporting move to the left in the chart (right). The largest age groups we currently support is the 30-40 and 40-50. Factors will be the repercussions of the more recent conflicts, and those who previously served as part of their National Service.





Dispersal

• The main purposes for grant applications are:

- Purchase of brown and white goods
- Support with mobility issues
- Debts
- Travel assistance (In-Service requests)

Fundraising

Fundraising declined during Covid and has not recovered since the pandemic. As families struggle financially everyone has other priorities that are closer to home. With the end of the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan the Army is headline news so out of the public eye. The Managing Director for Charity and Veterans has been tasked by the Trustees to review the Regiment's current fundraising methods and identify new opportunities to generate additional income for the Royal Anglian Regiment Charity. We will publish more information about this in the New Year but If you are planning an event, please consider fundraising or donating to The Royal Anglian Regiment Charity. You will be directly supporting those from your Regiment that fall in need, hardship, or distress.

Donation Methods. If you wish to donate

you can do so via one of the following methods:

BACS payment.

The Royal Anglian Regiment Charity
16-19-26
20233435

JustGiving™

Just Giving Follow the link via the website www.royalanglianregiment.com where there is a link to Just Giving to make a donation.

Cheque: Send a Cheque made payable to The Royal Anglian Regiment Charity.

Enthuse donation page on the Regimental website follow the link to the website where you can make a one off or regular donation <https://royalanglianregiment.enthuse.com/donate#!>

The Wayland Fund

The Wayland Fund is a specific purpose fund established to support amputees. The fund was donated by an organisation that intended to set up its own establishment in support of amputees. They realised it was not required and so donated their funds to us.

Benevolence in Action

Case Study 1

RHQ supported a garden adaptation for an ex-Poacher with 15 years' service. He suffered severe injuries after his Saracen was hit by an RPG in the Falls Road area of Northern Ireland in 1971. This resulted in his left leg amputated.

"The patio has allowed me the ability to enjoy my garden and outside space. It is now fully accessible and fun to use and has provided me with independence and the ability to go outside on my own, making things easier for me, thank you."



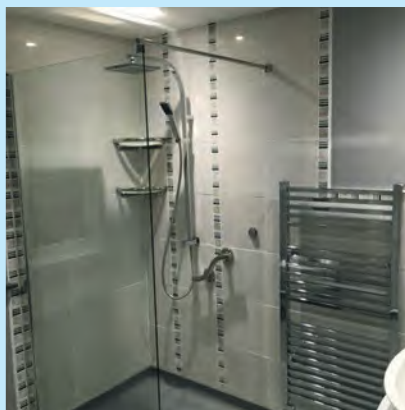


Regimental Charity & Welfare

Case Study 2

RHQ supported the installation of a shower room for an ex-Viking with 14 years' service who had a leg amputated. This was caused by undue wear and tear on operational deployments throughout his time in the Regiment.

"The Charity helped provide an accessible bathroom with raised toilet roll under basin and non-slip flooring which enabled me to be much more independent."



Case Study 3

The Royal Anglian Regiment Charity contributed £2,000 towards a new ramp so that an ex-Poacher with 5 years' service, could exit his bungalow kitchen area more easily. He suffered severe injuries from an IED in West Belfast and had both legs amputated and lost sight in his right eye.

"Before the adaptation I was like 'Eddie the Eagle' getting out of the house. This work has made a massive difference. I have my independence back and it has given me a boost. I see gardening as the way forward, enjoying life in the fresh air."

Full details of the Regimental Charities account are available on the Charities Commission website.

The Royal Anglian Regiment Charity (No: 1200816).



Do You Need Assistance?

If you find yourself in need, hardship or distress, seek caseworker assistances from SSAFA or RBL



They will forward your request to the Regimental Charity.

We are here to help and can ask other assistance providers to also assist, such as the RBL and The Army Benevolent Fund (The Soldiers Charity)

Donations

If you would like to donate to the Benevolent Fund you can do so via the Benevolence page on the Regimental Website

royalanglianregiment.com

Useful contacts

Mental Health Support and Emergency Services

If you feel like harming or hurting yourself or other people:

Call 999 or go to your nearest Accident and Emergency (A&E)

If you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency, NHS 111 is a free number to call. They can direct you to your local crisis support centre services they also offer health 24hr, 365 days a year.

NHS Veterans Support

Wales

Tel: 0800 2183 2261

Email: Admin.vnhswc&v@wales.nhs.uk

Cornwall

Available 09:00-18:00 hrs Mon-Thu,

Tel: 01579 373737

Referrals: 012579 335245

Email: cpn-tr.veteranassastance@nhs.net

Trevelis House, Lodge Road, Liskeard, Cornwall, PL14 4NE.

North-West

Available 09:00-17:00 hrs Mon-Fri

Tel: 0300 323 0707

Email: mviap@enquiries.nw@nhs.net

North of England

Tel: 0303 123 1145

Email: vvals@nhs.net

North End House, 42 North End, Durham, DH14LW

Midlands and East of England

Tel: 0300 323 0137

Email: mevs@mhms.org.uk

London and South East England

Tel: 0203 317 6818,

Email: cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net

Website: The Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison (TIL) Service

South Central and South West England

Tel: 300 365 0300

Email: awp.swveterans@nhs.net

Bath NHS House, Newbridge Hill, Bath, BA1 3QE

Other Assistance Providers



Samaritans

Provides emotion support 25 hrs a day 365 days of the year. They allow people to talk about feelings of distress and despair and are confidential and offer non-judgemental support.

Tel: 116 1123 (24hr Freephone)

Email: jo@samaritians.org

Website: samaritians.org



Mind

09:00-18:00 Mon-Fri, less bank holidays.

Mind Infoline gives confidential support and information on lots of mental health related issues including where to get help, drug treatments, alternative therapies and advocacy. Mind has a network of nearly 200 local Mind associates providing local services.

Tel: 0300 123 3393

Email: info@mind.org.uk



SANE Health Helpline

SANE runs an out-of-hours helpline offering specialist emotional support and information to anyone affected by mental illness, including family, friends and carers.

Open every day, 16:30-22:30 hrs

Tel: 0300 304 700



Mainly About People

From Our New Regimental Secretary Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) JCJ Wright

I assumed the role of Regimental Secretary in January 2024, with little experience of RHQ, I did visit as a potential officer in 1989, but have learned a great deal, met many people, (some old friends) and feel it is a privilege to continue to be part of this family and do some good for those who need it from time to time.

Our role is to conduct Regimental business so our Battalions can focus on training for or conducting operations and all that goes with it, specifically we deal with our heritage, communications, commemoration, charity, our Family, and the management of our charitable fund.

There have been a few initiatives that we have developed this year, the most significant is the introduction of the managing director for Veterans and Fundraising and Ian Robinson has assumed this role. Ian is well known to the Regimental Family especially those with connections to the Vikings. This appointment has allowed us to broaden and deepen the reach and connectivity with our Family, maintaining what we have and improving better where we can. We have also started the App, Royal Anglian Connect, a comprehensive means to allow our Family to organise in a variety of groups, plan and organise events and a good source of information. If you are not using Royal Anglian Connect, I urge you to do so.

We welcome Steve Armon to the team, who has taken over the role deputy Regimental Secretary, temporarily, to manage the heritage and communications work we do. Steve is well known in the Regiment and has a great deal of experience in creating video shorts and the use and application of social media. The communications work is constant and evolving, and includes our presence on many social media platforms, our website which has unrestricted access as opposed to Connect which is a closed system. Steve is also instrumental in liaising with external media and of course is the lead for Castle and Royal Anglian News published bimonthly.



It is right and proper that we give credit to Mike Peters for a great deal, who left as Deputy Regimental Secretary, communications and heritage in September this year. Mike was instrumental in the great improvements in both our heritage and communications. In terms of heritage, Mike worked on several projects to keep the Regiment alive to the public, especially in our counties and made available the museum to all on our website, which is a very popular feature. Our wonderful IT presence is also down to Mike's hard work and determination, and he has left the team in an excellent place as far as our virtual presence is concerned. We wish him the best of luck for the future.

We also welcome Gavin Good who will assume the role as Area Secretary 1 and will be our interface with the Family based in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex. Gavin had a long Army career, comes from Harwich and no doubt will get to know as many of you on his patch as he can, will provide an empathetic ear and provide the best support where required.

Finally, I would like to pass on my thanks to those great Royal Anglians who volunteer their time for the benefit of the Family. From those who have

taken a lead to host a Big Breakfast, organised a Remembrance Service in their local town or village, to being a point of contact at a funeral or simply for highlighting a Family member in distress, need or hardship. Without this help we will all be far poorer and more isolated. I want to thank all our County Colonels, Chris and Ange Headland, John Limb, KC Jones, Dave Granfield and Ben Shropshire for all their fantastic work over the past year. I know I have missed others off the roll call, so sorry but we are grateful to toy all. And as a close, please keep in touch with us, if you are not happy, feel we have overlooked something or have some message to pass to the wider Family, let us know.

New Area Secretary 1 Mr Gavin Good



The Regiment welcomes Mr Gavin Good to RHQ. Gav will be picking up the role of Area Secretary 1 and taking the needs of the role forward. Gav served in the Army Air Corps for 28 years leaving at the rank of Captain (LE).

He has served in Operational theatres such as Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan. He is very passionate about people and their welfare and he looks forward to helping our Soldiers both past and present.

Gav can still be found on the rugby pitch albeit moving a bit slower than he used to!

A Regimental Veterans Pilgrimage in Honour of Major Andrew French MBE Sunday 29 September 2024

by Patrick Shervington

Despite the wrinkles, the baldness, the flab and the stiffness we are still at heart young soldiers from The Poachers and The Pompadours. Remember that, 'young' 2Lt Adam Bevan, with us as a 'formal' representative from the 2nd Bn; welcome.

First, I must share my almost overwhelming feelings of gratitude and pride, standing with you all at that beautiful, peaceful setting at St Andrew's Church, Aldringham, where Andrew French was laid to rest more than 28 years ago.

I was not there on that fateful day, Thursday 22nd May 1986, when 'A' Company was so professionally patrolling the "bandit country" of South Armagh, near Crossmaglen.

To those of you here, who were there, I offer my and our heartfelt respect for the stress and emotions that still live within you.

I was at the funeral and in my minds eye can see a small group of men, standing slightly apart; and I recognised the Head of Special Branch Londonderry, Sam Donnelly, with whom I had worked closely during the IRA hunger strikes in 1981. Sam had come from Derry to pay his respects, in his words, to: "A very courageous soldier in your very best traditions."

So now is also the moment to remember the two Royal Ulster Constabulary officers, now the Police Service of Northern Ireland, (George Cross), who died alongside Andrew.

David McBride (27) Protestant

William Smythe (25) Catholic

Note. The fact that their religion was stated says so much about Northern Ireland - remembering of course that Hindu, Sikh, Muslim and Jew fought for the Allies in both World Wars.

Fast forward to 29th May this year when I saw Wilkie at a splendid Reunion at Windsor Castle. I mentioned that my



wife Vicki and I had recently been on holiday in Thorpeness and visited the grave; and had talked to Andrew and Alison Duff.

(An aside here – I'm 80, Andrew is not far behind, we've been married 55 and 52 years respectively, so I can officially confirm today that we married child brides!).

Back to Wilkie, who steamed into action and created a WhatsApp group – that Tim Beighton joined and many of you here. I named it Wilkie, Tim and the Swifties – as I'm really with it! To the day, four months later, we're here. Remarkable. THANK YOU.

The WhatsApp messages must be more than half a mile long: very moving; memories, tributes, photographs, poetry, links to Andrew's sister, Jane, together with masses of "Good on yer, mate; Deffo; Top man; Cheers" etc. One message from a former officer (rhymes with 'Rookie') – and I loved the misspelling – was that his wife had "buggered her 'keg', having been hit by a high velocity Labrador (ours!)", so he couldn't make it! 'Palm bearers' instead

of 'pall bearers' was another good one!

Plus many ... "Once a Poacher" and "All the Four's"; and several about getting a "God box, dog collar" here – well done securing the Senior Chaplain, 16 Air Assault Brigade".

Back in 1985, the 1st Fusiliers lost three soldiers in a car bomb in County Fermanagh. We held a memorial service in the gym of our barracks in Ballykelly. Another God box, the Bishop of Londonderry (would you believe his name was Cuthbert Peacock) asked: "Colonel, I wonder how many of your soldiers believe in God?" I replied: "Under fire they say Jesus Christ a lot!"

Finally, a personal memory of Andrew from a TEWT (Tactical Exercise Without Troops) in Cyprus with the 3rd Bn in 1977. Bill Dodd was the Commanding Officer and I was 'A' Company Commander, recently returned from a tour with the Sultan's Armed Forces in Dhofar. Colonel Bill had directed that the young officers and sergeants should site a forward company defensive position to counter infiltration and penetration; complete with Claymores, GPMGs, mortars, Gunners, the lot. For a couple of hours, in great heat, the boys trudged across gullies and outcrops. Andrew, for one, did not take it too seriously. I had demanded a field of fire of 200 – 300 metres, but when he had sited his position and I invited him, and all of them, to get down on their bellies, the field of fire was thirty metres at most! Ground is not easy to read. Later over a beer in the mess, I apologised for singling him out. "You were right" he admitted ruefully – and we drank more beers. All of us here, all ranks, have done our bit down the years in Army service for our Regiment, our country, our multiples and our mates.

Andrew, in giving his life, did more than his bit.

We honour him.



Regimental Heritage

From the Regimental Heritage Committee

It is a great privilege to be invited to become the new Colonel Heritage for the Regiment and especially, at such a pivotal moment.

I am extremely grateful to my predecessor, Col Dick Harrold, for the sterling job he did in managing the different strands that make up the heritage affairs of the Regiment over the past few years and ensuring that this essential part of our history continues.

My own background with the Regiment has been 15 years as a reservist, although I did join the Army in the first instance straight from school at age 17. Having served in 5, 6 and 7 R Anglian during that time, I finished my service in 1998 as 2IC of (what is now) 3 R Anglian. I am also the Chairman of the Regimental Museum and as part of a recent review, conducted at the request of the Colonel of the Regiment, it has been decided that the roles of Chairman of the Regimental museum and that of Colonel Heritage should be merged, to reflect the role of the Regimental museum has as the core heritage asset of the Regiment

We are now facing interesting times across the Regiment in terms of heritage, with our Regimental Museum facing the upheaval of a major move within the Imperial War Museum site at Duxford and our predecessor regiments, facing the headwinds of change, from financial



Maj (Retd) Stephen Card.

to physical in terms of maintaining the essential link between our Regiment today and our local counties, in which the heart of our Regiment lies.

It is our task on the heritage Committee to cement these local links and to support them wherever we can to provide that essential community link to our Regiment and I hope that we can count on the support of all elements of the Regiment in this task.

Royal Anglian Regiment Museum

The Regimental museum is about to undergo a period of great change. As a result of the implementation of 'The

Duxford Plan' by the Imperial War Museum, where the museum is located, the Land warfare Hall where we are located will be demolished to make way for new development on the site. As a result, the regimental museum will be without a permanent home for the next couple of years. To be clear though, the museum is not closing! Indeed, far from closing, the museum will be getting a much-needed facelift and reopening in a new location within the hall which is currently designated Airspace. This is a prestigious location, in the hall next to the main IWM entrance and will allow even more visitors access to our refreshed collection. This hall will be redesignated 'Post WWII and Cold War' which fits perfectly with our Regimental history, and we are working with the IWM on the plans for this new exhibition.

Inevitably, there will be considerable upheaval necessitated by this move. We must accept we will be without a fixed location for the museum whilst this essential work is being carried out but, we will have a temporary gallery display in front of where our new, permanent, location will be, which will be close to the tail of Concorde in Airspace. Please bear with us during this time as we are busy planning for the new space, fundraising and managing 'business as usual'!

The Regimental Museum - Strengthening Regimental Ties





The museum has enjoyed spending a bit more time with the 1st and 2nd Battalions this year.

In July the curator, along with some staff from the Essex Regiment museum, had the pleasure of being invited to visit C Company at Kendrew Barracks. It was a very informative time about the structure of the Battalion today, as well as a look around their building and at some of their equipment. It was great to have a look and be hosted.

At the museum we have a lot of historical objects and archives for research but it is really important to also keep up to date and have those links with serving soldiers.

Later in the year, we also had various visits from the 2nd Battalion to the museum, notably one in May and another JNCO visit in November. The museum always welcomes these visits, and enjoys meeting some of the serving soldiers and telling them about the history of the Regiment.

The museum welcomes the Regiment for a discussion or just leading a tour. We just hope it is beneficial and Regimental history is learnt and the battalion has fun while on site! It is also free for these visits so if any

companies or Royal Anglian groups wish to visit, please email the curator at: royalanglianmuseumcurator@outlook.com

Sometimes we also have some veteran accompaniment, as the museum is aware of some veterans that enjoy

seeing the current serving soldiers, talking about a time they served and have a quick chat.

If you are a veteran and you would like to be notified if either battalion is visiting, please register your interest to the above email.



Charlie Tapp talking about his time in Northern Ireland



Diary Dates

2025

January

8th Regimental selection board RMAS

February

10th Sobraon day
22nd Big Breakfast

March

5th Poulter's Prize presentation
12th County Colonels annual meeting

April

11th Sovereign's Parade RMAS CC242
12th Grimsby Sobraon lunch
25th Almanza Day

May

2nd Regimental council meeting
3rd Army vs Navy rugby
7th Regimental selection board RMAS
8th VE Day 80

June

8th Kettering AFD/Freedom Parade
14th Vikings veterans ball
25th Hindoostan Day
27th Regimental representation event
Rockingham Castle
29th Salamanca Day service Warley Chapel
29th Rutland AFD/VE80/VJ80 Parade Oakham

July

10th Regimental cocktail party Rockingham Castle
20th Cambridgeshire Association reunion

22nd Salamanca Day
26th Northamptonshire Association Talavera dinner
27th Talavera Day

August

1st Minden Day
2nd Minden Day Bury St Edmunds event
8th Sovereign's parade RMAS CC243
13th Blenheim Day
15th VJ Day
17th Blenheim Day lunch

September

6th Regimental rugby
7th Regimental Day Kendrew Barracks
(Formerly IWM Duxford)
10th Regimental selection board RMAS
15th- 19th Regimental BFS Dardanelles
28th RHC sponsored chapel service

October

1st Regimental heritage steering committee
11th Hohenzollern ODC

November

9th Remembrance Sunday IWM Duxford
9th Association contingent at the Cenotaph

December

7th Regimental carol service Warley Chapel
12th Sovereign's parade RMAS CC251
20th British Battalion Day

For more details and events please visit our website at: royalanglianregiment.com







Can You Remember?

1960s



3 R Anglian in Aden 1966



1st Bn Athletics team 1968

1970s



2 R Anglian Officers' Mess 1970



Company Sergeant Major Slinn presenting Drum Major Dougy May a silver bugle 1974



Can You Remember?

1980s



2 R Anglian Northern Ireland in the 1980s



Lt Col Mike Walker gets pulled out of camp in Gibraltar 1988

1990s



1 R Anglian vs a local Croatian side 1995



Maj David Jamieson VC CVO in 1994, viewing the painting that depicts his actions at the Battle of the River Ome on the 7th Aug 1944



Can You Remember?



WO2 Smart and his team from 6 R Anglian winning yet another shooting trophy 1990



Pte Main (now the Regimental senior LE) 3 R Anglian receives Top Student on his JNCO Cadre. 1990s



A Company Pompadours man a VCP in Londonderry 1990s



Poachers QM Dept East Tyrone 1992/93



Gen de la Billiere KCB KBE DSO MC (bar) visits Poachers Recce PI Op Granby 1991



Can You Remember?

2000s



Viking Mortars illuminate the night sky on Op HERRICK 16



Ptes Cooper and Drinkwater take a break after contact during Op HERRICK 6



A Poachers strong Jungle warfare Instructors Cadre where Cpl Penrose forgot to attend the camouflage to the forehead lesson 2003



Poachers Snipers Op NEWCOMBE 2021



1st Battalion

The past 12 months has seen significant change in the Vikings as we completed the implementation of our transition to our Future Soldier structure and commenced activities as a Security Force Assistance (SFA) Battalion. Despite this change, we have retained our core skills as Infantry soldiers. Change is never easy, and seldom welcome, but I have been continually impressed by the positive attitude and approach displayed by every Viking. We restructured the Battalion last December and each company has risen to the challenge of incorporating their new specialist weapons capabilities while retaining their core ethos and links to their counties.

The focus for the year has been Operation INTERFLEX. In January, the Vikings deployed to a training location in the UK to manage and deliver basic soldier and leadership courses (broadly equivalent to ITC and Juniors/Seniors, but in a much shorter timeframe) to nearly 4,000 Ukrainian soldiers over the course of six months. It was a multinational effort, with training teams joining us from Australia, Denmark, Finland, Kosovo, Romania, and Sweden. Once we settled the debate about which of us were the real Vikings, we learnt a lot from training the Ukrainians and our multinational partners that we have since brought into our own training. We have also identified areas that we need to get after as a priority to ensure we deliver on CGS's intent to double the lethality of the Army by 2027.

Away from INTERFLEX, we sent our companies to Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Romania to both train alongside our partners and deliver training. At every turn the Vikings have performed excellently and represented the Regiment and the Army superbly. Towards the end of 2024, the Vikings planned and delivered Recce and Sniper Cadres on behalf of 11 Brigade to regenerate our capability following the re-orbat – the first one of its kind in the Brigade that has thrown down the gauntlet to other units.

From the CO

Lt Col Adrian Thompson MBE



Just as it felt that we were starting to master the Security Force Assistance role, we were informed that 11 Brigade would be shifting its focus away from SFA and back to warfighting as part of the Army's Advance Force. This change has been well received at all levels in the Battalion and the determination to demonstrate how lethal we can be as a small infantry battalion has been evident in all aspects of our training.

At every turn I have been impressed by the excellent low-level leadership and desire for improvement that the Vikings are so well known for. The Training Wing, under WO2 Ben Page, has led the way in developing the Army's Trench Doctrine, culminating in a demonstration to 1st (UK) Division in November. With ready access to our own training area adjacent to the airfield, section commanders are delivering excellent training in barracks. Meanwhile, each company has been developing their concept of employment – how they can enable the Battalion to fight and conduct tactical actions in our

new size – something that will be tested when the Vikings deploy to Kenya next summer for a formal validation exercise.

We've also managed to find time for sport and social activities. After our Unit Move in 2023 prevented us from celebrating Minden Day as a Battalion, Maj Joe Hayhurst organised a superb Minden Day event in Kendrew just before Summer Leave that brought together all Vikings and their families for a day of celebrations. The presentation of King's Coronation Medals earlier in the morning by the Lord Lieutenant of Rutland was an excellent addition to the day's activities. We were also delighted that Dougie May was able to join us from the Royal Hospital Chelsea for the day.

Being co-located with the 2nd Battalion in Kendrew Barracks has presented several opportunities for collaboration and is proving to be a huge benefit to many aspects of our lives. Sport has been one of the key success areas, with football, rugby, cross country and cycling all delivering success for the Regiment.

With the arrival of SNCOs and Warrant Officers from the 2nd Battalion into the Vikings we have started to see the growth of BJJ (under the auspices of WO2 Steele) – an excellent addition to our sporting offer that fits well with the drive to train our soldiers in unarmed combat skills, and enables us to make the most of the first-class martial arts and boxing gym.

I am enormously grateful for everyone's efforts over the past year, particularly our families and supporters of the Battalion who continue to do so much to enable us to focus on our training. I hope that the articles over the following pages give you a good sense of the wide range of activities that the Vikings have undertaken over the past year.

From the RSM

WO1 (RSM) Paul Kennedy

It would be wrong of me not to start this section without acknowledging the immense pride that comes from having taken on the role of Regimental Sergeant Major in the Vikings at the end of 2023.

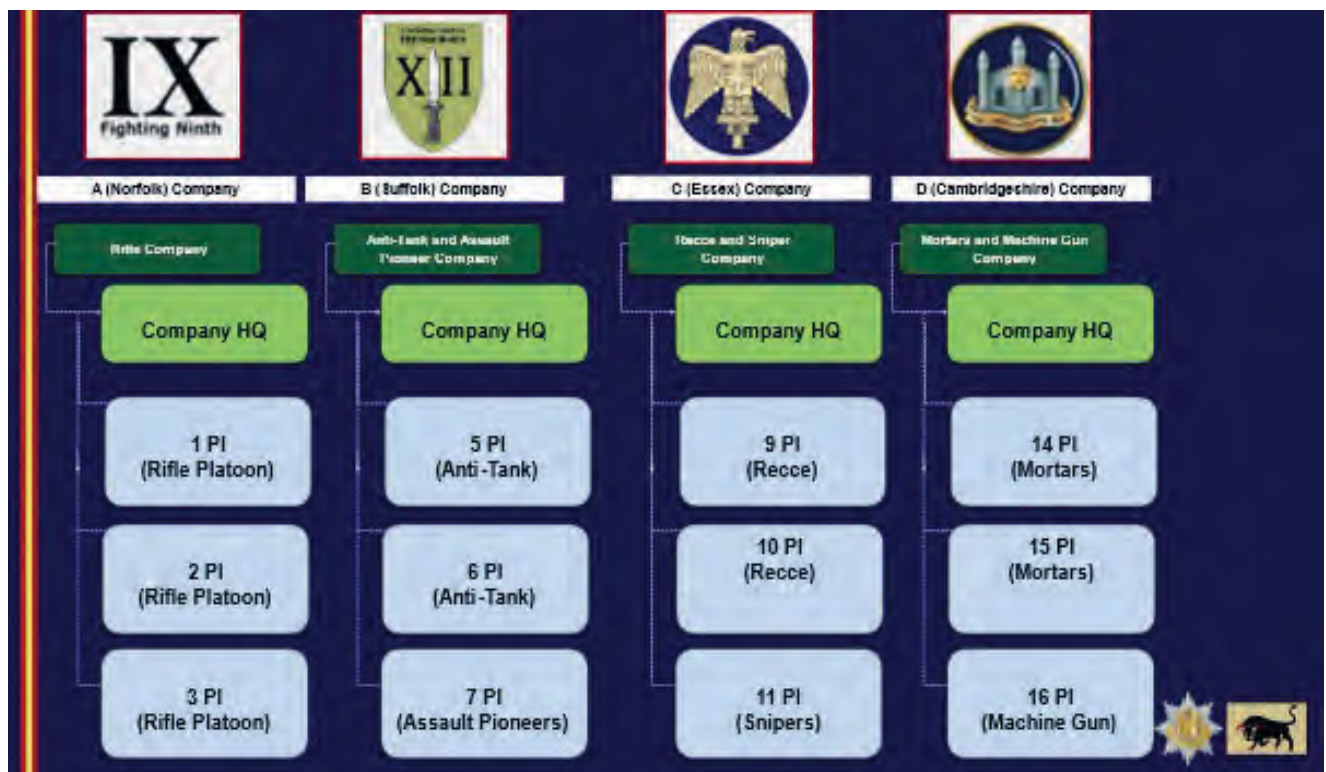
It is not a role that I aimed for as a soldier, but following my time as a Company Sergeant Major, it became one I aspired to. Working at Company level to create and sustain the conditions for the people and organisation to succeed was a rewarding experience; to have the opportunity to fill a similar role for the Battalion is an honour.

It cannot escape anyone's notice that 2024 is a momentous and pivotal year for the Battalion, and the wider Regiment, set in the context of a busy Army in an uncertain world. However, many if not all of the realities and events we are facing have been met by our predecessors. Be it the Battalions of the Royal Anglian Regiment, or the antecedent regiments before that, all the way back to 1685, change has been a constant. Large-scale change programmes involving re-role of task, changes of title, looming conflicts across Europe and the world, uncertain financial situations, and a rising costs



of living feel new to us. However, it is not new to the soldiers that came before us, in whatever uniform or cap badge they wore, whatever title or tribe they belonged to. Change in the Army (and Warfare) is not new, but to those undergoing it, it is huge, it is personal, and it is real.

I would contend that the experience of these changes is amplified through the hyperconnected media driven world of today. The complexities and impacts of our current realities are made exponentially more obvious to those we look to recruit, those we look to retain, and those veterans whose service we attempt to honour and follow. This level of connectivity is both a strength and a weakness; allowing virtual togetherness is great, but when a social media post is viewed or responded to with scorn and cynicism it drives division, not unity. My plea to all of our generations is to encourage more opportunities



A copy of the Vikings Order of battle, not including HQ Company and the supporting elements



1st Battalion

for positive connections between each other, both in person and online.

Stepping into this role and working with the Battalion on the effort to aid Ukraine in the defence of their country through training delivery, was a humbling and affirming experience. In my first weeks in this job I was quickly reassured that despite changes in our role and structure, the spirit and identity of the Vikings continues onwards. The experiences and character of the trainees across all of our courses was commendable, and remarkable; we took much from them. However, initially new to this task, and in newly formed companies, it was the effort, humility, and dedication the Vikings put into the task that was awe-inspiring. Prior to, and throughout the task, hours were spent on upskilling our own warfighting abilities across the companies through research and training so that we could be at our sharpest and truly add value to a worthy cause. In the truest Viking form, this relentless pursuit of excellence was driven from within by our own soldiers such as Cpl Lee with his meticulous intelligence analysis; Cpl Finch and LCpl Toye with countering the threat of drones on the battlefield; LCpl Guthrie and Pte McStay with their work on understanding and training us in countering explosive threats in a conventional war setting; and Cpls Bellingham and Stronges work on Russian and Ukrainian tactics in ambushes and complex terrain.

This work was driven by a passionate training Warrant Officer in Ben Page, who continues to surge towards improving the British Army's ability to fight in trenches and close country with ruthless persistence. These are just a few stand out examples; there are countless more and I am thankful for the Officers and Soldiers that live and sustain the Viking way of soldiering.

I write this as the Battalions' role evolves yet again, and under our parent brigade (11th Brigade) we move from the 1st Division into the Land Special Operations Force (LSOF). Our role in the Army's Advanced Force is being defined, but it is affixed even more to our mastery of our specialists and support weapons skills. Our role during a War in

the Advanced Force is to provide greater lethality by utilising our ORBAT (Fig1), and not being constrained by it. Our place in the Army's order of battle is still grounded in our identity of being determined, gritty Infantry soldiers with a professional curiosity and a relentless pursuit of excellence wrapped in humility. We must continue to strive to embody this in all that we do.

In recent years for those soldiers and their families both serving in the Battalion, and on external postings, life has been fast-paced and relentless. Our Regiment's culture, approach and identity are often amongst the factors that ground us and give us balance. We have had some amazing opportunities professionally and personally in the last year. But if there is one thing I could implore that we focus on in the coming year it would be connectedness, be that in the Warrant Officers and Sergeants or Corporals Mess; between our families, either in Kendrew or back home; between soldiers and our veterans and

our cadets. It is this connectedness, these links, hooks, and anchors to each other that matter, and where we find our true Strength within. It is these connections that support us when are struggling. It is also these connections that push us to work harder to relentlessly pursue our goals and objectives. It is these connections that allow us to understand when we need to lean in and support each other. If we do not work on them, if we just assume connection and don't engage to learn and understand each other, then we weaken our connections. We can all think of instances where these links and relationships have positively impacted us, and we all know the moments and relationships where we should have worked harder on these connections. We have to fight for these moments, fight to find time in our schedules, and to drive to design and implement methods to remain connected. Open Days, the Regimental anniversary at Duxford, the Big Breakfast, our social media presence – all can contribute.



A Viking sniper prepares to extract from position

A (Norfolk) Company

Overview

Major J Ryan, OC A (Norfolk) Company

As I reflect on a fantastic and successful year for the 'Fighting Ninth', we sit on the cusp of changing back to a warfighting role, providing a Tactical Recce Strike capability for the British Army and NATO. Over the last twelve months we have developed into a professional and capable Security Force Assistance Company, and we will take many of the lessons we have learnt from operating alongside partner forces forward into our new role within the Land Special Operations Force (LSOF).

2024 started with a three-month deployment to STANTA on Op INTERFLEX. Our task was to train Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) soldiers and officers to be commanders so that they could return to the fight against Russia with more lethality, survivability, and better leadership skills. We successfully trained over 400 commanders, which undoubtedly had a positive operational impact on the front line. It was great to see the soldiers and officers of the Company engage with this task with such tenacity, working extremely hard to deliver first class training to our comrades from Ukraine. I have attended two international training conferences in Germany this year discussing various aspects of AFU training, and it is abundantly clear that Op INTERFLEX is leading the way in providing unrivalled and world-class training to our partner. We are all very proud to have been part of this, especially considering the utmost importance and operational significance of the task.

The 'Norfolks' have also had the opportunity to deploy on multinational Overseas Training Exercises (OTXs) to Serbia and Romania alongside other operational deployments to Europe. Ex PLATINUM WOLF in Serbia was a company deployment that tested our expeditionary capability, as well as our soldiering skills in a Peace Support Operations context. Capt D Mileham and a small, yet determined, team of



Maj Jet Ryan taken in Serbia on Ex PLATINUM WOLF

'Fighting Ninth' soldiers drove across Europe to the Balkans to ensure that we had all the weapon systems and equipment required to be a credible and professional partner, operating in temperatures reaching above 40°C! We were seen as the partner of choice, supporting training delivery to nine other nations and being given the hardest objectives during the FTX phase. Equally testing was the support to B

(Suffolk) Company's OTX in Romania. The majority of the Company deployed on Ex SARMIS operating in some of the most beautiful and mountainous terrain that the Balkans has to offer. Both these deployments developed our low-level core infantry skills and our resilience, whilst also providing a challenging environment to learn from numerous partner forces, ensuring that our fighting edge remains sharp.



1st Battalion



As ever, it is not all work, work, work...there have been numerous fantastic sporting opportunities throughout the year. 'Fighting Ninth' troops have taken part in a wide array of sporting activities including rugby, football, motorcycle enduro, cross country running, mountain marathons, cycling, athletics, Brazilian jiu-jitsu (in

Texas!), boxing, orienteering, fishing, skiing and British Army Warrior Fitness. All of this sport and PT helped us to defeat all other Viking companies in the coveted annual Minden Day tug-of-war; perhaps one of our most significant achievements this year! And of course, we found the time for a good old fashioned company party, where we had

the pleasure of socialising and playing sport together.

Taking the time to reflect on the achievements of A (Norfolk) Company over the last 12 months is genuinely humbling. I'm struck by the individual commitment to our tasks and goals that is demonstrated on a daily basis by the men and women of the 'Fighting Ninth'.





This individual pursuit of excellence is the foundation to collective success and as ever, I am proud to serve alongside the soldiers and officers of the 'Norfolks'. We will not rest on our laurels, with our keen focus for the next year being on honing our warfighting skills so that we

are ready for whatever comes next.

Arrivals and departures

The 'Fighting Ninth' has said farewell to the following Officers and SNCOs over the last year: Lt D Bradnam, Lt B Jooste-Jennings, WO2 D Watson, CSgt

S Garrett and Sgt U Silva. The following have been welcomed into A (Norfolk) Company since January 2024: Lt G Chapman, 2Lt C Morgan-McDermott, WO2 C Steel, CSgt S Warburton and Sgt C Halsall.



Exercise PLATINUM WOLF 24

'Fighting Ninth' Company at the FOB, and a celebration of CSM Watson's last deployment with the Company

In June, the 'Fighting Ninth' had the opportunity to deploy to Serbia and take part in Ex PLATINUM WOLF 24, a UN validation exercise that would allow the Serbian Armed Forces to deploy

on peacekeeping missions to Lebanon, a mission that has become particularly poignant in recent months.

Ex PLATINUM WOLF involved ten countries and provided numerous

opportunities to integrate and operate alongside partner nations in exercise scenarios. This integration proved to be a great opportunity for the Company to develop and practice its recent role in



1st Battalion



A (Norfolk) Company soldiers conducting a raid using host nation vehicle platforms, BOV M16 Milos

Security Force Assistance, whilst also learning from partner nations' SOPs.

The exercise scenario represented a shift away from our conventional warfighting role, focusing instead on Peace Support Operations and irregular warfare. Knowing this, we set out to train and relearn many of the skills that had faded, such as counter-explosive ordinance and anti-ambush drills. As a company, we conducted our own Pre-Deployment Training in preparation for this exercise, utilizing specialist instructors across the Company and Battalion. This intense two-week training also involved a rigorous physical training programme designed to prepare us for the physically demanding training area and hot climate.

Once we deployed to Serbia, we continued our training alongside our acclimatisation period, which gave junior leaders in the company the opportunity to plan and deliver lessons and training. Additionally, we used our free time in the afternoons to organize company sports as part of our acclimatisation, with inter-platoon volleyball becoming a mainstay of the daily schedule. A highlight of this training was the medical serial, run by LCpl Kelly, which saw Private soldiers

confronted with realistic casualties, forcing them to treat and prioritise multiple casualties as they had been trained, while also testing the command and control skills of the JNCOs.

As the exercise phase began, the platoons participated in a round-robin of training serials that ranged from vehicle convoy and contact drills to reacting to injured and hostile civilian populations, all while fighting against an ever-present insurgency. Many of the serials and operations involved mounting troops in armoured and patrol vehicles, something new to us as a light-role Battalion, but a challenge we quickly adapted to.

We soon learned to use the mounted assets to our advantage and integrated them into our actions as a force multiplier. The troops were praised for their professionalism and effectiveness in dismounted patrolling and were asked to share our SOPs and tactics for urban operations due to our effectiveness during the exercise phase. This reputation translated into our tasks for the Distinguished Visitors' Day, where we were tasked with the raid on a complex compound, with a section of Serbian troops attached. This integration was an excellent opportunity to train

alongside partner forces. There was also the opportunity to explore some of the culture that Serbia had to offer, including visits to historical sites in the nearby town and exploring castles and battlefields with their long and storied history. We all relished the opportunity to experience the local area and learn about the history and culture of Serbia.

In conclusion, the deployment to Serbia and participation in Ex PLATINUM WOLF proved to be an invaluable experience for A (Norfolk) Company. The exercise allowed us to operate alongside a diverse range of partner nations, honing our ability to work effectively in a multinational environment while adapting to a shift in focus from conventional warfare to Peace Support Operations. This not only sharpened our skills in areas such as counter-explosive ordinance and anti-ambush tactics, but also enabled us to develop a deeper understanding of our role within 11 Brigade and how to integrate mounted assets into our operations. The training serials challenged the troops both physically and mentally, fostering resilience and adaptability in unfamiliar and demanding conditions. Our success in dismounted



A Company soldiers training for public order serials using host nation equipment

patrolling and urban operations highlighted the professionalism and effectiveness of the Company, earning the respect of our partner forces. Moreover, the integration of Serbian troops into our exercises provided a unique opportunity to strengthen our

interoperability, a crucial aspect of modern peacekeeping missions.

Beyond the tactical and operational benefits, the deployment also offered a valuable cultural experience, enriching the troops' understanding of the region and its history. This, combined with the

rigorous training and the opportunity to work closely with international forces, has undoubtedly strengthened A Company's capabilities, making us better prepared for future deployments and reinforcing our commitment to excellence in our role.



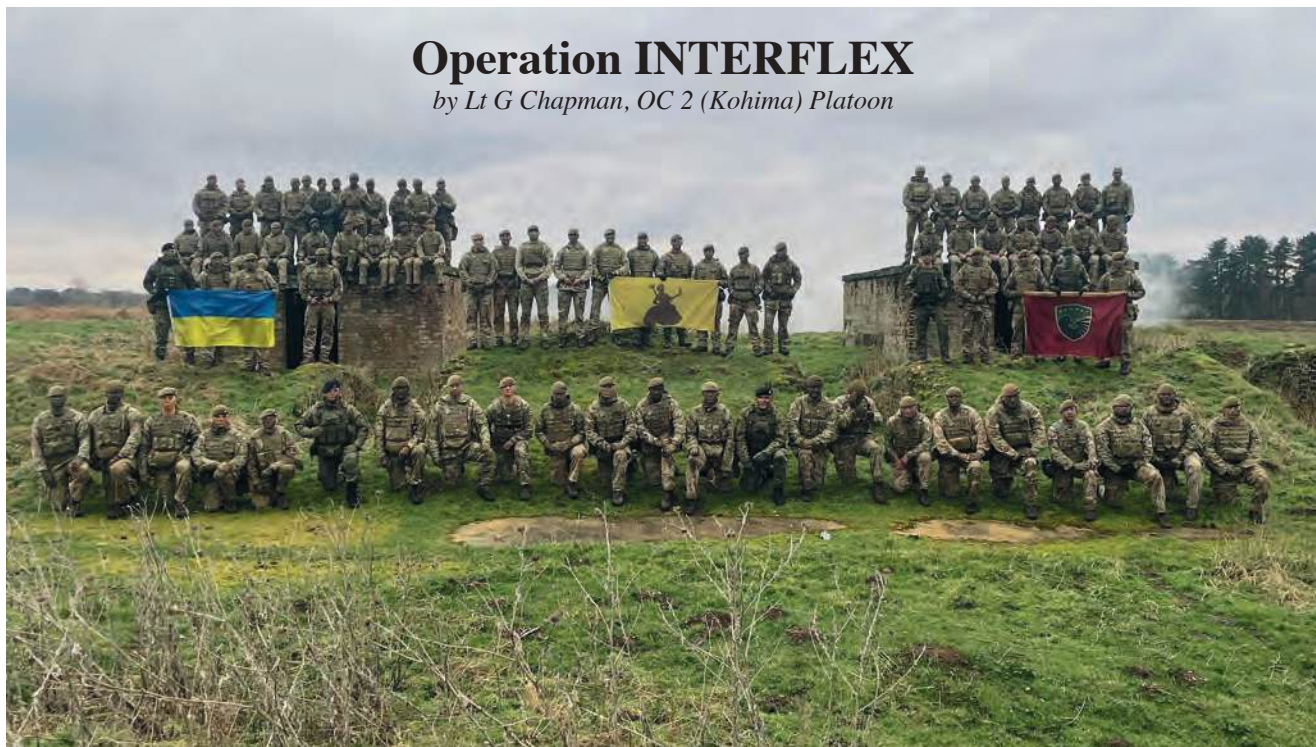
Soldiers from the 'Fighting Ninth' conducting urban operations as part of the exercise



1st Battalion

Operation INTERFLEX

by Lt G Chapman, OC 2 (Kohima) Platoon



A (Norfolk) and B (Suffolk) companies alongside Kosovan partners

Op INTERFLEX is the British Army's commitment to training Ukrainian soldiers in the UK. It is an ongoing UK-led multinational effort that has so far trained over 40,000 Ukrainians. From January to June, the battalion supported Op INTERFLEX, with BHQ running training based at STANTA, Norfolk,

accounting for a third of the operation's output.

The Vikings worked alongside forces from Australia, Sweden, Denmark, Romania, Kosovo, Finland, and the Royal Irish. A (Norfolk) Company, supported by B (Suffolk) Company, integrated with six instructors from

Kosovo to deliver leadership training to Ukrainian troops for three months before being relieved by C (Essex) and D (Cambridgeshire) Companies.

The 'Fighting Ninth' delivered three leadership courses with the aim of improving the Armed Forces of Ukraine leadership skills, survivability,



The AFU platoon is given a debrief after a successful trench assault



Soldiers of the 'Fighting Ninth' give a demonstration to the AFU section commanders course of breaking into an enemy trench

and lethality. The Section Commanders Battle Course and the Platoon/Company Sergeants Battle Course were five-week infantry leadership programs, designed to qualify experienced Ukrainian soldiers as section commanders or platoon and company sergeants.

Over ten weeks, A (Norfolk) and B (Suffolk) Companies trained 240 section commanders and 80 platoon and company sergeants: equivalent to four battalions of NCOs. Alongside

this, the Platoon Commanders Battle Course was a 10-week programme that took 40 Ukrainians straight from basic training and prepared them to be platoon commanders. These courses culminated in a 5-day final exercise, where trainees worked in their respective roles, closely mirroring their future command responsibilities.

This training experience was highly rewarding for the Company, as it allowed us to refine our skills

in our previous Security Force Assistance (SFA) role. The Company faced several challenges during Op INTERFLEX, but these challenges were instrumental in sharpening our adaptability, especially in SFA roles. The most significant challenge was the language barrier between instructors and trainees. However, an excellent team of linguists helped overcome this obstacle, integrating seamlessly with the Company. Moreover, our



1st Battalion

instructors became proficient in key Ukrainian phrases, allowing smoother communication throughout the training.

The courses focused on developing both leadership and soldiering skills. While many Ukrainians had frontline experience, they lacked formal training in basic military skills. The training addressed these gaps, focusing on three key environments: FIWAF (Fighting in Woods and Forests), urban warfare, and trench combat. The Ukrainians showed particular interest in British urban tactics, as this had not been a major focus in their pre-invasion training. Training progressed from room clearing at the individual level to a company-sized dawn urban assault, complete with simulated artillery, minefields, and medical serials involving amputee role players. This exercise was supported by drone reconnaissance, providing commanders with real-time battlefield awareness.

The work done by the Battalion in developing British trench warfare doctrine was reinforced during Op INTERFLEX, thanks to lessons learned from Ukrainian partners. Dispersing soldiers within trenches to reduce the impact of FPV drone attacks and the need for large stocks of grenades were key takeaways.

One notable practice shared by the Ukrainians was the use of constant drone updates to keep the lead elements informed of what lay beyond each corner or obstacle: an invaluable tactic for increasing battlefield awareness and survivability.

Three themes were integrated throughout the training: drones, counter-explosive ordnance (C-EO), and medical training. British medical instruction was well-received and proved highly applicable to the conflict in Ukraine. However, it was clear that our training on drones and C-EO needed improvement to meet the demands of modern warfare.

For many A (Norfolk) Company soldiers, this was their first significant exposure to drones, and the capability proved impressive, enhancing our ability to conduct reconnaissance, inform command decisions, and train the Ukrainians in counter-drone tactics. The experience of operating in an



An AFU section commander takes a knee on the route out to a section ambush

environment dominated by drones was eye-opening for all involved.

The Ukrainians also demonstrated a remarkable aptitude for digging, a skill honed through necessity in their ongoing war. Their expertise put our own skills to shame and highlighted the critical importance of digging in surviving drone and artillery bombardments. We also reinforced lessons learned from previous operations particularly the continued relevance of ground sign awareness from the HERRICK era. However, it became apparent that our training must expand beyond IEDs to incorporate conventional mines, given their prevalent use in the conflict. Cpl J Finch was particularly passionate about integrating these lessons, leading efforts to educate trainees on Russian mine tactics and ensuring mines and

IEDs were incorporated into all training scenarios, thereby complicating the battlefield environment for trainees.

Operation INTERFLEX was a pivotal experience for A (Norfolk) Company, serving as a strong foundation for developing our SFA and warfighting capabilities. The operation not only honed our tactical skills but also allowed us to professionalise as SFA operators, a role that demands a different set of competencies from traditional soldiering.

Looking forward, these lessons are also relevant to our new warfighting role as a Tactical Recce Strike Battalion. Overall, the mission was an invaluable opportunity to grow, learn, and contribute to the Ukrainian war effort, leaving both the trainees and our own soldiers better prepared for future challenges.



LCpl Reece Fuller operating a drone for the AFU platoon commander during a trench assault on the combined final exercise



1st Battalion

A Company Sports

Captain Mileham, Company Second in Command



Since the return from Cyprus last year, individuals from across A (Norfolk) Company have been enthusiastically re-engaging with sport. Despite the full and often uncertain calendar we always try to accommodate soldiers attending training and competitions across a variety of sporting disciplines. Since joining the company in December 2023 I have been struck by the energy and the competitive spirit that exists and I am pleased to report that this has translated into some great results.

Cpl Finch is a Section Commander within 3 (Corunna) Platoon. He has a passion for motorcycles and competes in Enduro, requiring him to navigate difficult terrain in all weathers for up to three hours per race. This year he has competed in the 1st round of the Eastern Centre Enduro Championship, racing across the deep sand of Thetford Forest only a few miles away from the Training Area where he had been instructing on Op INTERFLEX. This November, Cpl Finch competed in Ex HARD RIDE

on Catterick Training Area. This was a Tri-Service competition held over two days. By the end of day one Cpl Finch was in 17th place with a 40 second handicap for day two having picked up a few time penalties. On the second day of competition with the course wet and rutted Cpl Finch had some time to make up. After 5 clean tests on the second day he managed to claw back some time, finishing 8th overall and 1st in the Infantry.

Orienteering is my particular niche

The Vikings

and I have managed to compete in a number of races this year including the 55th Original Mountain Marathon (OMM). The OMM is held over two days every October and this year was held in the stunning and rugged Glen Artney in Perthshire. There are several courses, including the Long Score in which military teams can compete for the Hutton Trophy, presented to OMM by the family of Marine Jamie Hutton who was tragically killed in a training accident in 2008. This year I was racing with Lt Henry Wheatley 1GG in the Long Score class. Carrying all the kit needed to sustain us for two days of mountain running we set off into the mountains, racing to collect as many checkpoints before the 7 hour cut off. We did well covering over 30km and 2200m of elevation, arriving at the overnight camp site at 16:00 hrs. After a good supper, a stretch and a small flask of whiskey we crammed ourselves into the tent, ready for our 08:15 hrs start time on day two. The second day of racing was tough, we decided to risk heading south, away from





1st Battalion

The Vikings

the finish initially to collect some high value check points before running up the glen towards the finish. Muddy, bruised and tired we crossed the finish line with a few minutes to spare, heading straight to the bar for a post-race pint. In the end we finished 18th out of 146 teams and fifth in the military class.

The company has also been represented in both civilian and army rugby. Sgt Harraway and 2Lt Morgan-McDermott both play for the Oakham 1st Fifteen in their spare time and in July competed for the regiment in the HQ Centre Festival of Sport Rugby 7s, making it to the final. The team performed exceptionally well only losing to the Royal Irish by a single point with 2Lt Morgan-McDermott winning “player” of the Tournament.

Towards the end of this year, A Company soldiers will be competing in skiing, both Nordic and Alpine as well as team sports, martial arts and even fishing. Sport continues to be an important part of life within the company and will be supported in between deployments and exercise commitments.





The Vikings

ROYAL ANGLIAN BIG BREAKFAST 22 FEBRUARY 2025



At locations across the UK
Funded by the Regimental Charity

www.royalanglianregiment.com/bigbreakfast25

If you can run an event contact details
for RHQ are on the webpage link



1st Battalion

B (Suffolk) Company

OC's Overview

Maj Paul Machnicki



B Company trench

In August 2024, I had the privilege of taking command of B (Suffolk) Company from Major Ollie Bullen. I found a company that was fit, mission focussed, and professional in its approach. B (Suffolk) Company had just completed a rotation of Operation INTERFLEX, finishing in April 2024, training Ukrainian officers and soldiers on a training estate in the South East of England.

For the duration of this task, most of B (Suffolk) Company were under the command of A (Norfolk) Company, with our officers and soldiers responsible for the delivery of the Platoon Commanders' Battle Course, the Platoon Sergeants' Battle Course, and contributing to the delivery of the Section Commanders' Battle Course.

Upon completion of the Operation INTERFLEX Task, the Company changed focus to re-ORBAT to our new Security Force Assistance (SFA) role, moving from an established strength of 87 to a strength of 54, and re-rolling into two Anti-Tank Platoons (5 + 6 Platoon), and an Assault Pioneers Platoon (7 Platoon). This change brought an influx of Support Weapons and Assault Pioneers experience into the company, and these skills were used to run Anti-Tanks (Ex SUFFOLK MJOLLNIR, 17 Jun – 12 Jul) and Assault Pioneers (Ex SUFFOLK SKEGGOX, 1-19 Jul) cadres.

After summer leave in August, the Company then switched focus to Exercise SARMIS, an Overseas Training Exercise in Romania, training

with Romanian Mountain infantry and eight other nations in the Carpathian mountains.

The Company moved its freight across Europe by ferry and road, building on lessons learned by A Company from Ex PLATINUM WOLF, and learning some valuable lessons to pass to D Company for Ex FELAGI. The Carpathian mountains (home to Dracula) were challenging terrain, both in elevation and weather, but the company found that UK training in Brecon had prepared them well.

Overall, the re-ORBAT to Security Force Assistance has presented the company with a challenge; where will the balance of activity lie along two scales: Security Force Assistance vs Warfighting, and Support Weapons



capability vs Rifle capability. This question is still open; Ex SARMIS was conducted entirely as a rifle company,

but future exercises, operations and deployments will see us employed as Anti-Tanks and Assault Pioneers

specialists - skills that recent and current conflicts have shown as invaluable for the warfighting force.



France burial



1st Battalion

B Company ATK Cadre

Capt R Simmons, OC Anti-Tanks

As part of the Viking re-orbat into the Security Force Assistance (SFA) role, soldiers in B (Suffolk) Company were bolstered from members of the Anti-Tank Platoon (formerly D (Cambridgeshire) Company), to form two smaller platoons of Anti-Tanks within B (Suffolk) Company.

After a busy start of the year supporting Operation INTERFLEX, and a small rest period, members of 5 and 6 Platoon then began preparations to begin the Anti-Tank Cadre that would see them be introduced to and learn their new speciality. Quite daunting for some soldiers who hadn't seen a 'javelin' since their school athletic days!

In May and June the conditions were being set, with PT focussing on weight carriage and having the core stability to carry a Javelin Bergen of up to 60 kgs. Concurrently, all previously qualified Anti-Tankers blew the cobwebs off the equipment (and their Anti-tanking skills) that hadn't been used since the Platoon's deployments to Kenya and Finland in later months of 2023.

The Cadre commenced in late June, and would consist of four weeks, with the final week being a six day Exercise in Stanford Training Area (STANTA). The first week largely focussed on lessons on the Command Launch Unit (CLU) and the Javelin missiles - getting

to grips with the technical equipment. Cadre students were also introduced to Combat-ID (previously known as AFV Recognition), identifying the key differences in main battle tanks from NATO countries and other nations.

Week 2 worked on the newfound knowledge and operating skills of the CLU and saw Cadre students undertake their Gunnery skill tests, qualifying them as Javelin Gunners. Further Combat-ID lessons and theory lessons led to the week concluding with written assessments. With a solid theory base now built, the third week saw the Cadre begin to practice in real time what they had learned, with more lessons



An Anti-Tank section moves in to establish their positions.



Soldiers from B (Suffolk) Company upon completion of the Cadre.

and walkthroughs on the back area in Kendrew Barracks. Lessons on kit carriage and establishing a Javelin Post and Anti-Tank Observation Post (OP), as well as practicing the unmasking drills when engaging a vehicle and extraction drills, resulted in the last three

weeks of lessons all coming together as cadre students began to see the pieces fit together.

The Cadre then deployed to STANTA and conducted a six day exercise. Several anti-armour actions including ambushes, raids, passive observation

posts and long - heavy insertions served as a good culmination of the Cadre. With most of 5 and 6 Pl now qualified and having had some experience as Anti-Tank Operators, the Anti-Tank Platoons now look forward to further developing their skills on future deployments.

7 (Assault Pioneers) Platoon

Lt J Bagnall, OC Assault Pioneers, B (Suffolk) Company

In the recent restructuring of The Vikings, B (Suffolk) Company is now home to the Assault Pioneers. The Platoon are now a mix of the old B (Suffolk) company soldiers and already qualified Assault Pioneers.

The Platoon started the year supporting Op INTERFLEX here in the UK, this saw the experienced members stepping up as Instructors with the more junior members of the Platoon providing support as demo troop and opposing force.

After three months working with the Ukrainian Armed Forces the Platoon took a break in the form of week of Parachuting adventurous training in Netheravon. This saw the Platoon progress from the classroom to solo static line jumps from 4000ft after just three days. After this the focus switched fully to the platoon's new role as Assault Pioneers.

The term "Assault Pioneer" became formalized during World War

II, reflecting the need for soldiers who could undertake engineering tasks under direct enemy fire during offensive operations. Assault Pioneers were tasked with breaching enemy defences, clearing mines, building Assault bridges, and creating paths through obstacles, such as barbed wire or minefields, to allow infantry and armoured units to advance. They were often the first troops to engage in a combat situation, facing heavy fire while clearing the way for others.

In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, the role of Assault Pioneers became more specialized and was sometimes integrated into combat engineer units. However, many infantry regiments like the Vikings continued to maintain the Assault Pioneer capability. With modern technology and changes in warfare, some of their traditional roles have been taken over by dedicated Royal Engineers, although Assault Pioneers still serve a valuable role in certain infantry units, particularly in urban or

close-quarters combat situations.

The first aim for the Pl was to get qualified, this meant travelling to Minley to train under the Royal Engineers this October and become badged as Assault Pioneers. This was a three week intensive course focusing on both classroom-based lessons and practical application.

It culminated with a mission readiness exercise in which the Pioneers use these new skills in a tactical context. They learnt skills such as controlled demolitions, bridge construction, minefield clearance and defensive building.

Looking forward, the Pl will be working to expand their skillset, specialising in plant operation and the use of chainsaws.

They will use these skills on the Battalion's upcoming BULL STORM exercise in Kenya and working with the Royal Engineers and other partners on projects in the UK.



1st Battalion

Oakham Remembrance Parade

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion B (Suffolk) company had the absolute honour of marching through Oakham and representing the Regiment at the local Remembrance Day event held in the village.

Having both Battalions in Cottesmore means we can represent well around a busy schedule and due to the 1st Battalions previous posting to Cyprus, it is nice to be able to March and remember on home soil with families and friends in

attendance. Oakham provided a fantastic crowd of people who all took the time to stop for two minutes at eleven AM and remember those that have fallen and when the guns fell silent.



The Vikings





1st Battalion

Exercise SARMIS

by 2Lt Sam Irvine, Platoon Commander, 6 Platoon

In October B (Suffolk) Coy and attachments from A (Norfolk) Coy deployed to Romania for three weeks on Exercise SARMIS 24 to train alongside the Romanian, Turkish, Bulgarian, Belgian, Luxembourgian, Polish, Portuguese and North Macedonian armed forces. Ex SARMIS is an annual mountainous exercise, run by the Romanian 2nd Mountain Brigade to validate their battlegroups and headquarters. In previous years, other UK subunits have taken part, including C Coy, 1 MERCIAN in 2023, and A Coy, 2 RGR in 2022.

B (Suffolk) Company group included soldiers from A (Norfolk) Company, who formed an ad-hoc '4 Platoon', a chef from 3 Rifles, a vehicle mechanic (for our quads, which were essential for CASEVAC and resupply), Observer Controller Trainers (OCT)s, a Liaison Officer, two Combat Medical Technicians, and a General Duties Medical Officer.



A (Norfolk) Company soldiers prepare to attack an enemy position during a battle lane in Romania. The Carpathian mountains shown in the background





A B (Suffolk) Company soldier climbs one of the mountains on GROHOTIS training area during Ex SARMIS 24

The Company deployed deep into the Carpathian Mountains by air and road as part of the Romanian 21st Mountain Battalion, which was operating as a multinational battlegroup. It was tasked to train and evaluate operational capabilities to plan, lead, and conduct tactical actions in challenging, mountainous terrain. The exercise took place in the GROHOTIS area of the Carpathian Mountains, a patch of ground with elevation ranging between 700-1500m, temperatures ranging between -5°C to +23°C, and rain which lasted for several days during our deployment.

The terrain was not the only demanding element of the exercise; navigation under the near total forest coverage, a free thinking opposing force, difficult communications and several bear encounters presented additional challenges. For the final test exercise portion of the deployment, B (Suffolk) Company strapped on its bergens in full Combat Equipment Marching Order (CEMO), and advanced to contact up several peaks, making a total of 614m of elevation gain.

There was also valuable time to conduct cross training with our partner forces where the Company group had a look at different NATO capabilities



A B (Suffolk) Company soldier conducts urban operations training during Ex SARMIS 24



1st Battalion



A Polish soldier fires the British Sharpshooter rifle on GROHOTIS training area during Ex SARMIS 24

in action, as well as conducting a live fire segment where foreign troops got to grips with firing British weapon systems, including the SA80 A3, the GPMG, and the Sharpshooter.

Once the exercise phase had concluded, the Company returned to the town of BRASOV to conduct cultural activities which included visiting the old town, Dracula's castle, and sampling various local refreshments. The Company then returned to the mountains for the final few days, staying in a chalet belonging to the Romanian 21st Mountain Battalion to conduct some walking and R&R– this was topped off with a visit to the largest thermal spa in Europe before heading back to the UK.

Ex SARMIS 24 was a fantastic opportunity to operate alongside, and share TTPs with our NATO partners in demanding terrain. Our NATO partners particularly noted the 'robust morale' of British soldiers during the constant rain and mountainous terrain, but they didn't know the little ace we hold up our sleeves – Sennybridge Training Area!





Cpl Mark Steer and 2lt Callum Morgan-McDermott in between serials

Bear Encounter!

by Pte Broughton, 6 Platoon

Romania is well known for its population of approximately 8000 Brown Bears, many of which live in the Carpathian mountains. Over the past 20 years, bears have killed 26 people, and severely injured 274 others, so B (Suffolk) Company were understandably wary about camping out in the middle of the forest. Our Romanian hosts told us it was unlikely that we would see any bears, but in total, the B (Suffolk) Company had five bear encounters during the course of the exercise.

We had been given actions on by the

Romanians – move in large groups, and if you see a bear, back away, throwing food or clothing on the ground to distract the bear. Once naked and hungry, work your way back to civilisation! The Sergeant Major had a more robust response. If we saw a bear, fire miniflares, fire some blanks at it, put on your white light and shout a lot.

It was about 0300, and I was asleep in my dos bag in the company harbour, when I was woken up by a snuffling noise coming from somewhere nearby. As the snuffling grew closer, I realised

it was being made by something very large, and probably very hungry. My first instinct was to freeze ... I didn't have miniflares as these were only given to the sentries, and whilst my weapon was within arm's reach, I didn't know what the bear would make of a tasty forearm emerging from my dos bag. After about 2-3 minutes, I called for help and the roving sentries deployed white light and came over towards me and the bear whilst shouting, which scared the bear off. Not an experience I'm desperate to repeat!



1st Battalion

C (Essex) Company

Overview

It would be remiss of me to start this without saying how immensely proud I am of the C (Essex) Company Vikings for what they have achieved over the past 12 months. It has been fraught with change, challenges, and expectations.

I have asked a lot of the Company, but they have delivered in spades; with hard work, humility and professionalism. Furthermore, every soldier has embodied the C (Essex) Company ethos; Bold, Professional, Proud. I could not be more honoured to be their Officer Commanding.

The start of the year began with the re-organisation of the Battalion once it re-subordinated to 11 Brigade. This marked an exciting time for C (Essex) Company as it became the



New C (Essex) Company emblem

Reconnaissance and Sniper Company. A fusion of the strong and fierce reputation of the Company, built through blood,

sweat and tears, with the soldiers of the Reconnaissance and Sniper Platoons. These soldiers, traditionally the best soldiers in the Battalion, bring with them their own unique cultures and legacy. As a result, it was important for the Company to acknowledge all elements, but to fuse them to ensure that we remember our various pasts, but work together to forge our future.

I would be fibbing if I didn't admit that this was a Command challenge, but it was one that was of the utmost importance, and one that everyone leaned in to. To the extent, that through the artistic prowess of LCpl Peek (Sniper Platoon), the Company was able to design and agree on its' new emblem. Containing the eagle and purple from the



The conference room

Essex Regiment, the sniper rifles from the Sniper Platoon, and the proud 'recce tree' from the Reconnaissance Platoon, the Company now have a unique brand to galvanise under.

With help from the Essex Regiment Museum, and thanks to the relentless work of CSgt Vine (CQMS), we established company offices which the Company were proud to call their own. Complete with its own social area and a newly named Essex Regiment Conference Room.

In quick succession, after the re-organisation, the Company deployed for two months onto Op LAZURITE, Defence's fourth priority. An extremely important task, concerned with the relocation of Afghan refugees to the UK, it required empathy, patience, and humility.

The Company performed outstanding, receiving several awards and making an unmeasurable difference to families that supported our campaign in Afghanistan. Deployed across three



Painting provided by refugee



Salamanca Day



1st Battalion



sites stretching from Crowborough to Chepstow.

Subsequently, following a brief spell of leave, the Company deployed for three months on Op INTERFLEX, Defence's highest priority. The Company performed exceptionally. Faced with a daunting task of providing training to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the Essex Vikings displayed their professionalism, soldiering capability, emotional intelligence, and instructional skills.

It is without doubt the Ukrainian soldiers deployed back to the front line better prepared. Finally, to celebrate the end of Op INTERFLEX, and the hard work of the Company, Salamanca Day provided an opportunity to remember the legacy and share each other's company. An exceptional model built by the Reconnaissance Platoon set the scene, and the presence of the Salamanca Eagle

made it an evening to remember.

Following a welcome Summer Leave, the Company finally deployed on the event it had been planning since Jan 24; the Light Close Reconnaissance Patrolman's Course (LCRPC) and the Sniper Operators Course (SOC). Its' first opportunity to progressively train and test its' soldiers over 11 weeks.

Furthermore, it was a first as it was not just for the Vikings, but for the Field Army. Containing students from across 11 Brigade, 7 Brigade, Army Special Operations Brigade, and Bosnia in Herzegovina. It was an opportunity to determine who met the high standard, and those who did not, and those who were ultimately suitable and unsuitable to serve in these specialist capabilities. In summary, it is through these cadres that the Company set the foundations for going forward. It is only through the hard cadres that the Company, and

its' platoons, can ensure it contains the highest quality of soldiers and builds credibility.

Although this may seem a lot, there were plenty more events that took place! Deployments to Bosnia in Herzegovina, Romania, and the Republic of North Macedonia. Sports and Adventurous Training expeditions to Nepal and France.

Private soldiers completing courses such as the Anti-Tank Cadre, the Tactical Intelligence Foundation Course, and promotional courses. All of this to improve the capability and morale within the Company.

I will finish as I began. The Company has been pushed hard but has done it with a smile and humility. I could not be more proud of what they have achieved, and I have no doubt they will continue to excel, building on the impeccable legacy reputation of C (Essex) Company.

Sniper Operator Cadre 2024

This year, the Sniper Platoon, took charge of delivering the Sniper Operator Cadre (SOC), an intensive eight-week course that pushed potential snipers to their physical and mental limits.

It was run as an 11 Brigade cadre, including soldiers from the 1 Royal Anglian, 2 Royal Anglian, 3 Scots, 3 Rifles, and 3 Ranger. We also welcomed three snipers from the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, following an autumn partner-force sniper package ran by a four-man team in Bosnia.

This Cadre tested not only technical skills but also physical endurance, resilience, and mental robustness. Snipers operate in small teams, and their skill set must reflect the highest standards of precision, stealth, and independence. This year's SOC lived up to its reputation as one of the toughest courses in the British Army, with each candidate striving to earn their sniper badge.

The Cadre Breakdown

The SOC was divided into six distinct phases, each focusing on key sniper skills: shooting, observation, judging distance, camouflage and concealment, navigation, stalking, and sniper knowledge. Here's how the Cadre was structured:

Phase One: Technical Foundations

The Cadre began with a week dedicated to the skill-at-arms behind the sniper rifle. Students learned the fundamentals of marksmanship, weapon handling, and precision shooting. This phase was crucial in ensuring that all participants had the technical foundation needed for the challenges ahead. The importance of perfecting trigger control, breathing, and sight alignment cannot be overstated; every shot counts, and the smallest error can make the difference between success and failure in a real-world scenario.

Phase Two: Navigation Week

Navigation is a cornerstone skill for any sniper, requiring not only map-reading ability but also the capacity to move undetected across hostile terrain. This week took place on Salisbury Plain, where students honed their navigational skills.

The vastness of Salisbury Plain provided the perfect setting to challenge candidates, taking them across difficult terrain, often in adverse weather conditions. By the end of the week, all participants were up to the high standard required to move forward in the Cadre.

Phase Three: Live fire in Sennybridge

Moving to the rugged landscape of Sennybridge, weeks three and four marked the live-fire phase of the course. This is where the students' shooting skills were truly put to the test. Sennybridge is notorious for its challenging terrain





1st Battalion



and unpredictable weather, making it an ideal environment to simulate real-world operational conditions.

Over these two weeks, students practiced live-fire drills, engaged targets at extended ranges, and learned how to operate under pressure, ensuring that they could effectively engage enemy forces in any situation. Shooting accurately under stress is a defining skill of a sniper, and this phase tested each candidate's ability to remain calm and focused under fire.

Phase Four: Skills Consolidation

Following the live-fire package, the Cadre shifted to the Catterick Training Area for two weeks of consolidating the sniper skills learned so far. Here, the students delved deeper into observation, judging distance, static map reading and mastering the art of camouflage and concealment.

The terrain in Catterick, though different from Sennybridge, offered its own set of challenges, forcing students to adapt their skills to different environments. Whether it was blending





into dense shrubland or remaining undetected in open terrain, each sniper was pushed to refine their techniques.

Week Five: Badge Test Week

Perhaps the most anticipated and demanding part of the Cadre was the badge test week. This phase brought together all the skills learned so far, with students being assessed on their proficiency in the seven key sniper skills. These tests were designed to ensure that only those who met the high standards required of a British Army sniper would pass.

The tension during this week was palpable, as each candidate knew that one small mistake could mean the difference between earning their sniper

badge and being sent home. It was a gruelling week, but one that truly separated the best from the rest.

Week Six: Final Exercise

The final week culminated in a comprehensive exercise designed to push the students to their absolute limits. This exercise tested not only their technical and tactical skills but also their mental and physical endurance. Snipers are often required to operate for long periods, under intense pressure, and with limited support.

The final exercise simulated these conditions, challenging the candidates to demonstrate their ability to function effectively in a high-stress, high-stakes environment. It was the ultimate test of

whether they had what it takes to operate as snipers within a battle group.

Summary

The 2024 SOC, delivered by C (Essex) Company's Sniper Platoon, was a resounding success. It was an intense and arduous eight weeks. For those who earned their sniper badge, the achievement marked the culmination of weeks of dedication and resilience.

The Cadre not only tested the physical and technical abilities of the students but also demanded mental robustness. In an ever-evolving operational landscape, these newly qualified snipers stand ready to serve the British Army in one of its most vital and challenging roles.



1st Battalion

Op LAZURITE

Lieutenant Wansbury, OC 10 Platoon

C (Essex) Company's year started busy as always. Still covering the task of being the United Kingdom's Standby Battalion (UKSB) providing Government assistance if needed; on the 8 Jan 24 it conducted a hand over from 3 Rifles of Op LAZURITE. The first Warning Order (WngO) had come less than one month prior, which gave just enough time to understand what output was needed.

Op LAZURITE is a military support task to enable the relocation of Afghan Entitled Persons (EPs) from Pakistan to the UK under the existing Defence Afghan Relocation and Resettlement (DARR) process. These are individuals and families who helped the UK Afghanistan campaign in varying ways. At the time, it was estimated to be a 6-8 month task, however nearly a year later, Op LAZURITE is still in full

swing. 1 Royal Anglian was instructed to cover three Reception, Staging and Onward Movement (RSOM) sites for two months. C (Essex) Company were allocated Crowborough Camp in East Sussex, ran by Lt Wansbury and Chickerell Camp in Weymouth, ran by WO2 Murphy. Our small teams of soldiers provided Real Life Support (RLS) by managing the reception and processing of the EPs. Due to the pace



of the operation and it being only one month old, this was a simple job, but a complex task. C (Essex) Company had to be adaptable and learn quickly.

Daily Life

Once we had collected our allocated EPs from Stanstead Airport, they fell into the routine of daily life at the RSOM sites. The RLS team were frequently employed to help with anything that enabled the smooth running of those sites. Our soldiers found themselves collecting donations from local charities Picture 1 – C (Essex) Company Soldiers returning from collecting church donations for the EP's, taking EPs to hospital appointments and collecting prescriptions Picture 2 – C (Essex) Company Soldier assisting EP's with a medical appointment, delivering post, assisting with safeguarding, manning a 24/7 helpdesk, and running a free shop for the EPs among many other more random tasks.

Essential to the running of RSOM sites were the supporting teams and agencies who C (Essex) Company integrated seamlessly with. Linguists were there 24/7 to assist us. They were very passionate about helping and were





1st Battalion



an invaluable asset, without them, we would not have been able to be effective. Additionally, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) helped EPs apply for Universal Credits, the NHS provided drop-in clinics two times a week, and Mears were contracted to fulfil social worker roles.

Going Above and Beyond

With no prompting, from day one, C (Essex) Company strived to improve the process and experience for the EPs at their RSOM sites. The Mayor of Crowborough, Matthew Street, remarked after his visit, "I must admit, I was impressed with how [C (Essex) Company] set up operations so well and so quickly". Picture 3 – Lt Col Beales and Lt Wansbury with Matthew Street (Crowborough Mayor) and Natalie Whittle (Crowborough Deputy Mayor) after their visit to RSOM Crowborough.

Key to the Company's success was

their constant liaising with external agencies. Through this effort they were able to provide entertainment such as music workshops, cultural days out, and visits from the Fire and Rescue Service as a fun educational activity for the children. Picture 4 – East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service visit with cadets to RSOM Crowborough for Child EPs entertainment.

Not only did the Company organise entertainment, but it also tried to set the EPs up for success with their new lives. It sourced free sim cards, clothing, and toys from local charities, and signposted EPs to numerous support groups. Additionally, it arranged for the Police speak to all new arrivals to welcome them and explain how the UK Police operated. Picture 5 – East Sussex Police introduction to UK Laws and engagement piece for a newly arrived family of EPs. English lessons were started for the children with a qualified

teacher, and 'life lessons' with the Site 2IC introduced the adults to the customs of their new home.

Conclusion

The number of EP's processed by C (Essex) Company was in the hundreds. All the soldiers who made up the RLS teams went above and beyond what was required from them and showed maturity and compassion throughout.

The positive feedback and gratitude from the EPs on how C (Essex) Company had looked after them meant a lot to those involved. EPs and agencies alike both expressed how they felt comfortable to bring us their problems and queries and confident in our ability to find timely solutions. Although not our usual business as an Infantry Battalion; it was recognised that we had delivered exceptional results and transformed both RSOM sites from where we inherited them.

Light Close Reconnaissance Patrolman's Cadre (LCRPC) 2024

by Capt Will Bagnall, OC Recce

Introduction

This year C (Essex) Company have delivered the LCRPC. Its' aim was to qualify students with the Reconnaissance Patrolman qualification, enabling their employment on exercise and operations within the Reconnaissance Platoon. Uniquely, this cadre was delivered to students from across 11 Brigade, not just 1 Royal Anglian.

This offered an excellent opportunity for Viking soldiers to meet, and learn from, their peers in from 1 Irish Guards and 3 Rifles. Furthermore, it was a chance for discussion between the instructors about the employment of the Reconnaissance Platoon in 11 Brigade and on the modern battlefield, sharing lessons learned from Op INTERFLEX, recent deployments, and 1 Royal Anglian's Concept of Employment (CONEMP).

The Cadre was set over four distinct phases: navigation on Salisbury Plain, live firing in Sennybridge, fieldcraft in Catterick, and capped off by a joint field training exercise (FTX) with the Sniper Platoon and A (Norfolk) Company. It was a tough learning experience, but progressive, with the intent of creating



Pte Tarallo conducting the IA drill on an Individual Close Quarter Battle Lane

the most effective Reconnaissance Patrolmen possible, for success on operations and overseas exercises in Kenya in 2025.

Phase One: Navigation

The navigation package was delivered on Salisbury Plain, an area unfamiliar to

most students, and deliberately so. It was to be a true test of their navigation, not their memory of a well-used training area (looking at you Sennybridge!).

The week was broken down following a 'crawl, walk, run' approach. Starting with instructor led navigation, progressing to navigation by day and



The students of the Light Close Reconnaissance Patrolman Cadre prior to deploying on Final Exercise



1st Battalion

finally progressively harder night navigation exercises, without any night vision aides. The students, notably the Vikings, performed exceptionally well with 80% of the students passing their summative assessment.

Pte Norman commented “It was great to have the time to really practice and improve my navigational ability, I wasn’t completely confident before, but now I feel like I’ve got it.”

Phase Two: Live Firing

The live-firing phase, based in Sennybridge, focused on the Immediate Action (IA) drill and the Break Contact drill. The package culminated with 6-man contact drills. Students mastered these, including with the addition of GPMG and with simulated casualties. Pte Smith shared, “It was incredibly satisfying to bring the gun to bear, allowing the team to bound safely while I suppressed the enemy position.”

Phase Three: Tactics

The tactics phase in Catterick covered Observation Posts (OP), Close Target Reconnaissance (CTR), and “lead-in” rehearsals. Each element reinforced key reconnaissance skills, including establishing covert OPs and setting the conditions for Company and Battle Group offensive actions. A (Norfolk) Company joined for “lead-in” training,



Pte Wong firing through cover on the individual battle shooting range

enhancing the training by providing a manoeuvre unit for the Platoon to train with.

Phase Four: Final Exercise

The Cadre was capped off by a combined final exercise that saw the Platoon cover a total of nearly 20km split into three missions over seven days.

On the first mission, students advanced through the night to reconnoitre a farm complex, recommending a company attack. A (Norfolk) Company successfully executed the assault,

capturing additional intelligence that set up mission two—a raid to capture valuable enemy commanders.

The final mission involved coordination between OPs, Apache helicopters, and A (Norfolk) Company to clear enemy from a valley. The Platoon established OPs to understand enemy positions, then provided recommendations on how best to employ Snipers and the Apache to clear the enemy from the valley. The Platoon then lead A (Norfolk) Company into the attack before echeloning through them to clear the final position.

Cpl Taylor reflected on his leadership role: “As Patrol Commander, it was my responsibility to brief the Commander on terrain, enemy positions, and the best course of action. I then led the assaulting Platoon into position ahead of the attack.”

Summary

Following the LCRPC the Battalion saw the newly qualified reconnaissance soldiers receive their Reconnaissance flash from the commanding officer. The Platoon are now ready for deployments and exercises in 2025.

Furthermore, it has formed relationships across 11 Brigade for the delivery of LCRPC, which I am sure will endure, honing the capability of the Reconnaissance Platoons in our new Advance Force role.



Pte Black completes a static navigation exercise

D (Cambridgeshire) Company

Overview

Major J Hayhurst and Warrant Officer Class 2 A Stearne

This past year has been a transformational journey for the Coy, marked by unique challenges, growth, and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

Each Operation and deployment has forged us into a stronger, more cohesive team, showcasing not only our adaptability but also our dedication. Including Ex HAKA STORM, Op LAZERITE, Op INTERFLEX, Machine Gun Cadre and FELAGI, an SFA activity, in Bosnia and Herzegovina as I write this.

Our move back to the UK from Cyprus began with the deployment to Kenya on Ex HAKA STORM where we immersed ourselves in rigorous training, adapting to the demands of a new environment. This experience sharpened our war fighting capability and broadened our perspectives,

and reinforced our readiness under challenging conditions playing enemy in support of the Grenadier Guards Battle Group.

The transition to SFA was a pivotal step, redefining our approach to teamwork, leadership, and tactical support. This shift required our Coy to adapt new methods, demonstrating flexibility and professionalism at every turn.

Op LAZERITE saw us embark on a challenging task spread across 3 different sites around the UK. Throughout the Op we overcame unforeseen obstacles and demonstrated an impressive level of administrative skill. Similarly, Op INTERFLEX tested our resilience and readiness, demanding teamwork and cooperation with allied forces. This phase highlighted the excellent teaching

skills of our JNCOs and depth of knowledge across the Coy.

Further enhancing our technical skills, the machine gun cadre conducted in Brecon equipped our teams with specialist competencies that have become integral to our collective operational and war fighting capability. This training not only expanded our skillset but also exemplified our commitment to continuous learning, ensuring that we remain prepared for the demands of the future.

Our current deployment to Bosnia and Herzegovina builds on these experiences, presenting new challenges that allow us to apply our skill, adapt, and partner with a foreign nation. While we undertake an Infantry Skills package for the AFBiH.

Operation INTERFLEX: Training the Armed Forces of Ukraine

Capt Paul Phillips, OC MG Platoon

As the United Kingdom continues to support Ukraine amid ongoing hostilities, the 1st Battalion played a critical role in Operation INTERFLEX—a multinational training initiative aimed at enhancing the skills and resilience of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU).

The second tranche of training delivered by the battalion D (Cambridgeshire) Company, supported by C (Essex) Company from April to July 2024, we were tasked to train the next generation of Ukrainian soldiers with vital battlefield skills and manoeuvre warfare military tactics.

The main task for our sub units in Training Delivery Unit 1 (TDU 1), based in Stamford Training Area (STANTA) near Thetford, was to train

the three key leadership courses: The Section Commander's Battle Course (SCBC), The Platoon & Company Sergeant's Battle Course (PCSBC) and the Platoon Commander's Battle Course (PCBC). These varied in length from 6 to 11 weeks, focussing on training AFU soldiers in basic fieldcraft, marksmanship and their leadership abilities.

The ongoing conflict in Ukraine has underscored the need to train the AFU beyond just getting the basics right, especially focussing on trench warfare and drones. Both C and D Companies prepared to deliver these essential lessons, honing their skills in trench combat tactics and drone operations through a rigorous Pre-Deployment

Training package put on by our training wing, headed up by Sgt Maj Ben Page.

Trench warfare, once a relic of past conflicts, has become a pressing skill for Ukrainian forces. C and D Companies delivered vital training which included trench warfare exercises, enhanced by tactical vignettes derived from recent AFU experience.

These exercises simulate real-life combat conditions, challenging troops to move, manoeuvre, and communicate in complex trench environments. By recreating the conditions that AFU soldiers face daily, this training prepares Ukrainian troops for both the psychological and physical demands of modern trench warfare.

Drones have transformed how



1st Battalion

military operations are conducted, providing invaluable intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities.

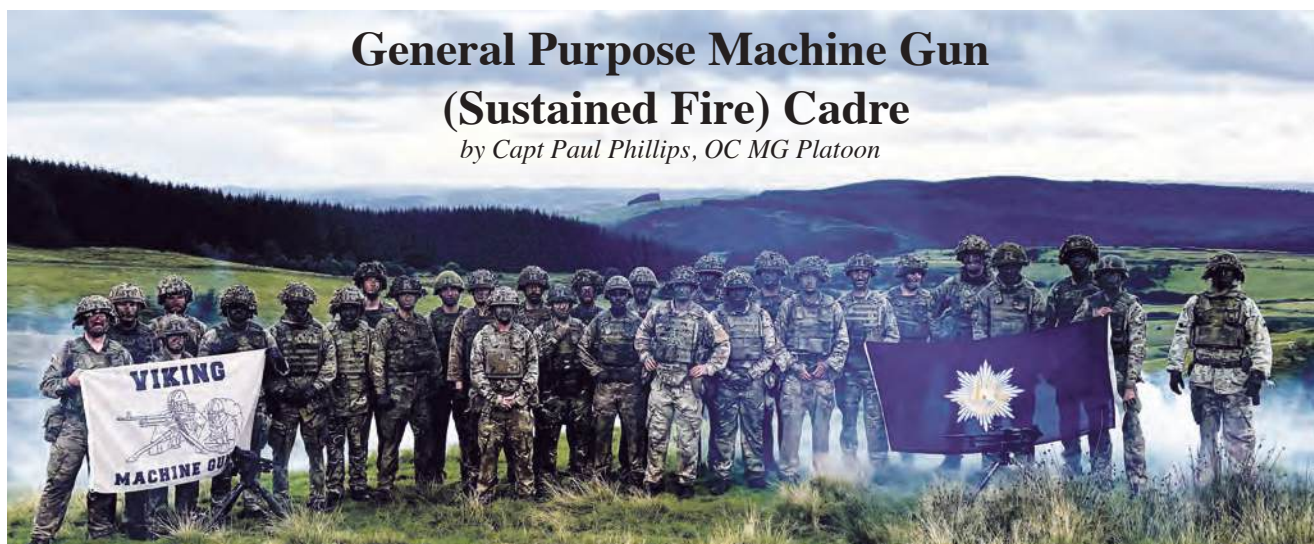
Recognizing this, C and D Companies have invested significant time in mastering the variety of drones available to us, which have proven effective for both ISR missions and simulating enemy unmanned aerial systems (UAS). The troops undergoing this training will gain skills in drone

operation and aerial surveillance, making them invaluable assets on the battlefield. These exercises offer situational awareness that could provide Ukrainian soldiers with a significant edge in future engagements.

The 1st Battalion's involvement in Operation INTERFLEX is emblematic of the UK's commitment to supporting Ukraine and highlights the importance of allied cooperation in security force assistance missions. By working

alongside soldiers from countries like Australia, Denmark, Finland, Kosovo, Romania, and Sweden, the soldiers of C and D Companies contributed not only their teaching skills but also built relationships that reinforce our global security networks.

Many of the AFU soldiers trained throughout this tranche of Operation INTERFLEX have gone straight back to the front line to fight the invading Russian forces.



General Purpose Machine Gun (Sustained Fire) Cadre

by Capt Paul Phillips, OC MG Platoon

In the rugged terrain of Sennybridge, Wales, soldiers from the Machine Gun Platoon of D (Cambridgeshire) Company, 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment conducted their GPMG (General Purpose Machine Gun) SF (Sustained Fire) Cadre.

This is a vital skill that empowers these soldiers to provide both direct and indirect fire support for the battlegroup. Over the past month, they have undertaken intensive training to sharpen their skills and endurance to prove themselves as competent Gunners and Controllers.

Phase One: Skill at Arms

The cadre began with the Skill at Arms phase at Kendrew Barracks, where participants took their first step into understanding the complexities of the GPMG in its sustained fire role. This phase laid the groundwork for every subsequent exercise, with soldiers focusing on mounting and maintaining the heavy tripod-mounted machine gun system.



Troops move across the ground tactically with SF Kits approaching the gun line

For many, this initial training introduced them to the C2 sight, a specialized piece of equipment designed to help Gunners and Controllers accurately align their fire onto pre-recorded targets. The sight is integral to achieving the sustained, accurate fire expected from the machine gun platoon, up to 1800 meters for direct fire and map-predicted fire accuracy out to 2.5 kilometers.

Phase Two: Offensive, Defensive and Enabling Actions

After completing the skill-focused sessions at Kendrew Barracks, the company moved to Sennybridge Training Area (SENTA). Here, soldiers were faced with one of the cadre's most demanding aspects: carrying and operating the GPMG in a blank firing exercise.

The weight of the weapon itself, combined with a heavy tripod and the 800 rounds of 7.62mm link each soldier carries creates a demanding weight to carry. This weight, along with the demanding Sennybridge terrain, forced soldiers to confront the physical challenges associated with being part of the Machine Gun Platoon.

In this phase, the platoon drilled on tactics, applying the theory they had learned and adapting to the unique needs of the machine gun platoon. This included practicing communication, coordination, and positioning techniques to maximize their fire support capability. They rehearsed scenarios and tactics, ensuring each soldier could manage the complexity of movement, communication, and precision required.

Phase Three: Live Fire on C Range, SENTA

The final phase of the cadre was a true test of both skills and resilience: live firing exercises on C Range, Sennybridge. With live rounds in the weapon each soldier was tested through the Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (ACMT) for the GPMG (SF). This rigorous assessment is a challenge that requires pinpoint accuracy and composure under pressure, as soldiers put their newly acquired skills into practice.

Beyond the ACMT, soldiers



GPMG being fired in the SF role

participated in additional live firing scenarios that required precision and teamwork, further developing the skills and confidence necessary to fulfill their role in the Machine Gun Platoon. These sessions, marked by heavy recoil, gunfire, and concentration, were a culmination of their efforts over the preceding weeks.

The Final Test

To bring the cadre to a close, soldiers faced one last formidable trial: a grueling 3-mile run carrying the GPMG SF Kit up the steep and unforgiving X Range

hill in Sennybridge. This test demanded sheer physical grit and mental fortitude.

Those who successfully completed the cadre are now set to be officially badged as qualified machine gunners.

This cadre will enable the Machine Gun Platoon of D (Cambridgeshire) Company to serve as a critical support element for the 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment. With their newly acquired expertise, these soldiers stand ready to provide essential fire support on future deployments.



1st Battalion

HQ Company

Minden Day



The colours on parade



The CO brings the Vikings to attention

The Vikings



HQ Company dig in during the tug-of-war





1st Battalion

Sport

Battalion Carp Fishing team

by CSgt Dixon

I started out the year wanting to set up a fishing club within battalion, it had been achieved before and I knew it could be done. However, it was working it around the busy schedule of battalion. I identified some time and booked the day in. The response was well received and across battalion I had a total of 12 soldiers who were interested. From there, I organised the day's fishing for a total of 24 hours at Norton Disney.

On the day of the event, we had a total number of six soldiers. Fishing is a great opportunity for team bonding and is a team cohesion event. It is also good for mental health. At the event itself we had soldiers from battalion I didn't know, but got to know throughout the 24 hours and bonded with well over the fishing.

Pte Richardson was the first soldier to be blessed by the carp gods and managed to land an 18lb carp. He then went on to have another two fish. His swim he chose was fishing well, later throughout the day other soldiers tried different tactics but unfortunately didn't manage a bite. CSgt Dixon managed to grab a blank-saver at the end of the 24 hours as well.

Going forward with carp fishing in battalion it is an excellent opportunity



to bond and work on team spirit and mentally get some rest from some of the more difficult taskings that we must complete. I would like to grow the sport within the battalion and recruit more

people and gather kit to support newer members within battalion. I have a future ambition to organise more events and, hopefully, organise a trip into Europe with the battalion.

Army Motorcycle Road Race Team

WO2 Watts and Pte Warren-Goode

The 2024 racing season proved to be a milestone year for WO2 Watts as his relentless pursuit to excel in the sport of motorcycle racing led him to achieve one of his goals for the 2024 race season which was to compete at the front of the Premier 1000 championship.

Early on he became a title contender in one of the most competitive championships competing against seasoned professionals and rising

stars of the sport. WO2 Watts showed consistency and speed at each race meeting which ultimately secured his spot at the top of the standings in 2024. WO2 Watts stated that his key to success was his ability to adapt to track conditions and having a great feeling with his machine.

His triumph did not stop there. The interservice championship is a highly contested series between military

personnel from all three services, WO2 Watts displayed total domination by winning every single one of the seven races to be crowned the 2024 Interservice champion which helped the Army team bring home the team title in 2024.

Pte Warren-Goode has had an incredible debut season racing with the Army Motorcycle Road Race Team. From the moment he first took to the track it was clear that the Army team



Photos by Camipix Photography

had unearthed a gem. His raw talent combined with unwavering commitment to the team set him apart from his peers.

Over the course of the season Pte Warren-Goode consistently demonstrated a blend of natural speed and talent whilst competing on machinery that was not quite up to that of his competitors.

He has firmly established himself as a formidable competitor with the Army Motorcycle Road Racing Team. His exceptional rookie season has been nothing short of remarkable, earning him the prestigious Loz William Trophy for the most developed rider of 2024. This prestigious award recognizes not only his on-track accomplishments but also his dedication to the team.

His rookie season has set a strong foundation and the Army team eagerly anticipate what he can do in 2025.





1st Battalion

1 Royal Anglian Ski Team

In mid-December 2023, a team of Vikings deployed to Val d'Isère, France, on Ex FROSTED BLADE 38 for five weeks of skiing competition. The team, consisting of Lt Harry Browne, 2Lt Joe Bagnall, Cpl Cole, Cpl Simmons, LCpl Fuller, Pte Barton, Pte Armitage and Pte Ibrahim spent four weeks training on the slopes before a week competing on the A and B hill.

This took some of the team from complete novices to skiing technical races in Slalom, Giant Slalom, Super-G and Downhill. This is a tremendous achievement for only 4 weeks of experience.

The training was intense, with the soldiers focusing on improving their speed and technique in downhill skiing. They spent their days navigating challenging slopes and learning from experienced instructors to prepare for the final week of competition.

When race week arrived, the

team performed well. The A Slope team placed well, despite being a man down due to injury, with Lt Bagnall standing out placing 2nd overall in the junior category. His performance in the divisional races at Les Contamines earned him a spot in the Army Championships.

Outside of skiing, the team took full advantage of the culture side of Val d'Isère, enjoying both the slopes and the après-ski scene in equal measure. The Vikings returned home with a great experience under their belts, having made the most of their time in the French Alps and achieving solid results in the military skiing leagues.



Waterskiing and Wakeboarding

2024 has been another good year for both the Viking Wakeboarding team and the Infantry Wakeboard and Water-Ski team. Since the unit move back to Kendrew Barracks from Cyprus the Viking team has conducted regular team training on a Wednesday sports afternoon at BoxEnd Park (BEP), in Bedford. The improvement and standard of riding has improved massively due to this.

Sgt Fines has taken over the reins as Viking team captain and also joined the Infantry Wakeboard and Water-Ski Association (IWWA) as media IC. Since taking over these roles Sgt Fines has been pushing the sport hard not just within the Battalion but also Infantry wide. The Viking team rode really well at this year's Infantry Championships which was held at BEP, showing some true Viking grit and determination. However, unfortunately we couldn't retain last years IWWA championship





1st Battalion



Capt Lee Estwick and the team

tile and had to settle for a well-deserved 2nd place.

Sgt Fines and I were selected to ride as part of the Infantry team at the Army Championships this year, which saw the team take to the podium finishing 2nd to a very good Royal Engineer team. This the best result the Infantry has had since the sport became recognized by the Army.

I was also lucky enough to Caption the Army boat and cable Men's Wakeboard team at this year's Inter Service Championships, which was a fanatic honour.

Being the IWWA Chairman has put me in a brilliant place to be able to see the positive impact this sport can have on service personal, both mentally and physically. The plan for the remainder of the year and next year is to carry out some focused Battalion team training. I'd love to see more Battalion riders being selected for the Infantry team and even the Army team.

If you're interested, please reach out to Sgt Fines or myself, we would love to see more Vikings on the water.



1 Royal Anglian Golf



CSgt Lake, AGA Stableford Winner, Belton Park Golf Club



CSgt Lake and Cpl Strong, 3rd place R Anglian pairs competition, Burghley Park Golf Club

The Vikings Golf society has had a busy and successful year. There are 28 regular players. The majority of these are social players but those that attend competitions have either won or been very close.

The events attended have been the Royal Anglian Spring, Summer and Autumn meets, multiple Army Golf Association (AGA) and Eastern Regional Golf (ERG) events and the Infantry Championships held in York.

CSgt Lake submitted a LEIF bid

of £12000 for a golf simulator (think DCCT but for golf) that was successful and has now been installed for all of Kendrew Station personnel to use. This has been a big hit.

Cpl Louis Strong won the ERG Division Two event held at Elton Furze and the AGA Stableford Competition held at Belton Park. Due to his consistent contention at ERG events, he was selected to represent them at the Inter Regional Golf Competition.

CSgt Lake won the Royal

Anglian Golf Championship held at Wensum Valley and came 4th in the Stableford Competition at the Infantry Championships.

CSgt Lake and Cpl Strong came 3rd in the Royal Anglian pairs competition held at Burghley Park.

A lot of effort is going into building the participation in official competitions. The golf professional at Greatham Valley has established group coaching sessions for the Battalion which is due to start soon.

Battalion Football

Since arriving back from Cyprus, the Battalion football team has seen a significant change due to personnel leaving but mostly the formation of now the regimental team. This year the regimental team has entered the Lincolnshire Services Association Football League as well as the midlands

Cup. So far, we have conducted preseason and understanding the new structure and with both teams joining together to understand how each other plays and what we want to come from the team.

During this process both battalions have great representation

with the infantry football team and coaches have been selected for the Army Female development squad. We hope this carries on into the future and we are sure that the regimental team will do well with the steadfastness and ability to adapt after the changes throughout this first season together.



1st Battalion

The Royal Anglian Regimental Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Team



The Royal Anglian Team, placed 1st as overall team

In a groundbreaking development within the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) community, two formidable teams, the Vikings and the Poachers, have amalgamated to form a new powerhouse: the Royal Anglian Regimental Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Team. This merger signifies a union of talent, strategy, and determination, poised to make a mark on the global BJJ scene.

The journey began with rigorous training sessions that brought together the distinct styles and techniques of both teams. For several months, members have been working tirelessly, honing their skills and building camaraderie. This period of intense preparation culminated in the launch of an intensive

training camp at the beginning of October.

The training camp was not just about refining techniques; it was an all-encompassing experience, designed to prepare the team physically, mentally, and strategically for international competition. With a clear focus on unity and excellence, the Royal Anglian Regimental BJJ Team embarked on a remarkable journey across the Atlantic to Texas.

In Texas, the team engaged in a week of concentrated training, visiting various gyms and learning from renowned athletes in the sport. This immersive experience allowed the

team to immerse themselves in diverse styles and strategies, gaining invaluable insights from the best in the field. The climax of this Texan expedition was their participation in the Austin Open Championships, an international BJJ competition that draws top talent from around the globe.

Here, the newly formed Royal Anglian Regimental team showcased their prowess. Their participation was a testament to their dedication and the seamless integration of two once-separate entities. The team members, each bringing their unique strengths to the table, demonstrated a remarkable level of cohesion and skill.

The Royal Anglian Regimental BJJ Team made an impressive mark at the Texas Austin Open Championships. Demonstrating exceptional skill and teamwork, the team secured a total of 12 medals, with four standout golds among them. This remarkable achievement not only highlighted their individual talents but also their cohesion as a unified team. Their collective effort earned them the prestigious overall team trophy, underscoring their dominance at the competition and establishing them as a force to be reckoned with in the BJJ world.

As they return from their successful campaign in Texas, the future looks bright for the Royal Anglian Regimental BJJ Team. Their formation marks the beginning of an exciting chapter in the world of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, one that promises innovation, competition, and the pursuit of excellence.



The Team training at Sheepdog Response with Tim Kennedy



Royal Anglian Podium 1st Place Pte Reynolds, 2nd place Pte Ryan, and 3rd place Maj Sanders



2nd Battalion

I write this foreword having been in command of the Battalion for four months and as you will see in the articles that follow, the soldiers and officers of the Poachers have once again enjoyed an extraordinarily busy and productive year.

Prior to taking command in August, I watched and listened, and the Second Battalion were front and centre, and indeed on the Main Effort, as the spearhead battlegroup of the UK's land contribution to NATO. The last 12 months has been dominated by this role – the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (Land) – VJTF(L) which amongst other things, saw the battlegroup deploy to Poland on Exercise STEADFAST DEFENDER as part of a 12,000 strong NATO exercise. This saw 850 members of the Poachers battlegroup deploy 280 vehicles, 3000km across Europe. A mammoth effort that showcased the battalions Light Mechanised Infantry (LMI) capability. As I reflect upon the Bn's return from Dhekelia in 2019, its conversion to LMI with tough deployments to Ops CABRIT 9 (Poland, 2021), NEWCOMBE (Mali, 2020-21) and TORAL 11 (Afghanistan, 2020) en route, I now see the fruits of everybody's labour as 2 R ANGLIAN presents itself as a highly competent, credible, and tough war-fighting Mechanised Infantry unit. I am proud to be in command.

In the summer the Poachers battlegroup deployed to Salisbury Plain on Ex WESSEX STORM role-playing the enemy, also known as Taskforce Hannibal. In this role we gave the 1st Battalions of the Scots Guards and Royal Yorkshire Regiment a good run-out over several weeks of hard graft. Our soldiers' mastery of our Foxhound and Jackal vehicles was evident. We learnt a great deal and are currently shaping our own WESSEX STORM that we will participate in next year where the Scots Guards will be our enemy – we understand that they're keen for a rematch!

In July, I took over command from Lieutenant Colonel Ben Hawes just after the Battalion had marched off the square for the Talavera Day parade. Here the Lord Lieutenant of Rutland had

From the CO

Lt Col Jeff Bennett-Madge



given a rousing speech underlining the importance of the Poacher contribution to NATO on the world stage. She directly thanked our families and wider veteran community for the tremendous role that they all play in supporting our soldiers when they are deployed. We had a superb evening of festivities and fantastic entertainment that brought us all together. My sincere gratitude to CSgt Wes Ireland and his team for putting on such an excellent event. Also a big 'thank you' to our Regimental Headquarters who were very gracious in supporting us financially.

We have taken some time since the summer to focus on our basics, giving each Company the space to set the foundations for next year. We have been able to really concentrate on core infantry skills such as getting stronger and fitter, driving our vehicles, navigating, shooting, and communicating. I have been particularly impressed with the spirit in which the teams have gone about their jobs. Our team is determined to continue the journey that the Battalion has been on, to learn and improve, and to

show the Army again that the Poachers are the 'go to' unit for Light Mechanised Infantry expertise. This autumn we have completed arduous and rewarding Section and Platoon level training in Garelochhead, Brecon and Germany, as well as completing some excellent marksmanship training too. The Battlegroup Headquarters has also been ramping up its planning and execution skills deploying on Ex CERBERUS, a Divisional-level Command Post Exercise commanded by Maj Gen Olly Brown, a former commanding officer of the Poachers. We have also conducted a series of 'joined-up' training exercises in the UK with our full battlegroup headquarters, including our Artillery, Engineer and Medic attachments.

Since the 1st Battalion returned from Cyprus last year, we have begun to realise the benefits from being able to forge closer links. One of the initiatives we have pursued is the forming of Regimental sports teams. On the football pitch, the team has so far won their first three games of the season in the Lincolnshire Services League, considered one of the best military leagues there is to play in. Amongst many stars, I'd like to publicly name LCpl Zach Crawford who continues to play for the Army team – he is a great ambassador for the Regiment. The growth of our Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (BJJ) squad has been equally impressive. We have 15+ Poachers who train regularly on the mats, flat-packing each other on a weekly basis; hats off to WO2 (CSM) Chris Roffe, CSgt Nick Foley and Cpl Lou Myburgh all from HQ (Rutland) Company for their endless enthusiasm. The Regimental combat centre in Kendrew Barracks that hosts the BJJ mats and the boxing gym, has its own space dedicated to the medals that have been won by the team. Recently the team travelled to Austin Texas, led by OCA (Lincolnshire) Company Maj Josh Sanders, where they proved themselves

on the other side of the Atlantic. This, combined with their performance at the English Opens in November added 16 medals to the team's count. I'm delighted to report that the Poachers Inter-Company Boxing competition held in November was a resounding success. Capt Gav Williams, Sgt Aron Walker, and their team all did an amazing job. 11 hard fought bouts were watched by an audience of more than 500 which included friends and sponsors of the Regiment who have been so generous to us. C (Northamptonshire) Company were overall victors. Of special note, Officer Commanding C Company, Maj Andy Lucas, fought and won his super-heavyweight bout in the finals displaying tremendous leadership, skill, and bravery. The best boxer of the night was Pte Gracey of B (Leicestershire) Company who displayed outstanding skill and tenacity as he won his welterweight bout.

The professional and personal development displayed by our people remains as impressive as ever. Dozens of promotions have been earned by hard-working and high-performing soldiers. The battalion-run potential junior non-commissioned officer cadre was a huge success, and we have recently seen nearly 50 soldiers earn their first stripe. LCpl Jack Leenderts D (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) Company led the way as top student on the Poacher cadre and follows in some very distinguished footsteps.

Within this busy schedule we have even managed to conduct adventurous training (AT), getting hundreds of soldiers away to Wales during September and October where they participated in a multi activity package that has been really rewarding. I am really clear that nothing trains physical courage quite like AT, and I'm sure you'll agree that the skills needed by an effective infanterie match across directly to well-planned and arduous AT expeditions. There is more to follow here too. Next year, we'll be skiing, scuba diving and mountaineering across Europe – all with the aim of getting soldiers out of their comfort zone, growing their leadership presence, and growing our

own instructor base. Heroic efforts from 2Lt Adam Bevan and Sgt Callum Wiles in bringing all this together!

As we look forward to 2025, the Poachers will continue to learn, develop, and train to deliver a hard and capable Battalion, ready to fight and win. We will build on our solid foundation and start to

ramp up the complexity and challenges we face, to peak in a Battlegroup level test exercise in June and July 25. I am excited to really test ourselves in well designed and resourced training events. The prize for our validation is the prospect of deploying on operations. We will be ready!

From the RSM

WO1 (RSM) Dale Miller

My first few months in role as The Poachers' Regimental Sergeant Major and I couldn't be prouder, an absolute honour and privilege to hold such a prestigious position in this fine Battalion. The Poachers are impressive and deliver in spades, time and time again, whether that be as individuals, or a collective.

As we reach the end of another year, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on the accomplishments, challenges and growth we've experienced throughout 2024. It has been a year marked by dedication, resilience, and camaraderie, and I am immensely proud of what The Poachers have achieved together.

I would regret not taking the opportunity to acknowledge the recent and significant loss of Cpl Shaun 'Robbo' Roberts, he was a remarkable and exceptional soldier who embodied what it was to be a proud Royal Anglian. I know the thoughts of our Battalion and wider Regiment are with his family through this difficult time.

This year, we were held at 48hrs Notice to Move (NTM) as part of Very High Readiness Joint Task Force Land (VJTFL) and as part of Op LINOTYPER, deployed on Ex STEADFAST DEFENDER. This deployment saw a rehearsal of the Polish National Defence Plan and a forward deployment by 7 LMBCT into blocking positions. Our Very High Readiness was maintained for a period of 6 months prior to being able to take leave again in the summer.

Concurrent to our High Readiness commitment prior to summer leave and on return from Ex STEADFAST DEFENDER, the Battalion delivered a



JNCO Cadre and deployed individuals, small teams and subunits on various tasks, these included support to Ex WESSEX STORM as both enemy and G4, the Freedom of Uppingham Parade, Talavera Day and not to mention an outstanding Regimental 60th Anniversary at Duxford during summer leave.

After spending some quality time with family and friends on a thoroughly deserved summer leave, it was back to work; conducting numerous subunit training exercises, a Battalion led AT package and JNCO Development. All the while preparing for Inter Company Boxing, which saw soldiers from across the Battalion training extremely hard for an opportunity to represent their Companies, exemplifying the Poachers' fighting spirit and every soldier stepping into the ring had it in abundance.

A huge shout out to all of the coaches who gave blood, sweat and tears turning



2nd Battalion

your average Saturday night kebab eater into a steely eyed dealer of death. The standard was phenomenal and probably the best I've seen at this level over the years. B (Leicestershire) Company were victorious in our previous Inter Company Boxing competition back in 2022 however bragging rights this year went to C (Northamptonshire) Company, very well done.

The Regimental Boxing Team have also been working hard in the margins of inter-Companies, preparing for Army competitions next year.

Sport is a huge part of Battalion life, it builds team cohesion and provides both

physical and mental fitness ultimately contributing to operational effectiveness. We have seen great success this year with soldiers representing not only the Battalion and Regimental teams but also Corp and Army in the following areas; football, rugby, BJJ, boxing, cycling, volleyball and fishing to name just a few.

The coming year will bring new challenges as the tempo continues to increase, this will present continued opportunities for individual and collective development. Our focus in the short term being firmly on re-validating as a high-performing Battlegroup on Ex WESSEX STORM and remaining a first

choice Unit to the Brigade. Post summer leave next year sees D Company preparing and deploying on Op CABRIT with the remainder fulfilling commitments to Op INTERFLEX. These opportunities, whilst increasing operational effectiveness and lethality will test our mettle but I am confident we will meet these challenges head on.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the families and loved ones who support every one of us, without your continued support it would make operating at the forward edge of Defence all the more challenging.

A (Lincolnshire) Company



A Company boxers after their fights

It's time to reflect on the notable achievements and events that have defined the past year for A 'Lincolnshire' Company. Despite facing diverse challenges across various terrains and scenarios, A Company has demonstrated unparalleled resilience, versatility, and dedication, making significant contributions to multinational defence efforts, and improving their own skills.

The year commenced with A Company's participation on Op LINOTYPER, a NATO initiative held from January to March. The soldiers embarked on a 300km+ journey, driving from the camp through Germany to Eastern Poland. This exercise was recognised as the largest military manoeuvre in Europe since World War Two. The experience not only honed their tactical and force projection skills but also their interoperability in a

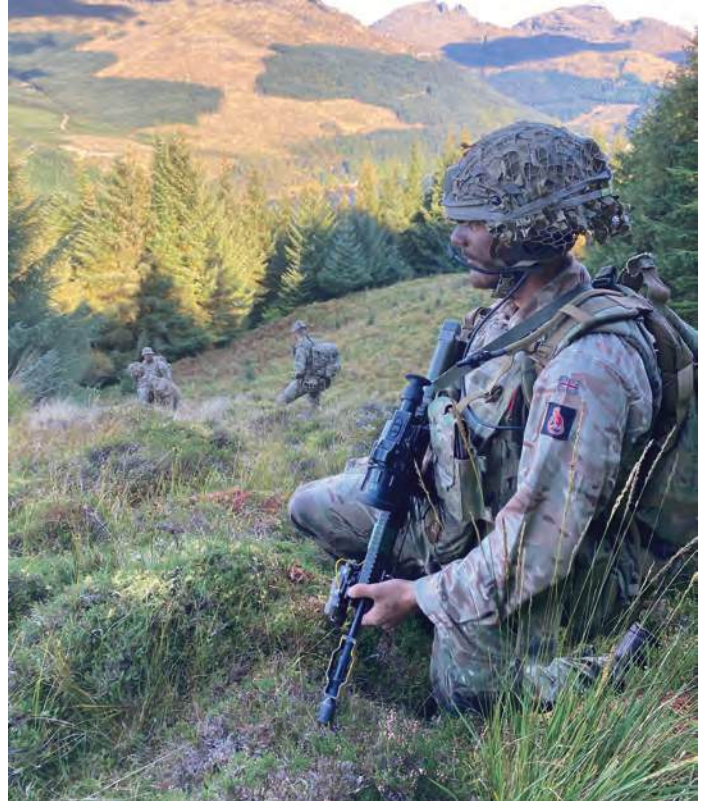


A Company soldiers conducting BJJ to improve their close quarter combat skills

The Poachers



Cpl Jack Finnigan directing soldiers when conducting CPERS after a position had been cleared



A Company soldier observing his arcs before a hasty section attack Pte Adcock

multinational theatre.

In June and July, A Company highlighted their tactical ability during Exercise WESSEX STORM on Salisbury Plain. In this exercise, they played the role of the enemy, a critical task that requires cunning strategy and adaptability. This role was challenging, providing our soldiers with a unique perspective on tactical operations by simulating adversary tactics, thereby enhancing our combat readiness and tactical thinking.

September brought the challenge of Garelochhead, Scotland, on Exercise IMPS HAMMER where the focus shifted to mastering section and platoon tactics in arduous, mountainous terrain. A Company embraced light role tactics, moving away from their usual reliance on Foxhound vehicles. This exercise enhanced their lethality, combat fitness and improved their teamwork working under physical and mental stress. October saw A Company embracing the rugged beauty of the UK's landscapes, embarking on Adventurous Training



A Company soldiers integrating with the Polish armoured battalion in Poland. Pte Coia and Pte Chi



2nd Battalion

(AT) and navigation training first in the Snowdonia mountains and then the Lake District. These excursions were not merely for improving individual navigational skills; they were opportunities to foster teamwork, and a chance to enjoy some more relaxed weeks away from the uniform.

On Thursday, 14th November, four members of A Company, who had made it into the company boxing finals, represented the company in some impressive fights. The evening opened with our own Pte Disha boxing in the youth category and winning his fight. Pte Johnson boxed in the welterweight category; although he unfortunately did not win, he put up an impressive fight against his opponent, Pte Gracey. Later in the evening, Pte Matthew fought Pte Holness from B Company.

This made for an epic fight, with some exceptional comebacks from both of them, seeing Pte Matthew secure the win. They won the best fight of the evening. The evening wrapped up with Pte Merritt of A Company bravely taking on Maj Lucas, Officer Commanding of C Company. Despite not winning, he put up an impressive resistance against a very capable boxer.

Ptes Matthew and Andrew have been selected for the Battalion Boxing team, and Pte Disha will continue to train alongside them over the coming months for further youth fights. We look forward to seeing them all box again and wish them the best of luck.

Throughout 2024, A Company has exemplified the ethos carried forward from their forbearer Regiments. Whether on international exercises, mastering the basics or boxing in the ring, the soldiers of A Company have consistently risen to meet each challenge with excellence and determination.

As we look forward to 2025, A Company is ready to take on any challenge with a smile on every soldier's face.



The Fighting Third

B (Leicestershire) Company



B Company practise combatives in Fight Club



B Company hones the art of trench clearance



Maj Simon Cox, OC B Company, leads his Company on an attack on Op LINOTYPER



2nd Battalion



The Lord Lieutenant inspects B Company



Sgt Dom Ward-Mansfield and WO2 (CSM) Johnny Herring on the Freedom of Uppingham Parade

C (Northamptonshire) Company

by Capt CW Johnstone, 2IC



7 Platoon on a Polish Leopard

C 'Northamptonshire' Company has been kept busy throughout 2024, having service personnel deployed in five different countries and on tasks in every month of the year.

January started with the company renewing its competency in Life Fire Tactical Training in Wales (Photo, Pte Baker Pistol) as final preparation of taking over as the spearhead NATO Battlegroup and deployment to Europe. This was followed by an epic drive through Germany to Poland as part of Op LINOTYPER where C Company took part in a unique training opportunity with NATO allies. The highlight of this for the company was a joint live attack with Spanish Leopard Tanks and Armoured Infantry supported by Air and Artillery assets, a rare opportunity for any UK Forces.

On return to the UK, C Company took on a number of enjoyable taskings most notably acting as the hunter force for UKSF Selection in Scotland. Alongside this elements of the company were responsible for helping deliver the Cadet Exercise Ex WYVERN TOR in Dartmoor and taking part in a variety of courses. We also managed to fit in some fantastic experiences for C Company personnel, visiting parliament (Photo 2, C Company at Westminster) at the invitation of our local MP and an element travelling to Spain to take part in a Battlefield Tour of Talavera, the Northamptonshire's premier battle honour.

The summer saw the majority of the company deploy back onto Salisbury Plain to act as enemy for the Royal Yorkshire Regiment and Scots Guards,

another excellent opportunity to train against our peers and understand the tactics of potential adversaries. At the same time a small team deployed to The Gambia as part of the ongoing commitment to grow a peace support capacity within The Gambian Armed Forces (Photo 3, The GAF Training School with the C Company Training Team).

This training focused on empowering The GAFs own Training School to deliver a training programme that can pass the UN validation standards for working alongside the organisation and its allies on the continent. The end state saw the GAF elements involved in the training being given deployable status to work with ECOWAS on a future deployment.

Post a well-deserved summer



2nd Battalion



Cpl Wolfenden coaching on the pistol ranges



A C Company soldier using the HK416 on the range



Pte Jonathan Baker perfects his pistol shooting



Making friends with the crews of Spanish Leopards

The Poachers

leave period the company has started its journey towards its validation on Ex WESSEX STORM in 2025. This has allowed us space to work on new skillsets such as a week to develop our trench clearing skills and having personnel attend courses such as Unmanned Aerial Surveillance. There have also been more opportunities to take part in training with our close allies with a section deploying to France to work with the 152nd Infantry Battalion.

This training allowed C Company personnel to use French weapons and communication equipment and both countries understand each other's tactics and operating procedures further developing ties that were initially forged by A Company last year.

C Company is now looking at a period of training building up from sections acting in a light role context on Sennybridge Training Area before mounting back up in our Foxhounds and heading to Salisbury Plain. A good chance for our soldiers to refresh their infantry skills after a high intensity period.



C Company push through the night to cross a river in small boats



Vistula River crossing, Poland



2nd Battalion



Parliament



Gambia

D (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) Company

by Capt JFG Rice, OC Mortars

D 'Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire' Company have had an incredibly busy 2024. Highlights include deploying on Op LINOTYPER, Mortar Platoon Cadres, operating as part of TFH on Ex WESSEX STORM and focusing on promoting and qualifying our personnel.

2024 began with the Poachers Battlegroup adopting High Readiness (@ R1) as part of NATO's spearhead battlegroup. This brought some fantastic opportunities for soldiers, new equipment to trial and an opportunity to deploy on Op LINOTYPER, demonstrating our ability to project force across Europe at short notice. For soldiers in D Company, this offered a chance to operate alongside our NATO

partners as well as take part in some challenging training, the highlight for the company being an opportunity to conduct live firing on some of Poland's vast training estate.

On return from Op LINOTYPER, the Company enjoyed some well-earned leave before final preparations took place for the first of the Support Weapons Cadres. The 2024 Mortars Cadre ran in May between Brecon and Salisbury Plain. It was an opportunity to help prepare soldiers soon to take part in promotional courses as well as qualify new people who had recently arrived from the Rifle Companies. The cadre was run alongside soldiers from the Vikings and 2 Yorks. In total, 16

new Mortars Numbers were qualified, all of whom were able to experience the lethality and effect of Mortars on the final weeks Live Fire Package.

Shortly after the Mortars cadre finished, D Company deployed a large number of soldiers in support of Ex WESSEX STORM as part of Task Force Hannibal (Enemy Forces) and as exercising troops. It was a fantastic opportunity to showcase the knowledge, skills and professionalism of our soldiers as well as demonstrate what effect support weapons can have on the battlefield. All of those who took part in the exercise came away with the understanding of and confidence in D Company as a battle winning asset.



Dawn attack in Poland



2nd Battalion



Mortars live firing at night

Following TFH, D Coy enjoyed well-earned leave and the first time off @ R1 in 2024, allowing soldiers to travel outside of the UK and explore more exotic locations!

On return from summer leave

preparations began in earnest for Recce, Anti-Tank and Machine Gun Support Weapon Cadres running in January and February 2025. This would provide a fresh group of qualified soldiers to join D Coy in the build-up to Ex WESSEX

STORM and Op CABRIT. Op CABRIT is arguably the highlight of the FOE for us and an opportunity for soldiers to work alongside the Americans as the FSP Coy attached to a Light Cavalry Battlegroup.

STIRLING
TIMEPIECES



***HANDCRAFTED
TIMEPIECES - DESIGNED
AND DEVELOPED WITH THE
END USER IN MIND.***



***BUILT BY
SOLDIERS FOR
SOLDIERS***



2nd Battalion

HQ Company

Following an extended period of summer leave, owing to our @R1 throughout the first half of 2024, members of the BGHQ deployed on Ex CERBERUS 24 in Sennelager, Germany.

This was a multinational exercise, designed at validating the various Bde HQs within the warfighting construct of 3(UK)XX, including our own Bde HQ, HQ 7 LMBCT, the Desert Rats. Whilst the Bde HQ deployed into the field for the exercise, the BGHQ deployed as LOCONs, with the aim of receiving and executing Bde Orders in order to increase the realism of the exercise.

In order to best support the Bde HQ, four members of the Bn had the opportunity to work within the Bde HQ. I deployed as SO3 G5, working within the team responsible for creating the Bde plans on receipt of Divisional Orders. Capt Stratton deployed as the Bde Battle Captain, CSgt Ferguson as the Bde WatchKeeper, and Cpl Ward as the IM SNCO.

The Bde HQ deployed onto the training area to conduct a Reception, Staging and Onward Integration (RSOI) package. This included the establishment of the deployed HQ, moving the Bde HQ, and integration of the different departments, namely Plans, Execute and Alt HQ. Over the next 48hrs the Bde HQ were set to begin Ex CERBERUS. We re-deployed to

simulate arriving in theatre and received our first set of Orders, a 300km March to set for offensive Operations. Movement calculators and maps at the ready, the Plans team strapped in for its first 12hr planning cycle outside the comfort of a classroom environment. Following completion of the planning cycle, the final product was handed over to the Execute Team, and orders delivered to the units within the Bde. This included a Rehearsal of Concept (ROC Drill), and a well received care package from the Bn Ops Officer (consisting of Dairy Milk, Maoams, Ground coffee and some fresh fruit). Almost immediately, the next Orders from the Division dropped, and so the Plans team, armed with fresh maps and a selection of brightly coloured pens produced the next plan.

The Bde HQ is the lowest level at which a HQ is able to plan and execute concurrently, owing to the size of the teams within it. This means that they are able to keep the tempo, and ensure that we are able to capitalise on successes on the battlefield. It also meant that I had no opportunity to share out my delivery of Dairy Milk and coffee with the other departments – but I suppose it's the thought that counts.

After a week on exercise, the decision was made to maximise the training opportunity to the more junior members of the Bde HQ. This saw me

switch to the Alt HQ, and Capt Stratton transition from Alt HQ to the Main execute CP. Whilst with the Alt HQ, we were tasked with developing Command Post (CP) survivability on Operations.

Led by Maj Heaton, the Alt HQ conducted a planning cycle on what we wished to achieve, and decided that we should focus on the urban area, both residential and industrial. We then deployed to a disused ammunition compound, which we viewed as an underground car park for the purposes of the exercise. Following 3 days of living 'underground' and longing for day light, we sent a small recce party to the urban training area, to establish a second HQ in a building. The move was a welcome one, as we saw sunlight for the first time in a number of days, until of course we boarded up the windows of the new HQ location to increase our survivability!

Once the exercise was completed, the staff had the opportunity to relax in the nearby town of Paderborn for an evening, sampling the Schnitzels and beers the town had to offer prior to writing up the findings of our CP survivability experimentation.

Overall, the exercise was a fantastic opportunity for members of the Bn to understand the Bde HQ, whilst developing their own skills prior to deploying on future exercises and operations in 2025.

Behind the Lines:

HQ Company's Crucial Role in Supporting the Poachers

While much of the focus this year has been on the front-line operations of the 2nd Battalion, Royal Anglian Regiment (the Poachers), it is the unseen but essential work of HQ Company that has kept the battalion operational and successful.

As the backbone of the unit, HQ Company has coordinated logistics, communications, and administration across a variety of challenging

environments during their pivotal role in NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF).

HQ Company's efforts were critical during the Poachers' deployment for NATO's Exercise Steadfast Defender, one of the largest military exercises since the Cold War. The exercise involved extensive logistical challenges as the battalion travelled thousands of kilometres from Germany to Poland,

supported by HQ Company's planning and execution. Whether managing vehicle movements, maintaining supply chains, or ensuring operational coordination across multi-national units, HQ Company was central to the smooth deployment of the battalion.

In complex environments such as the dense forests and urban training grounds of Poland, HQ Company played a critical role in maintaining

communication between battalion elements and allied forces. These areas posed challenges for signal transmission and coordination, but HQ Company ensured seamless integration, enabling smooth tactical operations with allies from Spain, Turkey, and Poland during the battalion's woodland and urban warfare training.

During amphibious operations like the river crossing on the Vistula, HQ Company's logistical planning ensured that every element of the battalion—vehicles, personnel, and supplies—was ready to meet the demands of this highly complex exercise.

The crossing tested NATO's ability to project a brigade across major obstacles, and the success of this mission

was due in large part to HQ Company's meticulous preparation.

As the battalion operated under NATO command, HQ Company also managed key administrative tasks, such as personnel support and operational reporting. Their work ensured the battalion was ready to adapt to rapid redeployment scenarios, a hallmark of their role within the VJTF. This included coordinating with allied HQ elements to align the battalion's efforts with NATO's overarching objectives.

While the soldiers on the front lines of Exs BRILLIANT JUMP and POLISH DRAGON gained recognition for their tactical prowess, the work of HQ Company remained in the background—essential but often unnoticed. Their

ability to provide seamless support in challenging conditions enabled the Poachers to deliver on their mission objectives and maintain the high standards expected of a NATO spearhead battalion.

As the Poachers' year of readiness comes to a close, the contributions of HQ Company stand as a testament to the importance of strong support structures in military success.

Their expertise and dedication have not only strengthened the battalion but also reinforced NATO's collective defence capabilities. For HQ Company, this year has been a masterclass in operational excellence, demonstrating that behind every great battalion stands an exceptional support team.

The Light Aid Detachment's Role: A Showcase of Dedication and Skill

As the new year dawned in January 2024, the Light Aid Detachment (LAD) of the 2 Royal Anglian Regiment was already entrenched in preparations for their pivotal role in the NATO Reactionary Force (NRF) during Exercise STEADFAST DEFENDER 24. Achieving beyond an impressive 90%

vehicle availability was their mission, accomplished through relentless dedication, extended hours, meticulous inspections, and efficient repairs.

The deployment for STEADFAST DEFENDER commenced with a challenging journey from Marchwood via Abingdon. Despite facing numerous

vehicle breakdowns, the LAD's swift roadside solutions ensured that equipment was delivered on time and operational. Once overseas, the various Fitter Sections of the LAD, including A, B, D, and the Recovery section, were instrumental in maintaining the battalion's operational effectiveness.



Unified Efforts and Key Contributions

The LAD's unified efforts were crucial in ensuring the success of the exercise. They upheld exceptional equipment availability by often working into the late hours under demanding and arduous conditions. Their focus on maximising equipment readiness and participating in Live Firing Tactical Training (LFTT) demonstrated their adaptability and readiness in a complex multinational environment. Their expertise in maintaining critical weapon systems and platforms such as the Foxhound and Jackal was essential in preparing the battalion for live-fire exercises and cross-national manoeuvres.

The Recovery Section showcased exceptional skills in vehicle recovery and maintenance during road moves and river crossings, collaborating seamlessly with NATO allies. Their ability to



2nd Battalion



quickly address repair needs during the convoy from Germany to Poland further highlighted their commitment and technical proficiency within different environments.

Multinational Collaboration and Cultural Engagement

Exercise STEADFAST DEFENDER offered an unparalleled opportunity for multinational collaboration. The LAD participated in river crossings and

combined arms manoeuvres alongside German, British, French, and Polish forces. These interactions not only enhanced military capabilities but also strengthened the bonds between NATO allies.

The exercise concluded with a thorough equipment inspection and rehabilitation phase before the return journey to Gdańsk, which also allowed for cultural exchanges, including visits to local historical sites and landmarks.

Through unwavering dedication and technical prowess, the LAD underscored their vital role in maintaining 7X readiness and operational success within NATO's Very High Readiness Joint Task Force. The LAD's efforts highlighted the importance of teamwork and resilience in modern military operations, setting a high standard for future multinational exercises.

Light Aid Detachment's Role in Task Force Hannibal: A Tactical Triumph

Throughout June and July 2024, the LAD of 2 Royal Anglian Regiment took on a pivotal role in Task Force Hannibal during Exercise WESSEX STORM. Tasked with providing first-line Equipment Support (ES) and force assistance, the LAD played the opposing force (OPFOR) against the 1 Yorks, Scots Guards, and Scots Dragoon Guards Battle Groups, supporting the 7 LMI BCT in NATO's Allied Rapid Force (ARF). Operating at high readiness, the LAD focused on maintaining a sanitised fleet of Foxhounds, Jackals, and weapon systems. The fast-paced battle rhythm kept everyone on their toes, but the challenge was embraced wholeheartedly on the Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA).



Tactical Engagement and Maintenance Mastery

Throughout the exercise, the LAD was involved in maintaining the battalion's weapon systems, covering ranges from the SPTA back area. They participated in a memorable tactical exercise, simulating an attack on the HQ element of the Scots Dragoon Guards. This involved a strategic insertion and intense blank firing exchanges, providing a unique experience of being captured and held as prisoners, only to be released hours later.

During breaks between serials, the LAD provided Equipment Care (EC) lessons to fitter sections, familiarising them with weapon systems and vehicle platforms.

This cross-training was reciprocated as the LAD assisted Vehicle Mechanics (VMs) with various tasks, from passing tools to participating in Foxhound pod lifts. Conducting sanity checks and preventative maintenance before each serial helped avoid faults and ensured operational readiness upon returning to Kendrew Barracks.

Final Assault and Cultural Engagement

The LAD played a significant role in the final attack at Copehill Down, a purpose-built village for training. Despite a robust defence with a GPMG, the opposing forces swiftly overcame their position. The experience offered valuable insight into infantry operations and was a highlight of the exercise.

Despite being confined to Rolleston Camp and SPTA, the unit maintained physical training and, after weeks of hard work, enjoyed some downtime in Salisbury. Cheering on England in the Euro 24 final, the camaraderie and shared laughs over a few beers marked the culmination of a demanding but rewarding exercise.

This period not only cemented skills as an Armourer Class 1 but also broadened engineering knowledge and enhanced fieldcraft abilities. The experience on Task Force Hannibal during WESSEX STORM will be fondly remembered as a significant and positive chapter in a military career.





2nd Battalion

The Nijmegen Marches 2024

by Pte Ameyaw

A team of 10 members from 2 R ANGLIAN SPS Det and CIS PI participated in the 106th Nijmegen Marches in July 2024. The Nijmegen March is a four-day event held in Nijmegen, Holland, where military and civilian participants march 30-50 kilometres per day. There are tens of thousands of walking and marching enthusiasts from all over the world who participate. Mental resilience, stamina, and discipline, as well as a commitment to the values and standard of the British Army are all pre-requisites for the British contingent. In addition to the physical challenges, the Nijmegen March serves as a significant platform for military diplomacy and cultural exchange.

Each member of the team is required to carry kit weighing a minimum of 10 kilograms, which makes the task more challenging and rewarding.

Day 1 – Fresh Daisies

The first day, also known as blue Tuesday, was the most anticipated day as the team looked forward to commencing the march with excitement and enthusiasm. In full kit, at 03:30 the team were ready to begin a march of 27 miles with official rest stops every 7-8 miles for water, food, and medical care. Before passing go every military team must pay their compliments to the Saluting Officer of the day. The march began with some incredible views

from the Waal bridge, which spans the Rhine and the Waal rivers. The day also featured several historical sites, such as Operation MARKET GARDEN and Sunset March. The team finished the day with little fatigue, and some blisters.

Day 2 – Memorial Sites

Day 2 was set aside as a memorial for flight MH17, Wijchen and Beuningen due to historical reasons. At 05:00, the team set off with kit on a 23-mile march. In the beautiful land van Maa en Waal region, the march began with polder landscapes before crossing Wijchen's festively decorated market square. The team managed to motivate each other despite being tired and a little sore.



2 R ANGLIAN Team taking a rest



Cpl Panton and Cpl Palmer soaking their feet



The 2 R ANGLIAN team, march completed, after receiving their medals

As my body was still adjusting to the distance, the second day's march was the most challenging for me.

Day 3 – The Steep Hills

Day 3 was challenging and interesting, as it tested soldiers' courage, determination, mental resilience, and leadership skills. The route covered seven steep hills, along with a river crossing and totalled 25 miles. At this point fatigue was rife but the team pulled together to look after each other. We took more regular breaks to rest in the heat and keep on top of the many blisters that were appearing. The route captured several historical sites including Malden of (17 Sep 1944),

Mook (the layout of the British war cemetery), and Groesbeck.

Day 4 – The Final March

At 03:00, despite pain, blisters, and fatigue, the teams gathered to set off for the last 28 miles. The excitement was tangible across Camp Heumensoord. It was encouraging to see so many of the local people line the streets to cheer for the marchers.

There were friendly greetings, waves, music from sing-along to dance, free drinks, snacks, and as many high-fives as you could muster. Reaching Charlemagne field where the medals were presented was exhilarating.

Through endurance, teamwork and commitment, the team had successfully completed the 100 miles of the Nijmegen Marches.

The medal - Dutch monarchy, HRH king Willem Alexander awarded the Vierdaagse Cross as a symbol of British military professionalism after the march.

The 106th Nijmegen Marches highlighted the importance of fitness, mental resilience, and teamwork in military life. It was an unbelievable experience and a true honour to see diverse cultural displays, military ethos of different countries, and to receive such a warm welcome from the people of Nijmegen.



2nd Battalion

Adventure Training

Ex DRAGON POACHER in Snowdonia National Park

2Lt Adam Bevan, OC 1 Platoon



Clear summit on Snowdon, the highest peak in Wales (1,085m)



A (Lincolnshire) Company enjoying views from the top of the Glyderau range. (From left: Pte Wilson, Pte Jeffers, Pte Lofty, Pte Buckenham, Pte Wilkinson, Pte Gbeze)

More than 120 soldiers from across the Battalion completed adventurous training in North Wales over a period of five weeks through September and October. Based out of Capel Curig Training Camp, soldiers embarked on a physically demanding programme that included summiting the iconic peaks of Snowdon and Moel Siabod, as well as navigating some of the region's toughest mountain bike trails.

The training package was designed to push soldiers beyond their regular duties, focusing on resilience, endurance, and team cohesion, essential qualities for any operational environment. The overarching intent was to educate, enthuse and inspire soldiers of the 2nd Battalion to engage in an adventurous training discipline, and where appropriate pursue foundation-level and instructor courses. Held in the rugged landscape of Snowdonia National Park, the troops encountered an array of challenges—from harsh weather



Views of the Snowdon Horseshoe from the Pyg Track



2nd Battalion



HQ (Rutland) Company Mountain Biking on the Marin Trail (L to R: Pte Crowson, Cfn Watson, Pte Francis, Pte De Meyer, Pte Agyei Agyemang, LCpl Ford, Sgt Garrod, Pte Ives, Cfn Sudlow)

conditions to arduous terrain—that tested both their physical limits and mental fortitude.

The highlight of the training was the ascent of Snowdon, the highest peak in Wales at 1,085 metres. Despite unpredictable weather, soldiers successfully tackled Snowdon's steep inclines, rocky terrain, and rapidly changing conditions, summiting via the Pyg and Miners tracks. For most, this was the first time they had summited Snowdon.

For some, it was the completion of their National Three Peaks “bucket list”. The week also gave troops an opportunity to climb Moel Siabod, another challenging mountain known for its scenic ridges and panoramic views, which required solid navigation skills and teamwork to conquer.

In addition to hillwalking, the troops engaged in extensive mountain biking on the region's renowned trails. Navigating rugged forest tracks and steep downhill paths, exercising troops demonstrated

their adaptability in handling unfamiliar terrain and dealing with the physical strains of high intensity cycling. An introduction to core skills was delivered on camp before deploying to the Marin Trail and Coed Llandegla Forest to put their new skills to practice.

Maj Andrew Lucas, OC C Company and Unit Adventurous Training Officer (UATO), commented on the exercise: ‘Adventure training is a crucial element of soldier development. It takes them out of their comfort zones and builds key skills such as leadership, teamwork, and resilience.

‘The terrain of North Wales provided the perfect environment to challenge our soldiers in a way that simulates the stresses of combat.’

The soldiers also received lessons in navigation, risk management, and leadership, all set against the challenging backdrop of the Welsh mountains. This was supplemented by a chance visit to Llanberis Mountain Rescue Team for D Company soldiers, where they

learnt about incident management and emergency protocols in the mountainous environment. These skills not only enhance personal development but also contribute directly to the operational readiness of the Poachers Battlegroup.

Ex DRAGON POACHER was part of a broader initiative within the Battalion aimed at reinforcing the physical and mental toughness of personnel. Adventure training, which includes mountaineering, cycling, and water sports, offers soldiers the opportunity to develop survival skills, decision-making under pressure, and confidence in austere environments. As the soldiers return to their regular duties, the experiences gained in North Wales will undoubtedly serve them well, whether in future training exercises or operational deployments.

The adventure training in North Wales proved once again that the Poachers stand ready to tackle any challenge with discipline, strength, and determination, wherever duty may call.

Royal Anglian Cycling Club (Racc)



Royal Anglian Team – Cat C Race. White racing kit. From right to left: WO2 Ray McCaughey, LCpl Young, Sgt Walker

This year has been an amazing year for the team. The Royal Anglian Cycling team have now amalgamated to Royal Anglian Cycling Club (RACC) combining all three Battalions to support

the wider regimental community.

The Team is broken in to three main areas, Road cycling competing in the Army Cycling Road race championships (ACRRS), Cyclocross championships

(CXARS) and mountain biking. This year started off with the Infantry Road Race Championships at Milton Keynes Bowl. The season started strong. Capt Chris 'Larry' Holmes coming first in the



Royal Anglian team: from left: WO2 Tanner, LCpl Dolling, Padre Maj Ben Norton, LCpl Young, WO2 Ray McCaughey and Sgt Aron Walker



2nd Battalion



WO2 Dan Tanner first place York



LCpl Elliott Dolling Cat C third place finish Leeds

Cat C/B race with an exceptional ride. This is the prelim race for the Army Road race series. All the races are broken into ability and experience groups. Cat A being most experienced to Cat C being novice racers.

The Army Road race series started in earnest with Round 1 at Colchester sports complex. Padre Maj Ben Norton (Vikings) finished Top 10 Cat A, WO2 (DSM QD TT) Tanner 3rd in Cat B and LCpl Dolling and LCpl Rosendale Top 5 in Cat C and amazing effort considering this was their first ever race.

Army Cycling Road Race Series Round 2 was conducted in Hereford, this course was more like a BMX track, a complicated technical track one the riders had to adapt well to. Again, Padre Maj Ben Norton finished Top 10 Cat A, WO2 Tanner 4 in Cat B after a long stint in the break and LCpl Young top 4 Cat C and best result in 3 years, a massive improvement.

Army Cycling Road Race Series

Round 3 was conducted in York, this was a small attendance for the team due to deployments however WO2 Tanner won Cat B promoted to Cat A due to points accumulated in the previous races.

There was a small gap of no attendance due to work commitments. Then WO2 Tanner conducted Chase the Sun north as part of the Infantry Cycling Team. A double-century feat over an epic 200 miles leaving from the beachfront at Whitley Bay at the first ray of ocean sunrise aiming to reach the esplanade at Ayr to witness the (hopefully glorious) sunset into the sea beside the Isle of Arran.

A route full of stunning vistas, wilderness, heaths, rivers, lochs, castles and beaches, a challenge to inspire you when pedalling the longest day.

During the summer down period from racing the RACC supported the infantry cycling team organising the summer training camp in Kendrew Barracks and St' George's Barracks

Oakham. An awesome chance supported by Inf HQ to gain some very needed experience and mileage ready for the back end of the year races. There was a lot of junior members who managed to get a lot of mileage in.

After a well-deserved summer leave period the ACRRS started again, this time in Odd Down bath where WO2 Tanner and Capt Si Hale raced in the A race. A massive change in ability from B to Cat A. A special well done to LCpl Dolling and Rosendale again improving on their past results with top 5 finishes on a fast course.

Army Cycling Road Race Series Round 5 Bovington was another step up for LCpl Dolling who finished Second Cat C. LCpl Rosendale 3rd Cat C and LCpl Young 4th Cat C. A huge step up for the young lads. Army Cycling Road Race Series Round 6 saw Capt Matt Wilman attend his first race in Milton Keynes where amazingly he Won Cat C Race. Padre Maj Ben Norton as always



From left: LCpl Payne (Int Corps) Capt Wilson (Lancs) WO2 Tanner (Poacher) and Capt Rob Ferguson (PWRR)

smashing with another top 5 A Cat finish.

The final race of the season was the Army Road championship in Swindon, where WO2 Ray McCaughey smashed it winning Cat C Race with an amazing

sprint. Finishing off an excellent season for the team. Considering last season, the regiment only had two podium the team have improved massively and a well done to them all.

If you want to be part of the team please get in touch with WO2 Tanner Poachers, WO2 McCaughey (Vikings) and Cyclocross WO2 Matt Waters. Via the R Anglian App – Cycling group.

Officers' Mess

by Capt Matthew Wilman, SLIM

May 2024 saw the Poachers Officers and Warrant Officers travel to Spain for a Battlefield Study of Talavera and the Spanish Civil War, absolutely the highlight of the Mess year.

44 Officers and Warrant Officers flew to Spain and travelled to the Spanish town of Talavera to begin the week. The first day saw the group walk the ground that the Battle of Talavera was fought on in 1809. Guided brilliantly by Maj (Retd) Tom Dormer, we saw how the battle played out on the ground.

Joined that day by Brig Olly Brown

and Brig Guy Foden, the day finished with a formal dinner at a private venue overlooking the battlefield, which included the traditional drinking of champagne out of the Talavera Cup and the singing of The Lincolnshire Poacher.

The second part of the week saw us move to Madrid, where the focus shifted onto the Spanish Civil War. With this came a shift of focus from learning the history to learning from history. Groups of young officers would present at each stand and we applied our modern doctrine and tactics to the problems

faced by each side. Madrid also allowed us to experience Spanish culture at its finest, including bull-fighting and some visiting the Bernabeu.

May also saw a good proportion of the Officers' turn out to watch Lt Connor Mitchell play in the Army vs Navy fixture at Twickenham. Although Connor and the spectators warmed up separately and in very different ways, there was a good roar from the Poachers section as Connor's name and number were announced in the starting line up. The Army side struggled through



2nd Battalion



a tough first half, but some good plays in the second half and a last-minute try helped the Army come out on top. How much this has to do with Connor's half time substitution, we will never know.

This autumn bought the usual frivolities of Oktoberfest and the Officers' Club Dinner. Both saw a good amount of Poachers Officers' come together, past and present, to reconnect and enjoy each other's company.

As they say, home is where the Colours are, and 'home' is getting some much-needed improvement. With huge thanks to the Regimental charity, the Mess has been repainted and some on-going works to create a new bar area will bring the Mess at Kendrew Barracks up to a good standard. A new accommodation block will also follow in 2025. The current battle, though, remains the Officers' attempts at replicating the Wim Hof method as we continue to live without heat or hot water in the building.

2024 has led to a number of hello's and goodbye's in the Mess. Over the course of the year we have said goodbye to many officers, but most notably I must mention Maj Sam Payne and Capt James Heal – both lifelong Poachers that left the Army this year.

A great year for all, and the Mess is truly looking forward to everything that 2025 brings.



Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess

by Capt Matthew Wilman, SLIM

The last year has been a very busy, yet very productive period for the Poachers' Mess.

We have had several farewells and welcomes to the mess this year, but two very important days include the dine out of RSM WO1 Gavin Williams and farewell to Lt Col Ben Hawes, CO 2 Royal Anglian. A traditional send off for the outgoing RSM and welcome to the new RSM and his wife at midnight. For the outgoing CO, an all-round good night hosting the CO for a few beverages and presenting him with a farewell presentation from the mess.

At the start of 2023 we started with the planning to carry out several



The WOSM presentation to Lt Col Hawes



2nd Battalion



Officers' Mess v Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess cricket

refurbishments within the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess in Kendrew Barracks. The main bar has had a complete overhaul, now giving the mess a much more upgraded and warming feeling to the 'Arms Bar'. Upgraded flooring, lighting, bar details and seating areas. All this was complete by August of 23, when the Vikings moved to Kendrew Barracks. Now a shared mess, with corridors displaying various different displays varying from silver pieces, pictures on walls and presentations from previous mess members who have moved on. There are still some final refurbishments to be done in other parts of the mess, hoping for this to be complete by Dec 2024.

Members from the WOSM have over the past year, taken part in numerous parades. Such as; Talavera Day, The Freedom Of Uppingham as well as the 60th Anniversary of the Royal Anglian Regiment in Duxford.

On the 1st of Aug 2024 we had our annual Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' mess cricket match against the Officers mess. Last year the WOSM managed to beat the Officers mess comfortably, this year we were keen to hold on to this title. Unfortunately, it was not our year, and in the end the Officers Mess took the win. They will hold the trophy this time, but next year we plan to come back well prepared and with a team who will be up



WO1 (RSM) Dale Miller thanks the outgoing CO, Lt Col Ben Hawes, from the WOSM

The Poachers



The dining hall set up and ready for the dine out of WO1 (RSM) Gav Williams

for the challenge. Hopefully next year, the RSM (WO1 Miller) will manage to stay in for more than one ball. He would argue that his partner on the pitch was not clear on communicating when to run, his partner would argue differently.

With the Summer season now passed, we start preparing for the winter, and with this comes all the favourite mess events. Such as WOSM vs Officers mess football, boxing, games night, and the mess Xmas Ball before falling out for Christmas leave.

We had a very special weekend where for the first time in years we had the generations event which then went into an Oktoberfest event. Such a success and enjoyed by every mess member and their guests, that we hope it can be an annual tradition. A busy time for us all, but important that we all invest in and support the mess. Keep traditions alive and educate new mess members who join as junior Sgt's, or for those who are posted in and attached to 2 Royal Anglian, they are made to feel welcome within the mess.



The new and refurbished Arms Bar layout



2nd Battalion

Op LINOTYPER

Lt Jacob Peel, OC 5 Pl, B 'Leicestershire' Company



Capt Harry Di-Lieto watches as C Coy soldiers explore Leopards

The first few months of 2024 saw the 2 ROYAL ANGLIAN Battlegroup deploy to Eastern Europe. The Battalion deployed as the VJTF(L) under 7 Brigade initially to Germany. From there the Battlegroup began a vast road move from Northwest Germany all the way to Eastern Poland, this was known as Op LINOTYPER and part of NATO's Ex STEADFAST DEFENDER.

Whilst on this deployment, the Battlegroup stopped at various training areas; this included DPTA, Grupa and BPTA; at these locations we trained and integrated with our partner nations from NATO.

At the first training area, DPTA; the Battlegroup worked with Spanish, Turkish, Albanian, and Polish forces. Initially beginning with low level training, then working all the way up to a Battlegroup attack.

This also included a Distinguished Visitors Day led by B 'Leicestershire' Company. The Company was working with the Albanian army, this included storming a position in front of various media outlets and many VIPs. We later featured on the covers, of The Guardian, The Telegraph and The Financial Times.

After this phase of the deployment, the Battlegroup then moved to Grupa to

conduct a river crossing demonstration across the Vistula River. This saw us once again work with our NATO partners and exhibiting the proficiency and capability of the Battlegroup.

As soon as this phase was completed; the Battlegroup then deployed once more and completed another road move to Eastern Poland to Bemowo Piskie Training Area, which is close to the Suwałki Gap. On this part of the exercise, C 'Northamptonshire' and D 'Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire' Companies conducted LFTT. Concurrent to this, A 'Lincolnshire' and B 'Leicestershire' Companies were able



Crossing the Vistula River

to do more blank training with access to the FIBUA and FIWAF training areas.

As the deployment began to wind down, we were fortunate enough to

host and meet the Secretary of State for Defence, Grant Shapps as well as the Polish Minister for National Defence, Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz. During

their visit, elements of the Battlegroup put on a Distinguished Visitors Day for them and had the opportunity to listen to them make speeches and then chat



Sgt McConkey and Lt Rice get eyes on targets downrange during the CALFEX



2nd Battalion



Grant Shapps, the Defence Secretary, visits D Company in Poland

to them both afterwards. The day was a great success, and a great opportunity to meet them.

In summary, the deployment was an enormous achievement. The Battalion covered thousands of kilometres in

our vehicles and showed the ability of what can be done when working as the spearhead Battalion of the VJTF(L). For many it was the first time that they had deployed to Eastern Europe on exercise; and for nearly everyone involved, it

was the largest deployment that anyone had been involved in, with the absolute scale of service personnel and vehicles. It was a great opportunity for all those involved, and a significant amount of training was accomplished.

Exercise WESSEX STORM 3 23 – Task Force Hannibal Salisbury Plain Training Area

2Lt Adam Bevan, OC 1 Platoon

During a warm summer on Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA), the 2nd Battalion showcased its operational versatility over the course of an intense exercise where it played the role of the

opposing force, Task Force Hannibal (TFH).

This was in support of the WESSEX STORM 3 23 validation exercise for the Royal Yorkshire Regiment and the Scots

Guards, providing them with realistic combat scenarios to enhance their operational readiness.

With its varied terrain and expansive landscapes, SPTA served as the



Task Force Hannibal Foxhounds prepared and ready to deploy

The Poachers

perfect backdrop for this demanding exercise. The objective was to test the strategic and tactical capabilities of the participating units through a series of offensive and defensive serials. As TFH, the 2nd Battalion was tasked with employing guerrilla tactics, ambushes, and psychological operations to challenge the advancing forces.

The exercise was meticulously planned, with TFH utilising a mix of traditional and unconventional warfare strategies. This included setting up ambush points, employing rapid mobility, and leveraging the element of surprise to simulate real-world combat scenarios, and to facilitate the validation of both battlegroups. Soldiers demonstrated their proficiency in using both direct and indirect fire, while also integrating reconnaissance assets to gather intelligence on the enemy's movements.

Throughout the multiple serials, TFH's adaptability was tested. Troops were required to switch between offensive and defensive postures, simulating a fluid battlefield environment. This dynamic approach not only put pressure on the Royal Yorkshire Regiment and Scots Guards but also allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of their decision-making processes under fire.



Above and below: Permanent Range Team (PRT) supporting Live Fire Tactical Training (LFTT)



Company-level training ahead of deploying on the first mission as Task Force Hannibal



2nd Battalion



Task Force Hannibal deploying on a mission to delay enemy advance

The success of TFH was not merely about opposing the advancing units; it was about fostering an environment where all forces could learn and adapt. Informal feedback sessions after each serial, together with comprehensive After-Action Reviews (AARs) highlighted key areas for improvement, particularly in areas such as communication, command and control, and situational awareness.

For both the validating troops and the enemy taskforce, the experience provided invaluable insights into the complexities of modern warfare, particularly the need for agility in tactical thinking and execution. The rigorous nature of the exercise emphasised the importance of collaboration and cohesion among units, reinforcing the notion that success on the battlefield often hinges on effective teamwork.

The 2nd Battalion's role as TFH in this exercise was a critical component in validating the operational capabilities of the Royal Yorkshire Regiment and the Scots Guards. As the 7th Light Mechanised Brigade Combat Team (LMBCT) continually adapts to emerging threats and challenges, exercises like these are essential for ensuring that soldiers are prepared for

the realities of modern combat. The lessons learned from WESSEX STORM 3 23 as TFH will undoubtedly shape future training and operational strategies,

ensuring that the Poachers Battlegroup is prepared for our own validation in 2025, and remains a formidable force in any theatre of conflict.



Task Force Hannibal defending a FOB in Copehill Down Village on the final mission

Light Mechanised Infantry Capabilities

LMI Capability Castlemartin Magazine

The British Army's Light Mechanised Infantry, leveraging the Foxhound platform, represents a key evolution in military mobility and operational flexibility. The Foxhound, a state-of-the-art light protected patrol vehicle, plays a pivotal role in enhancing the capabilities of infantry units, offering a balance of protection, mobility, and versatility, crucial for modern warfare. This article explores the strengths and operational role of The Poachers' Light Mechanised Infantry.

The Foxhound Platform: Key Features

The Foxhound vehicle is a highly agile, mine-resistant, and protected patrol vehicle developed for the British Army. Introduced in 2012 as part of the Ministry of Defence's urgent operational requirement for enhanced mobility in conflict zones such as Afghanistan, it quickly became a cornerstone for light mechanised units. Weighing just under 7.5 tonnes, the Foxhound is powered by a 3.2-litre diesel engine, capable of speeds up to 70 mph, giving infantry units rapid mobility across varied terrains.

Its V-shaped hull is designed to deflect the blast of IEDs (improvised explosive devices) and mines, providing superior protection compared to previous platforms such as the Snatch Land Rover. Additionally, it is equipped with modular armour, which can be upgraded or adjusted depending on the threat environment, enhancing survivability. The vehicle can carry a crew of six, including the driver and commander, with ample space for troops and equipment.

Enhancing Infantry Mobility and Tactics

The integration of the Foxhound into light mechanised infantry units fundamentally changes how these forces operate in combat scenarios. Light mechanised infantry is designed to deploy rapidly, maintain flexibility in both urban and rural combat environments, and cover ground quickly while retaining the capability to deliver force where needed. The Foxhound enables this through its high level of manoeuvrability, which is essential for quick reaction forces (QRFs), reconnaissance, and security operations.

In combat, the Foxhound provides light mechanised infantry the ability to transition smoothly between mounted and dismounted roles. The vehicle's mobility allows forces to move rapidly to key locations, dismount, and engage the enemy on foot, then quickly remount and redeploy if necessary. This versatility is crucial for missions requiring swift advances, flanking manoeuvres, or rapid extraction.

Light Mechanised Infantry: Strategic Impact

The strategic value of light mechanised infantry lies in their capacity for rapid deployment and high operational tempo. Foxhounds can be deployed in a variety of ways which make them incredible versatile, RoRo by sea, A400M by air, HET or rail by ground and of course they can drive. The Foxhound, with its adaptability and speed, gives The Poachers a competitive edge in responding to these threats.

In addition to conventional roles, light mechanised infantry supported by Foxhound vehicles are often

deployed in peacekeeping operations and humanitarian missions. Their rapid response capability makes them ideal for stabilisation efforts, where mobility, protection, and a lower logistical footprint are necessary.

Challenges and Future Prospects

Despite its strengths, the Foxhound platform is not without limitations. Its relatively light armour means it is vulnerable to heavy anti-tank weapons and direct fire from larger, more heavily armed adversaries. As a result, it is best employed in environments where heavy mechanised or armoured threats are minimal, or in combination with heavier units such as Challenger 2 tanks or Warrior infantry fighting vehicles, a platform the Army is phasing out and replacing with Boxer.

Looking to the future

The Poachers' LMI capability will likely evolve further, with advancements in autonomous systems, unmanned vehicles, and more advanced communications technology. The Foxhound, however, is expected to remain a critical component, ensuring The Poachers remain highly mobile and adaptable in an increasingly complex global security environment.

In conclusion, the Foxhound platform significantly enhances the operational capability of The Poachers. By combining mobility, protection, and flexibility, it enables these units to respond effectively to a wide range of contemporary military challenges, making them a formidable force in modern warfare.



2nd Battalion

PNCO Cadre 2401



Cpl Myburgh applies some encouragement to a PUNCO

Forty-eight private soldiers from across all five companies of the 2nd Battalion “The Poachers” took part in the internal PNCO cadre 2401 beginning in May. This was the first internal cadre to take place for over a decade, with all DS also coming from the Battalion, a truly Poachers affair.

Successful completion of the course qualifies the soldiers to promote to Lance Corporal and is their first step in their leadership careers within the army. The course was progressed over two phases: Tactics phase lasting six weeks, and the M&K Qual phase lasting two weeks. Tactics phase focusses on developing their practical ability and conceptual understanding of the role of a section second in command. This phase included three intensive exercises: Attacks Ex, Patrols Ex, and Final Ex. These



Cpls Sammons and Jones observe the preparations for the bayonet lane



Sgt Matty Chandler keeps an eye on the students

exercises pushed the soldiers to their mental and physical limits. Alongside the exercises and demanding physical training, the soldiers received a range of theory lessons ranging from Leadership and Ambushes to Regimental History and Base Security.

Twenty soldiers successfully completed the Tactics phase and passed out in front of Brigadier Guy Foden and their families on the twenty seventh of June before a well-earned long weekend. Three awards were presented at the pass-out parade: Top Physical Performance,

Top Student, and the Sharpe VC Award (named after VC winner Charles Richard Sharpe, 2nd Battalion Lincolnshire Regiment). These were won by Pte Barra, Pte Leenderts, and Pte Marson-Gear.

The M&K qual phase gives the soldiers the relevant qualifications needed to plan and conduct battle exercises and lessons, as well as being able to coach and help run static ranges. One week was ran from Kendrew Barracks with the second, and final week of the course, taking place in Barry



The bayonet - the eternal symbol of the infantry

Budden, near St Andrews Scotland. All twenty of those who passed Tactics phase also completed their M&K qualifications which concluded the PNCO cadre.

Their progression over the course was clear to all the DS and their CoCs who visited during the exercises. Growing from Private soldiers to PNCOs within a matter of weeks. They all now qualify to promote to LCpl at the next available opportunity, moving back to their respective Companies to continue their leadership journeys.

Battalion Rugby

Having narrowly missed out on the squad for last year's Army vs Navy, Lt Mitchell (A Coy) had his goals set for the 23/24 season. Captaining the development squad in the early part of the season he put himself in a good position to make the Interservice team.

He earned his spot as the starting second row for the Army Men's Senior

team and played warm up fixtures against Cambridge University and the British Police. Next, Lt Mitchell was selected to play against the Arme De Terre in Pau, France, where, in a tough and competitive game, the British Army came out on top winning 32-22. Lt Mitchell further featured in fixtures against the Irish Army and Bedford Blues

before heading to Dhekelia Garrison for Inter-Services training camp.

With the big game looming, the match day squad was announced, and Lt Mitchell was selected to start in the second row against the Navy at Twickenham. The game was dubbed the best Army Navy in history as the Army came back from 29-5 at half



2nd Battalion

time to win 43-42 with the clock in the red. Unfortunately, this was the end of Lt Mitchell's season as unbeknownst to him, he ruptured his ACL, MCL and fractured his knee in the warmup before going on to play the game and be substituted later. The British Army played the RAF the following at week at Kingsholm putting in a dominant performance to win and return the Interservice Cup to its rightful place.

The future is bright for The Poachers with Pte Gammon (B Coy) representing the Army under 23s in the outside centre, featuring in games against Sidmouth RFC and Cardiff Met. At the time of writing Pte Gammon is in the squad and pushing for selection for the U23s Interservice team with fixtures against the RAF and the Royal Navy at the end of November. In addition, The Poachers were represented on the British Army Sevens circuit with Pte Lutua (D Coy) playing for the sevens side in multiple events across the summer. He will be looking to cement his place in the squad next year to become a consistent feature

in the highly regarded British Army Sevens set up.

On 13 May 06, whilst on operations in Basra, Iraq, Pte Lewaicei and Pte Morris were killed in action when their vehicle was struck by an IED; an event which shook the Battalion and The Poachers community. In recognition of their individual sporting prowess, The Poachers and Bourne RUFC hold a match annually to celebrate their memory. The fixture also commemorates Pte Savanaca Koroibulileka, a much-loved former Poacher who tragically passed away after collapsing during a match playing for Oakham RUFC on 24 Sept 16. The Player of the Match is presented with the award to honor Pte Koroibulileka.

The Poachers team were supplemented by our sister battalion to form The Royal Anglian rugby team, making competition for a starting place in the XV very competitive. The Commanding Officer kindly gave rugby a priority and allowed the Companies to release their rugby stars for training

instead of Company PT. Training was rigorous as the team were subjected to intense rugby sessions from 0800 to 0900 straight into being put through their paces by PTI Cpl Lew Myburgh for fitness from 0900 to 1000. The training regime paid dividends as the Regimental side faced Newark Rugby in a warmup game winning by a margin of over 30 points.

The date was set for Saturday 18 May 24, a mixture of Oakham Rugby Club and Bourne Rugby Club fielded a side which looked formidable. The game started out with both sides trading blows; the Regiment's blows seemed to be landing as they pushed into an early lead.

The tough training began to show as silky backs moves led to scores which were built from some set piece dominance up front. In the second half the Regimental side began to run away with the game. The game was played in the right spirit and both sides can be proud of their performance, the stage is set for next year's fixture.

Royal Anglian BJJ Team: Grappling with Success in 2024

As the curtain falls on 2024, the Royal Anglian Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) team is celebrating a year filled with accomplishments, growth, and resilience.

Blending the discipline of military life with the art of grappling, the team has made significant strides, solidifying its reputation in both military and civilian BJJ circles.

Building a Strong Foundation

This year has been a period of expansion and progress for the Royal Anglian BJJ team. With new members joining from across the regiment, weekly training sessions became a hub of activity and development. These sessions not only sharpened technical skills but also reinforced the camaraderie and teamwork that are central to both BJJ and regimental life.

Guest instructors from the broader BJJ community played a pivotal role in the team's development. Hosting





accomplished black belts, both from military and civilian backgrounds, gave the team fresh insights and a deeper understanding of techniques tailored to their unique challenges.

Competitive Triumphs

2024 saw the Royal Anglian BJJ team take to the mats at some of the most competitive tournaments in the sport, earning accolades and respect along the way.

British Army BJJ Championships:

The team's hard work paid off with multiple podium finishes. Both gi and no-gi competitors excelled, showcasing their versatility and commitment.

Inter-Regimental BJJ Cup:

In a tightly contested field, the Royal Anglian team claimed an impressive 2nd place overall, underscoring their dominance within the military BJJ community.

Civilian Opens:

Several team members ventured into civilian competitions, taking on a diverse range of skilled opponents. Their





2nd Battalion

performances yielded medals and invaluable experience that will fuel future successes.

Celebrating Milestones

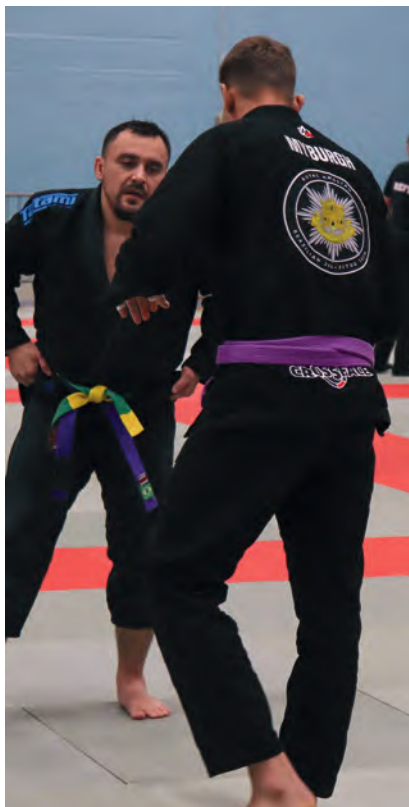
Beyond competition, the team celebrated several key milestones that highlighted their growth as practitioners and ambassadors of BJJ.

Belt Promotions: A number of team members earned well-deserved promotions this year, a reflection of their dedication to training and mastery of the art. These promotions are a testament to the team's commitment to continuous improvement.

Guest Seminars: Among the year's highlights was a seminar led by a renowned black belt. Tailored specifically to military BJJ practitioners, the session provided valuable strategies and techniques that enhanced the team's approach to both training and competition.

Resilience in the Face of Challenges

For a team operating within the demands



of military life, balancing operational duties and rigorous BJJ training is no small feat. Injuries, deployments, and tight schedules tested the team's resilience throughout the year. Yet, the Royal Anglian BJJ team adapted and thrived, embodying the regiment's ethos of determination and adaptability.

Eyes on 2025

As the team prepares for 2025, their ambitions are higher than ever. Plans are already in motion to compete on an international stage, representing the regiment at military BJJ tournaments abroad.

Closer to home, grassroots efforts are set to introduce more soldiers to the sport, ensuring the continued growth of the team and its legacy.

For the Royal Anglian BJJ team, 2024 has been a year of hard work, triumph, and evolution. With their sights set on even greater success in 2025, this team proves that excellence on the mats is a natural extension of excellence in service.



Poachers Boxing 2024

Capt Gav Williams Boxing Officer (UWO)



Having taken over from Capt Roy Cousin as Boxing Officer of the Battalion. Leaving the Battalion team in a great place.

What we have achieved:

On the 14 November our Battalion saw the second Inter Company Competition in four years. This has given us the new

blood of boxers forming a new team.

With this competition being close towards the end. C 'Northamptonshire' Company came away victorious. The





2nd Battalion





night was a fantastic show of the talent we have across all ranks in the Battalion.

What's next for the Battalion Boxing team? RSME Boxing Show in Chatham 27th November 2024; RAF Marham Boxing Show 28 November 2024; Infantry Box Cup in Aldershot from 1-6 December 2024.

This will give our newly formed team the best opportunity to have a good showing in the Major Units competition held from the end of February to May 2025.

Future aspiration is to form a Regimental boxing team, when both battalions forecast of events allow, very much in the spirit of Project 64; making the best of our combined strengths in one team.

Our Regimental coaches are still taking classes for the dependants of both Battalions in their own time. Giving the community a great FREE opportunity to come for some free fitness and skill work with some quality coaches.

Very short I know. Next year I will be able to talk about our escapades in the Major Units Competition and the run up to it.

'Up the Poachers!'





2nd Battalion

Lt Charles Stewart Cautherley 1st Battalion Hertfordshire Regiment



Sgt Aaron Walker and CSgt Andy Evans at the Poelcapelle British War Cemetery, Belgium

Lt Cautherley was gazetted from the Honourable Artillery Company and assumed the role of an officer in the Hertfordshire Regiment 1916, the same year he suffered from shell shock, however returned to service soon after.

In 1918 Lt Cautherley was sadly killed in the defence of Voormezele, unfortunately his remains were placed in an unnamed officer's grave until 2024.

Organised by JCCC, myself and Sgt Aron Walker from the 2nd Battalion,

Royal Anglian Regiment, had the privilege of ensuring Lt Cautherley's rededication took place on the 21st March 2024 in the Poelcapelle British War Cemetery, Belgium.

With a family member present, he



received a military re-dedication and the respectful service he deserved, the family member was also presented with a flag to show his historic family

sacrifice. With thanks to JCCC and the efforts of the CWGC, it is a reminder that even after 106 years, and several amalgamations of regiments, those that

have made the ultimate sacrifice will be shown the respect they thoroughly deserve. A valued consideration of all service personnel.

Basic Training: Battle Camp and CIC

by Pte Paul Liu, 3 Company

Reporting to ATR Grantham on 1st March 2024 for Battle Camp, I had a sense of *déjà vu* as I was assigned to 2 Section, Corunna Platoon, the same as in April 2023 when I was there for MOD3 (Battle Camp is essentially MOD3 without CBRN). Naturally, I chose the same bed in the dorm!

In 2023 I was injured during fire and movement training. Running zigzag was novel and the Corporal's feedback to go harder, faster and more aggressive was duly followed but turned out to be too much on the uneven terrain. I sustained an MCL rupture in my left knee and was RTU'ed. After a year of military physio and rehabilitation, I was back again.

I thoroughly enjoyed training previously. Battle Camp was no

different. It is astonishing how quickly you bond with your section in 2 weeks. The highlights for me were the field exercises, scoring Marksman on my ACMT, being designated 2IC for the final attack exercise (winning best section attack), and winning two awards (Best Shot and Soldier's Soldier).

Being on exercise was the toughest part of the course yet also the most rewarding and exhilarating: tough as we were applying everything we learnt in sub-optimal conditions (cold, wet, hungry and sleep deprived); rewarding precisely because it was tough; and exhilarating due to simulated contact with the enemy. I was in the right place at the right time when we got contacted on the final night, emptying 3 magazines

whilst flares were going off all over the place.

On my practice ACMT, I scored 40/50, (barely a pass). On the day of the ACMT, I was the 4th detail to shoot so I spent the entire time practising the positions and holds. I had rehearsed the shoot through the preceding 3 details by assessment time. I credit the extra practice for the turnaround in my scores on the ACMT for which I won the Best Shot Award.

Receiving the Soldier's Soldier Award was an unexpected end to the course! I was moved when members of my section came to let me know they voted for me. Afterwards, I reflected on the award and concluded it comes down to living the values of the British



2nd Battalion

Army, particularly selfless commitment. Selfless commitment is a bit abstract, in practice it means serving those around you. What holds for officers, holds for soldiers: serve to lead. Being 2IC was an eye-opening experience, and meant being the last to sleep and making decisions that may not have been popular, but necessary. It is the moments when you put your team before yourself, especially when it is hardest to do so that stack up and build trust, loyalty and commitment.

Moving forward, my CIC is booked for June so I have 2 months to prepare. Nobody is above the process so I won't be resting on my laurels. Some advice I received from a friend in The Rifles who did CIC last February included more cardio, and to train in hilly areas to reflect the terrain of Catterick rather than the flatlands of Grantham. I look forward to it.

CIC

Three months after my Battle Camp pass-out parade, I arrived at Catterick Garrison for Phase 2. Preparation included plenty of tabbing on the hilly terrain of Ivinghoe Beacon with other reservists and a battalion weekend where I used TES for the first time.

Phase 2 was both more intense and more relaxed than Phase 1; the training intensity increased, but we had more freedom. While in barracks, we could go into town after lessons, explore the shops, and spend our money on "gucci gear" at Dropzone Supplies.

The training built on Phase 1, with some overlap as a refresher. We had an introductory exercise of two nights in the field, followed by a final exercise of two nights as well. The latter would have been longer; however, due to scheduling conflicts we spent more time on the urban exercise, which suited me. In these two exercises, we learned about platoon attacks, deliberate attacks, and FIWAF.

Bayonet training was a far cry from the dummies mounted on posts we encountered in Phase 1. The training truly began on the last night of the final exercise, where we were stationed in a FOB. We were kept awake all night by



Pte Paul Liu receiving top soldier award from Battle Camp at ATR(G)

hourly flares and the constant rotation of patrols, QRF, and sentry duties across the three sections. In the morning, we ran with a stretcher in full kit for two kilometres, followed by a four-kilometre tab to a boggy heath, where the DS pushed us hard until we earned the right to go down the bayonet lane. The lane itself was down a rocky stream with dummies placed along the way, each one requiring a proper strike, supervised by a DS.

The urban exercise took place at a purpose-built facility made from stacked shipping containers, with each room equipped with integrated video cameras so the waiting section could watch and

provide useful feedback before their turn. We learned how to approach the building and clear the entire facility. The culmination of the lessons was a final run-through, clearing the rooms with Gurkhas positioned throughout the building.

CIC was both challenging and enjoyable, just like previous courses. Now fully trained, I intend to make the most of the opportunities available in the army. Since completing CIC, I've attended two weekend exercises and signed up for my IBRU course. I look forward to my first COE and the rest of my career with the Royal Anglian Regiment.

THE COMPANY BEHIND ROYAL ANGLIAN DIRECT

AMMO & COMPANY



**ROYAL ANGLIAN
DIRECT**

1850

Frederick Narborough manufactured component parts and storage containers for the arms trade during the Crimean (1856) and South African (1899-1902) campaigns.

1859

The D&N Silver trademark, still in use today, was registered with Birmingham Assay Office.

1900

Frederick Narborough started to manufacture military ceremonial canes. This expanded into ceremonial equipment for the military and police forces worldwide.

1925

A Narborough nephew, Mr S. C. Dalman, joined the company.

1962

S.C. Dalman was appointed Managing Director when the company changed its name to Dalman & Narborough.

1992

Significant expansion led to the formation of The All Arms Marketing & Manufacturing Organisation (AMMO). The military's use of the acronym 'AMMO' sat well, and they became known as Ammo & Company.

2006

The MoD approached the company to manage the Cadet Kit Shop, which was a key supplier to the Army Cadet Forces. This became a pioneer in e-commerce.

2016

Ammo & Company launched its first PRI partnership with The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.

2019

Royal Anglian Direct is launched.

2024

Ammo & Company now holds partnerships with over 15 regiments/corps, with in excess of £175,000 returned to benevolent funds.

In partnership with The Royal Anglian Regiment, Ammo & Company runs the online PRI: Royal Anglian Direct. Ammo & Company's history dates back to 1850 and the Birmingham arms trade. They have continued to expand operations, now under the leadership of Tommy Dalman – a fifth-generation Dalman. The business remains in Birmingham, with operations in Spain, Canada and the US.

Ammo & Company houses over 6,000 product lines and operates a modern fulfilment centre. They hold an impressive archive of samples – dating as far back as the 1800s – which includes the metal cap badges of many forming regiments.

To visualise Ammo & Company at work, when you walk into the premises you are immediately met with a big and bright workshop where Drum Major Mace Canes are being straightened by hand, cane tips are being polished and drums are being deconstructed for painting. At back-to-back benches, a sixth-generation Dalman is carefully soldering wire fittings to the new King's Cypher, which is made in Birmingham.

Behind a glass partition, workshop Director Ben Harris is refurbishing swords from the RMAS stores while adding personal inscriptions to presentation pieces on a state-of-the-art engraving machine.

The team combines modern-day software with their skills in handcraft to ensure consistency and quality across a worldwide supply chain.

In 2023, HRH The Princess Royal visited Ammo & Company to officially open its new premises, enjoying a full tour including a look at the historic archives.



John Dalman with some of the first maces produced by Dalman & Narborough.



Tommy Dalman visits Buckingham Palace for the King's award Dinner.



HRH Princess Royal oversees the hand emblazoning of drums for the RLC Corps of Drums.



Some of the archive books held by Ammo & Company which have already survived a serious fire at the premises.



3rd Battalion



From the CO

Lt Col Ed Matts



CO 3 R ANGLIAN addressing both Messes.

It is a real privilege to be writing this article, as Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion – a career Reservist – back with my home Battalion after many years away.

Having only taken command in August this year, it is very evident to me that I can take absolutely no credit

for the huge achievements that this Battalion has undertaken this year. I am incredibly lucky to have landed in a Unit that is punching above its peers in 19 Light Brigade, staffed with a team who genuinely care about improving – we recently won the Silver Award for Continuous Improvement – only the

second Army Reserve Unit to do so. It would therefore be remis of me not to thank my predecessor, Lt Col Dave Haggar, for setting this Battalion up for success, putting in place some key building blocks with which to grow from.

What a time to take over too –



CO addresses Ex NS 24.



two weeks before deploying on Ex NORTHERN STRIKE – dubbed the ‘Superbowl’ of US Reserve Exercises, it certainly delivered. I won’t steal the sandwiches of the article later in this magazine, but based in Michigan with attached helicopters, a huge complex urban environment, using US weapons and Radios and an FTX that had Northern Lights and a meteor shower as the backdrop, the ingredients were certainly there for an excellent two-week deployment. It is not a surprise that we had so many troops step up to deploy.

Ex NORTHERN STRIKE, was an excellent opportunity to build closer links with NATO partners, enhance interoperability and gaining a deeper understanding of other the challenges that ensue. At a more local level, we continue to do this with our growing relationship

with Unterstützungsbataillon Einsatz 1 – the Ops support battalion for the 1st Panzer Division. As ever in a Reserve Unit, we have the perennial balancing act of ensuring there is enough laid on for our troops to keep them engaged, whilst not overloading them given they have their own balancing act of family, civilian employment and Reserve commitment – and given the numbers on our training weekends and volunteering to deploy overseas, this appears to be succeeding.

In this issue you’ll be able to read the detail of many of these training events and opportunities, including Ex STEELBACK STRIKE, where we had over 150 Reserves and Recruits deploy for a force on force Urban training serial. Throughout the year, we have had 24 soldiers deploy on operations

including supporting OP INTERFLEX and to BATUK and already we have more penned in to deploy in 2025, again to Op INTERFLEX and also Op TOSCA. We have had troops deploy to Croatia, Spain, Germany, Norway, the US, Kenya and of course had exercises spanning the breadth of the UK – all in their ‘spare’ time whilst juggling their own civilian careers many of whom own their own businesses or hold down very senior and demanding roles.

It is impressive to see the number of our soldiers who showcase what the Regiment is capable of in the field of sport and competition. This year we have had Pte Carr running for GB, 2Lt Beckett compete in the Infantry Ice Hockey team, Pte Chamberlin compete in the Infantry Kayaking team. We submitted two teams in the Bismark



3rd Battalion

Challenge and LCpl Lawson, Reeder and Pte Middleton selected for the British Army Reserve Operational Shooting Team. In addition, our Battalion shooting team once again won the IXX Reserve Shooting Competition and came second overall in the Army Reserve Shooting Competition this in itself would be a great win, but to do so for the 3rd year

running is excellent.

So how do we top that for 2025? We will continue with what we are good at, tweak the elements that need changing and gear up to our culmination of training for next year; Ex RHINO HEART 25 in Germany next October, which is already shaping up to be an excellent opportunity for our soldiers.

It looks to build on Ex RHINO HEART 24 which saw the largest Army Reserve deployment in a generation. Our Forecast of Events continues to present as many opportunities as possible for our soldiers whilst ever improving our deployability, utility and capability as Army Reserves and preparing our Officers and Soldiers for the unknown around the corner.

From the RSM

WO1 (RSM) Phil Green

It has been an incredible honour to step into the role of The Steelbacks RSM, and I am immensely proud of everything the Battalion has accomplished during a challenging year.

This year's highlight was our annual deployment exercise in Michigan, USA, where we utilised an American Army training area. The exercise focused on Company level battle drills and honing the core skills of infantry soldiering. Despite the Battalion's other significant commitments, 113 Steelbacks participated, showcasing their dedication and resilience.

Operationally, thirteen Steelbacks mobilized for deployment: eleven supported BATUK Force Protection in Kenya, and two served on OP INTERFLEX. Their professionalism throughout these operations was outstanding. As we look ahead to 2025, we'll see ten Steelbacks deploying on OP TOSCA with 5 RRF. This is just the start, with many more soldiers ready and prepared to serve overseas.

Our recruiting efforts have been a standout success, with good numbers joining the Battalion this year. Positive outflow has been equally strong, with several Steelbacks transferring to the Regular Army. Additionally, we've welcomed experienced soldiers from the Vikings and Poachers and other units through the Regular to Reserve transfer. Their expertise has been a valuable asset, strengthening our capabilities and reinforcing our ties within the Royal Anglian family.

This year also saw significant changes in leadership. We've experienced a high



turnover of SPSIs and PSIs, and I want to thank the outgoing SNCOs for their commitment and professionalism. Their contributions have been critical to our success, and I wish them the best in their future endeavours. A special thank you to the Vikings and Poachers for continuing to provide top-tier SNCOs for these crucial roles.

Looking forward, 2025 will see us focus on refining our Company level

tactics as we prepare for EX RHINO HEART. This exercise will be pivotal in ensuring the Battalion's operational readiness and continued growth.

I'm confident that, with the dedication and professionalism of our soldiers, we will continue to excel and meet the challenges of the year ahead. Together, we'll build on this year's successes and take The Steelbacks to even greater heights.

1 (Norfolk & Suffolk) Company

Capt Caleb 'Smudge' Smith, OC

From the OC

Yet another enjoyable year for No1 Company, as our numbers are slowly increasing. Establishing itself within the fledgling 19 Brigade, we are slowly aligning with the focus on the Regimental Identity, balancing this with Bde HQ direction. A list of opportunities that is getting longer offering more choice to all our personnel, training events, sports and deployments.

In total 33 personnel from across the Company were presented (37 in total awarded) the Coronation Medal 2023. This occasion was quite rightly marked by the medals being personally presented by Lt Col Ed Matts, our new Commanding Officer, followed by a pizza and social event to allow him to meet his soldiers.

Green training continued, with soldiers attending various exercises and development cadres, maximising on the use of assets owned and occupied by our sister Battalions at Kendrew, many thanks to the Vikings and Poachers for enabling this. New JNCOs and Officers gaining confidence by peer-on-peer training development exercises lead by the Bn Adjt and RSM proved a success that is hopefully built on and will endure. Later in the year saw the Company deploy with the other southern Companies to train at Woodbridge, a backdoor training area adjacent the RE barracks. Maximising on the opportunity to put well-rehearsed drills into effect in a different urban



Dining out of QPSI Glen Keeble and his wife Sandra

setting. Also, the abundance of former aircraft hangars gave a good chance for the roll out of the Coy CIS and the Coy Aid posts, a first for a long time for some

of the specialist trade branches and the exercising troops.

Ensuring the work / life balance needs were met, No1 Company also



No 1 Company QPSI dine out



3rd Battalion

managed to host a summer BBQ function and Autumn fireworks event at either of its two locations. Prefixing these events with OC's Training Days may have helped drive the attendance up but the two new Pl Commanders must be commended for delivering outstanding events. Highlighting their planning, organisational skills and finally the safe execution of each event. Wider Regimental Veterans events were also attended on invitation from the 4th Royal Norfolk's and The Royal Anglian Regimental Association. Later we also had the honour of dining out our long (suffering) serving QPSI CSgt Glen Keeble. The whole evening was a tremendous success, and credit and well-deserved thanks must go to Capt Tim Jones for orchestrating the whole event with his well-known zeal and critical attention to detail. Once again, the Steelback chefs excelled themselves not only making the trek to wildest Norfolk, to deliver an authentic curry.

This year's annual training event, Exercise Northern Strike 24, the OTX in Michigan State, North America certainly had the attract factor. Although this started a lot like the earlier attempt to deploy to Spain, with hurdles and then definite barriers. Fortunately, with pressure being applied from BHQ the RAF confirmed the freight would be turned off we had the opportunity to turn that to our advantage and request US weapons, vehicles, comms and MRE's. Overall No1 Company deployed 23 personnel had the opportunity to conduct Company level Offensive Operations



Pte Tomsett-Hurrell Ex NS 24

delivered by Blackhawk and Chinook air frames, as an integral part of a much larger US National Guard mobilisation Ex.

Fortunately, this year Norwich City will host a Remembrance Day parade and finally the march past and later service within the City's cathedral. The usual Company representation will also take place at Lowestoft and Dereham, with reduced wreath laying contingents. The remaining time taken to finalise the Certificates of Efficiency, with a minimum of 30 No1 Company soldiers

predicted to achieve this and earn their cash bonus.

Looking forward to November to the Company Winter Ball, followed by a dispersed Christmas weekend (Ex Steelback Spirit) and of course then supporting the Royal Anglian Big Breakfast in February 2025. Where hopefully we will have the opportunity to catch up with some of the leavers of the Company, Glen Keeble, Paul Bishop, and Jonny Feaks. Always room for more soldiers, should anyone wish to re-engage.

Tower of London Commanding Officer's dine out

2Lt Sean Thompson

On Saturday 29th June, the Officers Mess of the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment – the Steelbacks – assembled to 'dine out' our outgoing Commanding Officer, Lt Col David Haggart. Our CO had been in post for just over two and a half years, and the evening provided a great opportunity for members of the Mess to wish the Colonel all the best in his future endeavours, and to thank him for all his hard work and commitment to

the Battalion. There was representation from all 5 Companies, and the staff from BHQ.

The evening began in typical Steelback fashion – with the 'advance party' enjoying some pre-drinks in All Bar One at Tower Hill in London. After introductions were made and drinks were drunk, we headed to the local Wagamama's for some fine Asian fusion cuisine, and to RV with those who

weren't able to make the pre-drinks. Again, there were some new faces to make introductions to, and some familiar faces to be reacquainted with, along with the outrageous colours of some of the young officer's chinos on display.

Wagamama's presented many challenges for some of the more culinary challenged amongst us, especially when it comes to spicy food. Add into the mix a menu which had as many combinations



3rd Battalion Officers' Mess

as would otherwise be found when trying to wrestle the best ration packs from the QM and make swaps. That said, it was a great sit-down meal, and I'm grateful for my RFI's being responded to, for both menu guidance and a spoon. I have as much coordination as a handcuffed crab when it came to the chopsticks, so conceded to the metal utensil at the earliest opportunity.

After our time in the makeshift cookhouse, we took the short walk down to the main event of the evening – the after public hours tour of the Tower of

London. I'd been fortunate enough to visit the Tower a year previously, but this occasion was very different. The tour was private, with only one other group joining ours, and we had an uninterrupted and detailed description of the various gates, towers, prisoners, and beheadings, coupled with a great deal of humour!

To make the visit even more personal to our CO, the tour was led by former Poachers RSM Simon Towe, who is now a Yeoman Warder at the Tower. Many thanks, Mr Towe, for giving your time

to us that evening.

Tour complete, we headed to 'The Keys' bar for another social drink and awaited the famous 'Ceremony of the Keys', when the Tower is officially closed and locked for the night, save for a small door next to the portcullis to allow us to leave when the bar closed. The opportunity was also taken for the CO to deliver a speech to the Mess, express a few personal thanks, and to receive the gratitude of the Steelback Officers for such a great evening.

Ex BRITANNIA FURY – October 2024

CSgt Turner (1 Company)

On the evening of Friday 18 October 1, 3 & 5 Companies deployed to Rock Barracks, Woodbridge in Suffolk to conduct an exercise focusing on warfighting in the urban environment. A CP was also constructed, including a lightweight generator (LFG), and a Company Aid Post (CAP) was set up so that the training audience could receive training on how they are set up and how they function.

On the Saturday morning, after

breakfast the three companies were split into 3 syndicates. Sgt Davitt (3 company), as the SME, lead with the urban warfighting stand. The Officers and Soldiers received comprehensive training on the doorway drill, 5 step entry, formations in the urban area and how to conduct confined space drills.

Pte Wicks (CMT 5 company) ran the CAP stand along with Pte Coe (1 Coy). The army reserve personnel found this to be a great insight into the capabilities

and limitations of the asset. The use of various medical equipment was demonstrated, and it was also a chance for the troops to get "hands on" with some unfamiliar equipment.

Cpl Riley and Cpl Wilkinson were responsible for the CP stand. They demonstrated how to set up and use the LFG, how to set up a ground spike antenna (GSA) and a 5.4-meter mast. Once the troops had mastered them, they were shown how the CP operates,



3rd Battalion

how to log and report information, and what kind of information they need from the troops on the ground. The army reserve personnel found the stand to be very useful, and something they have very rarely, if ever, been shown before.

On Saturday evening, the platoon commander received his orders from 3 company OC, Major Macleod. After a period of battle preparation, his platoon found themselves in the LD just before first light, ready to conduct a deliberate attack on an enemy stronghold, on H-Hour, the fire support section unleashed an intensive amount of firepower on the enemy to allow 1 section to gain a foothold into the first building, completely taking the enemy by surprise. The platoon then systematically moved through the objective, using the skills they had honed the previous day, they achieved their mission. The command and control from the commanders were particularly impressive.



Urban clearance

In conclusion, the weekend was successful with all attendees learning something new and I would like to

personally thank all the instructors and exercising troops for contributing towards a very enjoyable weekend.



Machine gunner

Shooting Team

by Capt Karl Chambers

The Steelbacks formed up its Shooting Team in November 2023 building on the success of the 2023 competition season. 2023 yielded a 2nd consecutive win at 1(UK) Division Operational Shooting Competition (OSC) and a 5th place at the Army Reserve OSC (AROSC).

Three further practice weekends helped the team refine their rifle marksmanship skills while also progressing onto General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG) and 9mm service pistol assessments. The initial team size of 25 drawn from across the Battalion gradually reduced due to the progressive nature of training necessitated by each OSC's stringent qualification rules.

April 2024 saw the team compete at 1 Div OSC at Altcar training camp near Liverpool. This was our first test in a competitive environment. Although operational marksmanship formed the focus of the event, other key skills were also tested. This included battle fitness, flexibility, leadership, command and control.

The 1 Div OSC consisted of a variety of assessments, some with a



DIVOSC Assault Course Pre Falling Plate

scored physical element conducted prior to shooting. To better assess individual skills and avoid "training to test" exact details of practices were withheld prior to the competition. Individual successes included WO2 Nash and Pte Lawson coming second and third overall respectively.

Aiming to capitalise on the Div OCS results and following more practice events as the weather improved, June quickly arrived, and the team headed down to Pirbright for the AROSC.

AROSC showcased the highest level of competitive marksmanship faced all season. 12 teams competed



AROSC awards



3rd Battalion

in a series of assessments designed to test precision and physical robustness while firing both the rifle and service pistol. The event featured individual and team events fostering leadership and a spirit of friendly rivalry across all teams. Highlights included rifle to pistol transition assessments, the long-range moving assessment and the defended house which was impossible to practice ahead of the AROSC. The competition proved more than just a contest of marksmanship. It reinforced the importance of confident weapon handling, fitness, discipline and teamwork.

A further improvement on 2023 and another excellent result after winning the 1 Div OSC. Our previous overall best AROSC placing was 5th. To jump a further three places to 2nd is phenomenal at this level of competition.

Prep has already begun for the 2025 competition season where our target is firmly on winning at the next AROSC.

Steelbacks Shooting Team members: Team Captain, Capt Karl Chambers (1 Coy), WO2 Duncan Nash



From left: LCpl Jordan Reeder, LCpl Gareth Goodge, Cpl Joseph Carr at Bisley

(1 Coy), Cpl Carr (1 Coy), LCpl Goodge (1 Coy), LCpl Reeder (1 Coy), Pte Giles Cheeseman (3 Coy), Pte Clement (3 Coy), Pte Findlay (3 Coy), Pte Jay Lawson (3 Coy) and Pte Middleton (3 Coy).

Steelback results at the 1(UK) Division

Operational Shooting Competition

Winning team for an unbroken third year running.

Advanced Fleeting Encounter: winning team.

Pistol CQB winning team: Pte Findlay placing top firer.

Defence Assessment winning team:



DIVOSC awards

Pte Lawson placing top firer.

Section Advance to Contact: winning team.

1 (UK) Div Cup (*assault course, 1km best effort run and falling plate*): winning team

Urban Contact Assessment: second place

Steelback results from Army Reserve Operational Shooting Competition:

Team placed second of 12 teams overall.

Team winners of the **Simpson Challenge Cup** (*Advanced Fleeting Encounter*).

Team winners of the **China Tankard** (*Fire Team Falling Plate*).

Long Range Movement Assessment - team placed 2nd overall.

Section Building Defence Assessment - team placed 2nd overall.

Section Attack Assessment - team placed 3rd overall.

Imperial Tobacco Trophy (*Defence Assessment best under seven years' service*) LCpl Reeder.

Pym Trophy (*Attack and Reorg best under seven years' service*) Pte Clement.



Pte Georgia Middleton firing the Advance Fleeting Encounter at Bisley



Pte Jordan Reeder awarded The Imperial Tobacco Trophy at Bisley



Pte Peter Clement Awarded The Pym Trophy at Bisley



3rd Battalion

British Army American Football: A Growing Force

by Cpl Chris Wilkinson, 1 Company

American football, a sport traditionally associated with the U.S. is steadily gaining traction this side of the pond in the British Army. Though still relatively unknown across the wider military, the British Army American Football team is expanding in size and reputation, uniting soldiers from various regiments who share a love for the game.

Army American Football was founded in 2019 and recognised in 2021. The Army American Football 'Jackals' have members who represent international completion, European Semi-professional leagues and local British American Football clubs. Army American Football intends to establish itself as a top tier British American Football Association (BAFA) program. With American Football being one

of the fastest growing sports in the UK currently we foresee increased participation from both grass roots and experienced players and coaching staff.

The team consists of soldiers from a variety of regiments, showcasing the diverse skills and backgrounds present throughout the Army. One notable contributor is the Royal Anglian Regiment, which is well-represented by both Officers and other ranks. Among these players are Captain Jack Rice, a star linebacker, and Corporal Chris Wilkinson, one of the quarterbacks, both of whom exemplify the high level of commitment that the cap badge deserves. Other members of the Regiment also strengthen the team when not on exercise and operations.

The team is known for its inclusivity,

welcoming soldiers of all backgrounds and experience levels. Whether a seasoned athlete or a complete newcomer, anyone is encouraged to try out for the team. American Football is the ultimate team sport, where an inch can be the difference between all and nothing, offering situations that are unlike any other sport.

The sport resembles a game of chess played with human pieces in a full contact display of controlled aggression and athleticism. We have a robust selection process for any potential players, creating an equal opportunity for both those who have played and those who have never even watched the sport previously. The nature of American football, which requires a wide range of body types and skill sets,



Cpl Chris Wilkinson



Army team beating the RAF

makes it accessible to all.

One of the key factors behind the team's steady growth is the involvement of both Army and civilian coaches, who bring valuable insights from UK and international American football leagues. Their professional guidance helps the players develop both tactically and technically. Head Coach Abraham Day, along with other long-standing staff, has been with the team since its foundation, fostering a disciplined and professional atmosphere that helps the players improve every season.

Despite growing popularity, American football remains relatively unknown in the Army. As a result, players often attend training camps at their own expense, covering travel costs themselves. This level of selfless commitment shows the dedication of the soldiers involved. Training sessions are held year-round and vary from one-day events to week-long camps, offering players the chance to improve their skills while balancing their military duties. For

Reservists, longer camps often come at the expense of civilian holiday, so great flexibility, dedication and commitment is needed by anyone wishing to take up the challenge.

There is optimism that, as the sport continues to grow, it will eventually gain a higher recognized status within the Army. This would bring additional funding for training and travel, making it easier for soldiers to participate without personal financial strain. The hard work of the British Army American Football team is evident in their recent success. In the inter-services championships, they recently triumphed over the Royal Air Force with an 18 – 6 win and followed it up with a 35 – 6 drubbing of the Royal Navy. These results highlight the team's growth and the benefits of their year-round commitment to training and development.

As more soldiers discover the sport and the unique challenges it offers, American football's presence within the Army is likely to increase. The

team's continued success, combined with its welcoming approach, makes it a compelling opportunity for soldiers looking to challenge themselves in a supportive, competitive environment. Looking ahead, the future of American football within the British Army looks bright. With growing interest, the sport is poised to become an integral part of Army sporting culture, allowing the team to attract even more talent and resources.

Anyone interested should get in contact attend one of the player trials. Any level of height, weight and strength are accepted, there is a position for any shape and size.

The sport is also open for both Regular and Reserve soldiers. Our future plans include combined services championships, international competition and local club level exhibition. For those interested, information on how to apply can be found on Defence Connect, just search for AAFA.



3rd Battalion

2 (Leicestershire & Northamptonshire) Company

Maj Andrew Speechley, OC

From the OC

2024 is my fourth and final year leading No.2 Company and it has been rewarding to continue to see the company developing individually and as a collective through a diverse and varied training year.

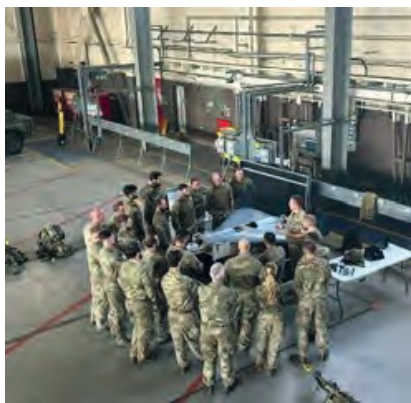
This year has seen attendance at both locations reach a peak, with the proliferation of joint training events and the inter platoon competition leading to greater camaraderie. This boost to attendance has been galvanised by the regular and reserve staff working hard to offer challenging and varied training at both locations as well as making use of the facilities at Kendrew Barracks wherever possible.

This year has seen the hard work and dedication of several reservists recognised. Balancing attending the specific courses required for promotion around civilian occupations is no mean feat. Particularly those in the recruit training cycle, where there is a lot for individuals to achieve prior to being involved into the mainstream company training programme. This year has seen a boost in numbers across, not just the recruiting led by Sgt Sweeney, but by those completing battlecamp and CIC. Additionally, there have been several new faces in at the SNCO level, with WO2 Fairbrother joining us from the Coldstream guards as CSM, CSgt Rana Magar, from the RGR and Sgt Hunt from the Royal Signals.

For the newly promoted LCpl's Linnell, Garratt, Clifford and Booth on Ex STEELBACK STRIKE this training year was an opportunity to step into their new roles and reinforce the lessons learned on FTCC. Additionally, Cpl Wills was promoted following successful attendance on the Section Commander's Battle Course at the start of the year. Finally, at the end of this year it was great to be able to promote Sgt Gray in front of the Company, prior to



2 Company



OC 2 Company delivering a presentation on drones

the remembrance weekend. Also of note was the continued work of Capt Hopkin, who has for the second time supported the delivery of PCD as a reservist instructor, as well as the potentially less personally enjoyable completion of the same course by 2Lt Beckett as a member of the training audience!

With the advent of the formidable pairing of Sgt Watts and CSgt Ward as PSI and SPSI respectively, this year's training has gone from strength to strength, unlocking opportunities for ranges every 6-8 weeks on a drill night at Kendrew Barracks. This has enabled a frequency and breadth of marksmanship

training which has enabled the reservists to gain proficiency on their individual weapons beyond ITR training. Being able to practice a variety of shoots has supported the work being done to focus on urban and trench clearing training that has been built into the majority of the collective training achieved by the wider Battalion across weekends and Ex NORTHERN STRIKE. Additionally, this year has also seen additional opportunities for varied training support tasks to MAB, enabling those regular attenders who are already fully qualified in ITRs to be able to engage in some more dynamic training across the UK. With the promotion of CSgt Watts and his return to 2 RAnglian we have now welcomed Sgt Magwaza into the seat as PSI, off to a strong start supporting training delivery across both Leicester and Corby.

2 Coy personnel are continuing to involve themselves across the breadth of army sport, with Pte Totty being selected for Army Reserve Football, 2Lt Beckett competing in Hockey and 2Lt Titmuss and Pte Carr once again competing in fencing and running. In addition, Pte Kingston supporting the Bn entry into the Bismarck Challenge, Regimental running team and several members of

the company signing up for a 'shot' at being part of the highly competitive 3 RAnglian shooting team.

The OTX this year, Ex Northern Strike enabled 14 members of No. 2 Company the opportunity to deploy to the US, where they integrated with a wider 3 RAnglian Company Group. It was an opportunity for them to develop their urban warfare skills through a more sustained period than normal training year allows. Pte Pusey took things one step further by volunteering to be mobilised as part of the BATUK FP unit. He has taken great pleasure in regaling us with photos of his time away and we look forward to him rejoining the Company in the new year.

Looking forward to the remainder of the year sees a busy period leading up to and during remembrance events in Northampton and Leicester, culminating in a coronation medal presentation presided over by the Lord Mayor of Leicester at Leicester ARC. From there the Company will be aiming towards training in the new year, supporting the shooting team, finalising ITRs, opportunities to train alongside Leicester Fire and Rescue and a 2 Coy led, Battalion patrols competition.

From diverse, in-camp training through courses and exercises, the training year has underscored what makes No.2 Company tick: a commitment to continuous improvement, an unwavering drive to develop and working hard to overcome obstacles as a team. I look forward to handing over No.2 Company in order to see it continue to grow and develop.



Sgt Dean Watts delivering lessons

Exercise NORTHERN STRIKE

Pte Amy Kingston

Having been asked to write an account of my first Annual Deployment Exercise it allowed me to reflect on my journey getting here.

I attested in April 2023 and almost a year to the day, I finished my training to become a qualified Reserve Infantry soldier at the Infantry Training Centre in Catterick; I embraced every minute

of the challenges thrown my way. With two pre-deployment weekends that included fitness tests, helicopter landing site and navigation lessons, thorough medical and documentation checks, as well as how to identify a rattlesnake and methods to fend off a bear, I felt as prepared as a possible.

After a long 30-hour day of travel

and a challenging logistics package we finally arrived at our home for the next two weeks – Camp Grayling, Michigan USA! The heat and humidity were a welcome treat, as were the air-conditioned accommodation blocks. When first light appeared the sheer scale and size of the place became real. There was a genuine buzz about the camp



3rd Battalion

as we met other soldiers from around the world and awaited the last of our colleagues to arrive in from the UK. We would be joining Ex Northern Strike; the US National Guard joint multinational combined fire exercise.

As someone who lacks operational experience and who is new to the Battalion, this was going to be a real opportunity to not only develop my skills but also to enable further bonding with my company (2 Coy) and beyond. With talk of Blackhawks and the notorious MRE's or 'meal ready to eat' (which is still up for debate) we would certainly be receiving an authentic American experience. The initial introduction to the Blackhawk was quite surreal, after a casual safety briefing Platoons of eager Brits were placed in their chinks and loaded on for a doorless-ride skimming the treetops over stunning lakes and forests. There were grins from ear to ear!

We were also given the opportunity to use the US Army's individual weapon, the M4. After a day of training and weapon handling tests everyone was ready to get to work. Nothing could really prepare me for the multiple pinch yourself moments this exercise would give me. The exercise was broken into two parts, using separate sites. The first was to get to grips with the weapon and cover off the basics of working in pairs and sections. The second location was the Combined Arms Collective Training Facility (CACTF) aka the "Cack-Tiff" which is a basically a small town where we spent the second half of the exercise. It is a super impressive urban facility, and the pace soon ramped up. Among the invaluable training sessions, we covered day and night room clearance, stair drills, casualty evacuation to name but a few. We received some of the best training from instructors fresh out of the Infantry Battle School in Brecon which allowed us to really pull together the skills and drills for the final assault through the CACTF. Another surreal moment that none of us will forget was stepping off in the early hours to a spectacular show of the Northern Lights.

The initial break in then took its first



From left: Pte Adrian Giannelli Pte Jon Dobbing Pte Tom Dunnett Pte Luke Sykes and Pte Amy Kingston

The Steelbacks

contact as the sound of the American M240, their version of the General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG), bounced through the compound. Our turn next as we soon delivered on our QBOs and entered a stairwell that we would clear and hold. As the battle ensued, we became slick at our drills and fighting the close quarter battle in a very intense, calmly chaotic environment.

On “EndEx” everyone was both exhausted yet exhilarated, dawn had broken, and troops began sharing their accounts of the past few hours doing the job we all love...brass collecting! We were soon back on the Chinooks and heading back to camp, not one person wanted it to be over, but we settled for the beach volleyball and a few beers next to a lake in Camp Grayling that followed on our final night in the States.

Getting to see something on the scale of Ex Northern Strike was fantastic, especially so early in my career; when I started my journey to become a soldier, I didn't realise the opportunities available to me as a Reservist are so incredible. The training received and insight into the larger global picture is invaluable. I will never forget Northern Strike for so many reasons. Our two-week annual exercise is an ideal chance to get in some vital training not only across the rest of the Battalion but also with other Regiments and, occasionally from other NATO partner nations.



Sgt James Robinson in a Blackhawk



CACTF under northern lights



3rd Battalion

Exercise STEELBACK SEEK

2Lt Ollie Beckett

Over the weekend of the 20th – 22nd September 2024, soldiers of 3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, embarked on Exercise STEELBACK SEEK, based at Kendrew Barracks, designed to enhance key infantry skills and conceptual development. A battalion weekend, led by No. 2 Company, the exercise marked a significant milestone in the battalion's ongoing training program.

The exercise comprised a round-robin series of stands, each targeting vital operational skills. Allowing soldiers to cycle through a variety of challenges and refine their abilities across multiple domains. The stands incorporated a pistol range, introduction to drones, trench clearance, and close quarter battle.



Sgt Dean Watts delivering lessons



Firing from a trench

The Steelbacks

For many soldiers, the pistol is a secondary weapon, but one that requires finesse and precision. The pistol range stand, run by Sgt Young & Sgt Roach, gave troops the chance to re-familiarise with the Glock 17 9mm pistol. Soldiers practised firing a range of shoots, with experienced coaching, allowing them to improve their marksmanship.

One of the more modern and forward-looking aspects of Exercise STEELBACK SEEK was the introduction to drones. As the battlefield evolves, the role of technology and unmanned systems is becoming ever more critical. Led by Major Speechley, OC 2 Company, this stand looked to expose soldiers to the different types of drones and their employment on the battlefield, and their use in reconnaissance, surveillance, and strike missions.

Soldiers got up close with small Quadcopter RPAS, tactical & strategic level drones, learning to understand their operation and CONOPS in a variety of scenarios to simulate real-world use in both rural and urban environments.





3rd Battalion



The trench clearance stand was led by soldiers from 1 Coy, who have recently returned from Op INTERFLEX teaching these skills to Ukrainian soldiers, building upon the most recent of experiences incorporating new lessons learned. Soldiers rehearsed clearing enemy-occupied trenches using methodical yet aggressive tactics.

This stand tested their ability to operate under pressure, maintain effective communication, and for junior commanders to maintain control over a chaotic and information-limited environment. After a demonstration, the troops broke down into smaller groups to work on their individual skills and drills in clearing corners, bunkers and

junctions, before joining together to run through a full section and platoon attack.

The final stand of the day was the close quarter battle (CQB) stand, where soldiers built upon skills learned on Exercise Northern Strike in the US in room clearance, utilising simunition, a non-lethal training ammunition, allowed soldiers to train as close to real combat as possible without the risk of serious injury.

The stand was led by Sgt Davitt, who has completed the CQB(I) course in Brecon and brings a wealth of experience to the battalion, the time was spent revising fundamentals and progressed onto clearing complex room scenarios which tested individual soldiers and

commanders.

As the Saturday of intense training concluded, the companies returned to their respective ARCs. On Sunday No. 2 Company travelled to Rutland water park for a day of team building, despite the less-than-ideal weather everyone had a great time and was followed by lunch cooked by Ptes Singh & Bray, soldiers were invited to bring their families which was a chance for the company to socialise in a more informal environment.

This relaxed serial rounding off a varied exercise working to integrate a variety of current operational activities as well as reinforce cohesion across the Company.

UKAF Interservices Ice Hockey Championships

2Lt Ollie Beckett

The week of 3rd-7th June saw the annual UKAF Interservices Ice Hockey championships held at Sheffield Ice arena. A week of competition between teams from all three armed services which resulted in the largest recreational hockey tournament in the UK.

Monday was a training day for all teams, given the nature of some teams drawing players from units all over the UK it is tough to hold centralised training regularly. The Infantry had recently returned from a training camp in Northern Ireland, so the Monday was a chance to refine set plays and integrate players who hadn't been on the training camp.

Day one saw the Infantry play the RLC chiefs and the Royal Navy, with a 3-2 win against the fellow army team, and a narrow 0-1 loss to the Navy. But both games were a strong performance by the team, with goals from team captain Sgt Ashmore and Cpl Hutchings.

With the cobwebs blown out, day two was a pair of games against RAF teams, the Infantry faced the RAF Bluewings in a narrow 2-1 win that required the whole team to dig out against a strong opposition. With the second game in the afternoon against the RAF Starhawks the team came out flying with a 7-0 win with goals being scored by every line. This resulted in the Infantry being placed at the top of the group stages by the end of day two.

Day three was the end of the group stages, with all to play for from all teams for a chance to reach the knockout stages. Game 1 saw the Infantry face down the Royal Signals team, despite several of the Infantry having represented the Army Blades side the previous night everyone still put in 100% effort leading to a 4-1 win and securing a place in the quarter-final. The afternoon game against the much tougher REME Stallions was a bitter slog that finished in a 3-4 result in favour of the REME.

The knockout stages of Day four, the first game was matched the Infantry once again against the RAF Bluewings which was a comfortable 6-0 win, but



2Lt Ollie Beckett

despite the great result the Infantry's run finally ended against the much stronger RAF Vulcans who scored a pair of last-minute goals to win 3-4.

Despite the unfortunate result, the team played incredibly well together,

despite the limited training time together and the addition of several new faces the lines synched up well and delivered some fantastic hockey. The teams focus now switches to the Whittaker cup to be held in October in Swindon.



Ice hockey team



3rd Battalion

3 (Essex & Hertfordshire) Company

by Maj Harry Macleod

From the OC

As one gains experience in command, the opportunities to embrace reserve life become wider and clearer. Two years in post has resulted in fruitful, lasting relationships for the Company and the Battalion which includes, but is in no way limited to 3 Military Intelligence Battalion, 254 Medical Regiment and the tongue-breaking “Unterstützungsbataillon Einsatz 1” (One 1 for short), a German light infantry battalion.

Snow fell in January and we were straight into supporting 3MI on their annual green training in an urban package on Longmoor. The following week we were up to STANTA for our annual ACMT package, ensuring the soldiers were current and competent on their basic weapons systems.

In February we deployed to Surrey for Ex STEELBACK STALK for one



of the wettest weekends in the year, a Coy level integration exercise focussed on low level rural skills, as well as integrating our German counterparts into UK specialist weapons.

We continued our urban development at Kendrew Barracks using simunition, where we adapt the current weapon systems to use small ‘paint’ rounds which makes training much more realistic, particularly in the close context of trench warfare. We also used the Battalion’s pioneers who took us through a series of explosive demonstrations teaching us the usefulness of breaching techniques.

It was time to get back into the rural activities, where we deployed alongside a mounted fire support callsign from the Poachers for a Coy level attack through Thetford. It was great to be back in a properly rural scenario with a full complement of reservists ready to take the fight to the enemy, particularly rolling in night recces and company



2Lt Akshay Narayan leads a dawn platoon attack on Woodbridge

The Steelbacks

moves to enhance the complexity of the training.

Through the summer we had soldiers deployed on the 19X Ex RHINO HEART in Germany, the largest move of reserves in a generation with our US counterparts which, particularly for the junior soldiers was a great insight into wider army operations. In two weeks they covered FIWAF, trenches, OBUA and raids and returned home twice the soldier. We also had soldiers competing for the Army in rowing, fishing and motorbiking which are fantastic examples of the opportunities that still abound for reservists.

Concurrently those deploying to the US embarked on a series of readiness periods to ensure they were fit and qualified to deploy. It was a great insight into the complexity of deploying a force overseas that are 100% current and competent. Ex NORTHERN STRIKE was one of the most interesting, engaging overseas exercises many of



Maj Harry Macleod prepares Ptes Abdulrazziq and Pte Howard for the range

the Company have experienced in the Reserves.

We were delighted to undertake two

weeks of air assault operations with the Michigan National Guard, undertaking a series of urban focussed exercises culminating in a night company attack



The Commanding Officer, Lt Col Ed Matts presents Coronation Medals to, from left, Ptes Millman, Edwards, Howard and Exell



3rd Battalion

on a US 'village', equivalent to the size of a UK based town!

It was time to return to more cerebral activity for the CO's Ex GIBALTAR STUDY looking at the urban complexities of Ukraine and how Russian forces fight. This, combined with briefs from APC was a great opportunity for the officers and seniors to get together for a better overall understanding of some of the operational challenges that we can feed into our work. It was good to host the new CO at our reserve centre where he could give out Coronation medals.

Meanwhile the soldiers had a dedicated trench warfare weekend, again with simunition to hone their skills from earlier in the year. Trench fighting has

been a real focus on INTERFLEX which our soldiers involved with training their troops have incorporated into our regular training; we see it as an unfortunate but necessary part of our future conflict.

This helped hugely as we deployed for the first time to Woodbridge camp, taking advantage of the old airfield facilities to practice platoon attacks. It was a great run out for the troops as they rolled into their winter phase of training.

On we march into Remembrance where we had troops taking advantage of the Merville Barracks urban training facility using simunition against a variety of innovative moving targets. We split our callsigns for the Sunday between Hitchin (our outstation for

its inaugural parade) and Chelmsford where the bulk of our troops parade. It was a great opportunity for interaction with our local community and veterans. Community and employee engagement are key to the success and commitment of our reserves, so it was a pleasure to use the ARC to host Chelmsford's deputy mayor and present the armed forces covenant gold award to a local company.

The Company is in a great place with an exciting future and I am proud of its progress over the past year. It has an exciting future with a great set of innovative, determined soldiers to drive it through. All the fours!

Exercise RHINO HEART 2024

1(UK) Div's ARes Battle group annual deployment exercise

Sennelager Training Area Germany 7-23 June 2024

by Pte Giles Cheeseman, 3 Company

Exercise Rhino Heart formed part of a wider NATO training objective – Exercise Linotyper which was conducted throughout 2023/4. Exercise Rhino Heart saw the largest deployment of UK and NATO Reserve forces in a generation and in doing so achieved its main objectives; to effectively deploy elements of 19 Light Brigade (19 Bde), to mainland Europe at speed and conduct training at Battle Group level. In doing so, 19 Bde demonstrated not only the capacity for Reserve forces to form part of NATO & UK defence strategy, but laid foundations for future Reserve forces to deploy en-masse too.

3 Royal Anglian were attached to 4th Battalion Royal Yorkshire Regiment and met at Wolseley barracks York. We travelled via coach & ferry to Paderborn Germany, and the NATO forward operating base – Normandy Barracks. Arrival included multiple briefs & administration in preparation for the exercise and allowed us time to meet fellow exercising troops from 19 Bde, along with a large contingent of US National Guard soldiers who were undergoing familiarisation training on British weapon systems.

The majority of the Steelbacks

were ORBAT-ed in C Coy, 2 Plt under Lieutenant Mercer with Cpl Hurst as Plt Sgt from 3 R ANGLIAN. Opportunities arose throughout the exercise to work closely with the US troops which proved to be an excellent opportunity to integrate with our NATO colleagues.

Skill sets and knowledge were frequently shared and developed at all levels. Attached services for the exercise included drone capabilities, field medics, chefs, and engineers from across 1 (UK) Div.

Following the reception stage C Coy deploy to the Sennelager training area via TCV to undergo the first training phase of the exercise conducted at company level. The aim was to challenge the company and platoon commanders while providing lower-level skills and drills for exercising troops.

The training phases included four 24 hour long serials covering: FIWAF & Advance to contact, Trenches – occupation, defence & extraction, OBUA and Raids. All serials included an instructor led lesson and brief teaching phase, followed by a short period for commanders to develop SOP's prior to the start. AAR were delivered after each serial to provide feedback from the OM

& DS. A highlight among all troops was the fantastic OBUA village training facility, a purpose-built village with every conceivable hazard present which demanded exceptionally high skills and drills throughout and provided a clear reality of the difficulties faced when operating in this type of environment. A clear winner for the most popular serial and training value.

In camp battle prep began in earnest prior to the FTX phase which began back in the OBUA village with a 48-hour advance to contact serial, designed to draw upon the newly developed skills and knowledge. Again, the main training objectives was aimed at Brigade HQ, however this did not deter troops at all levels who were situationally aware and switched on being continually tested through the various phases of the battle.

Continually operating at the required standards for the entirety of the exercise was vital to maintain our platoon's combat effectiveness. Individuals operating standards and battlefield discipline were closely monitored- any drop in skills would result in casualties. To ensure that we were suitably challenged, the DS would be seen "killing off" section commanders/2ICs.



Pte Giles Cheeseman from 3 Coy providing overwatch during a Fighting in Woods and Forests attack

Occupation of the village lead to defensive posture and routine, before our Coy being tasked with conducting a Relief in Place (RiP) with a Coy of US National Guard who had been providing flank protection. In typical infantry fashion, this was followed by a biblical deluge of rain and thunderstorms ensuring we and the ground were sufficiently wet for the remainder of the exercise; “if it’s not raining, it’s not training”!

Having completed the RiP we provided fire support for the final advance to contact, a 7 kilometre clearance with multiple enemy positions including forest and trench systems. The going was tough over the wooded and sandy terrain as our company peeled in line with the FLOT. Continual casualties and replenishment work parties drove us on into the night until we eventually

achieved mission success.

The Royal Yeomanry then delivered a firepower demonstration with their Jackals using a mixture of 50 calibre HMG & GMPG onto fixed targets. This was supplemented by a selection of exercising troops who fired NLAW & ASM. Coming from a light role Reserve Bn it’s not every day that you witness this kind of firepower! A few Brigade pictures later and we were at End Ex. The Brigade commander addressed us and delivered a heartfelt speech and commendations. He highlighted this deployment was a template for future Reserve deployment and the largest movement of Reserve troops in a generation.

Return to camp following the end of training lead a well-earned BBQ and opportunities for us to experience some of the culture around Paderborn,

Germany. Excursions to local Spas, bars and restaurants to relax and enjoy the European Football Champions football competition or visits to several historical locations including, Wewelsburg Castle – home to the SS during WW2 and Mohne reservoir – site of the famous dam buster raids of the same period. All of which were enjoyed.

As a member of the Army Reserve, Ex Rhino Heart has given me the opportunity of being part of something bigger. It has allowed me to meet, observe and train with other Units from across the UK within 19 Bde, the US National Guard and to experience working within a Brigade context. It has allowed me to build relationships, develop skills and improve my understanding of the role we play in the Army Reserve. I am delighted to have been able to play my part as a Royal Anglian.



3rd Battalion

Exercise STEELBACK STRIKE

by 2Lt Akshay Narayan

Ex STEELBACK STRIKE was the final opportunity for a Battalion level tactical training event prior to the Steelbacks going to America for Ex NORTHERN STRIKE. The Battalion converged from across the Regimental footprint on Stanford Training Area (STANTA) near Thetford. Soldiers from all five companies arrived at Lynford Home Farm, at the assembly area to begin preparing for the rigorous training ahead.

Saturday morning began with the issue of Tactical Engagement Simulation (TES) equipment, to enable the training to be a more realistic force-on-force experience. Not common to all Reserve training events; TES kit gives Reserve soldiers more feedback as to the quality of their use of the ground and cover and drives home that marksmanship is an essential skill for infantry soldiers,



Directing fire support



Capt Christian Healey, Maj Harry MacLeod, Capt Caleb Smith, Maj Martin Hurrell planning



Ex SB STRIKE - Pte Bore Macdonald Promotion

adding a vital layer of authenticity to the exercise.

Prior to the training serials, in a moment of pride and camaraderie, the CO promoted several Private soldiers to Lance Corporal in front of the entire Battalion. These individuals had recently completed and passed a JNCO cadre, demonstrating exceptional leadership potential, and the Battalion celebrated their achievements with enthusiasm. Additionally, the CO publicly congratulated the Battalion Shooting Team for their outstanding performance, having just won the 1 Div Operational Shooting Competition for the third consecutive year the week before. The Battalion also bid a heartfelt farewell to the RSM, WO1 Gareth George, who was retiring from the army after 25 years of distinguished service.

Admin, presentations, and promotions over focus moved onto “remind-and-revise” sessions, where soldiers practiced advance-to-contact SOPs and rehearsals. This progressed into Fighting in Woods and Forests (FIWAF) attack lane serials building to Section level, familiarising soldiers with TES equipment and the implications on how the move and the use of cover.

While the Sections refined their TTPs, the Platoon Commanders received orders from the Company Commander for the following days deliberate company attack. Building on the estimate training from the 19 Bde junior officers cadre run by the 3 R ANGLIAN Adjt earlier in the year they developed their plans and delivered orders.

Following a vehicle move, troops patrolled to their forming-up points,

poised to launch on H-Hr. The subsequent assault saw the Company clear a mix of wood blocks, farm buildings, and a quarry. Fire support was provided by Jackal from 2 R ANGLIAN, enhancing the attack’s effectiveness and drawing the Regimental efforts together working toward the War Fighting Increment the Army Reserve provides to the Regular Units.

This intense and multifaceted exercise was designed to enhance their combat readiness. On End Ex the learning and development points were drawn out, augmented by the TES data, to be built on for the future. Ex STEELBACK STRIKE was a testament to the Steelbacks unwavering commitment to building excellence and re-affirmed that Reservists are indeed “twice the citizen”.



3rd Battalion

Exercise TERTIUS COLDSTART 24

by 2Lt Neville Reid

A cold weekend in early January saw the Steelbacks back in the field deploying to Longmoor training area for Ex TERTIUS COLDSTART. 50 Soldiers from 3 Coy were requested to support a 3 Military Intelligence (3MI) Battalion training event focused on Operations in Built Up Areas (OBUA), developing their basic key skills. 3MI delivers MI Operators to IISR Brigade.

As analysts the training emphasis is on building strong, core Operational Intelligence (OPINT) skills, overlaid by an understanding of actual and emerging threats and theatres of operation. These Int Corps soldiers who are highly capable analysts must also be confident leaders and soldiers.

BCS are core skills for soldiers operating in the modern battlefield. It's the subject matter expert skill set that the infantry troops have, in a range of kinetic and non-kinetic scenarios, that the Int Corps soldiers wished to



Cpl Tim Rolph mentoring a 3MI multiple commander



3MI PSI delivering orders lesson



Steelback mentor helping 3MI Bn soldiers with a CASEVAC

harness. This collaboration was also an opportunity to increase the 3 R ANGLIAN interoperability skill set with a view to deploying on the Bns overseas training exercise in August, Ex NORTHERN STRIKE.

The training began with lessons and refresher sessions delivered by Steelback instructors covering OBUA serials up to Section level and battlefield casualty drills and casualty evacuation. This revised knowledge was then put to the test with attack lanes, each with added levels of complexity including obstacle crossings, transitions through the rural/urban interface, abandoned armoured fighting vehicles and building clearances. Following the kinetic activity commanders were then further

stretched as CMTs from 3 R ANGLIAN had set up casualty situations often leading to the classic infantry phys event; a CASEVAC.

Having set the conditions and ensured troops understood the basics to operate in the urban environment the Longmoor FOB was occupied to begin the final training phase. Patrols led to meetings with an unpredictable and sometimes violent local civilian population intent on protesting and disrupting their movements. This tested the troops abilities to maintain focus under pressure, while deploying appropriate responses to the varied verbal and progressively more physical dangers being presented.

Reports and returns from these

encounters fed an ever-increasingly detailed intelligence picture that the soldiers from 3 MI Bn were building. The training culminated with a dawn raid on high value target that had been assessed as a destabilising influence and a threat to the local population and friendly forces.

While much of the training was aimed at Royal Anglian soldiers developing the Int Corps soldiers' skills; the value of the Int Corps soldiers' OPINT skills and their analysis and guidance for the combat estimate and orders process was where the Steelbacks had the favour returned. The sessions deliver by the Int Corps instructors proved invaluable and will undoubtedly help Steelbacks on future career courses.



3rd Battalion

4 (Lincolnshire) Company

by A/Maj Christian Healey, OC

From the OC

As the newly-appointed OC 4 Coy, I'm now a couple of years in and consider my feet (relatively) firmly under the table. And I'm still continuously impressed by the commitment of our troops and their ability to balance the demands of their 'day jobs' with those of the Army Reserves.

Perhaps unsurprisingly it's been another busy year for the Bn and 4 Coy, the basis of our training being the reinforcement and development of the fundamentals of soldiering – namely move, shoot, communicate and mediate. We've also sought to create development opportunities for our junior soldiers, from delivering informal briefs to their peers, to covering elements of basic lessons.

Recent events in Europe and beyond have led to a focus on the more 'traditional' infantry skills, incorporating elements of lessons learned from current conflicts around the world such as C2D2 (camouflage, concealment, dispersal and deception). Much of our training this year has been geared towards the Bn Main Effort, ex NORTHERN STRIKE in the United States. But there's also been Coy representation in other exercises including the 19 Bde ADX Ex RHINO HEART in Germany.

Support to operations and the wider Army continues to be a high priority tasking across the Bn and 4 Coy. Several of our soldiers have deployed, or are lined up to deploy on Op INTERFLEX, with several others currently providing Force Protection to BATUK. In both instances they are gaining valuable experience and making a positive impact on the delivery of these vital taskings. In the case of the BATUK deployment, Pte Chloe Wilkinson has found time to coach a local women's football team, even donating Grimsby Town FC shirts to them.

Although some in the Coy would suggest Lincoln City shirts would have been a better choice (!), such acts of care



LCpl Kai Bore Macdonald scans the terrain whilst on Ex STEELBACK STRIKE

and generosity are helping to improve the everyday lives of women in the local community. Pte Wilkinson has also set out to raise funds for the purchase of recreational and school supplies for a local primary and secondary school in the area.

We've continued to welcome and integrate new members into the Coy and achieved good progression through the training pipeline, up to and including the Combat Infantry Course (CIC). This has been down to the hard work and dedication of WO2 John Limb and Sgt Mat Hardy and the team. A soldier of particular note is Pte Troy Mills who has successfully completed the training pipeline from Foundation through to CIC

in a single year, collecting the Soldiers' Soldier Award for his Battlecamp performance along the way.

The NE Lincolnshire Armed Forces Day in Cleethorpes as well as Remembrance Day continue to allow our soldiers to interact with the public and display the best of the military during high profile occasions. Additionally, this year the Coy was responsible for facilitating an Army Engagement Group Event at Grimsby Town Hall. Here, members of the Coy were presented their King's Coronation medals by CO 3 R Anglian and the Mayor of NE Lincolnshire. There were even a couple of cameos from some former members of the Coy. Pte Sian Potter also delivered



Pass Off Parade - Pte Troy Mills received the Soldiers' Soldier Award for his Battlecamp performance

an outstanding, insightful presentation on her journey into and through the Army Reserve as an Infantry soldier, to 150 guests from 3 different Reserve Units, the RFCA (Reserve Forces and Cadets Association) and Humberside Army Cadet Force. With such huge public support for our Armed Forces, it's always a great experience for the Troops and their families.

Finally, we've welcomed the arrival of Sgt Wayne Richardson as PSI. Posted from 3 RANGER, Sgt Richardson has made an immediate impact on the Coy, becoming a mentor to both junior and more experienced soldiers. We congratulated Pte Kai Bore-Macdonald on his promotion to LCpl, presented by the outgoing CO on the Bn exercise Ex STEELBACK STRIKE, and LCpl



Cleethorpes Armed Forces Day - WO2 (CSM) Keith Hack inspects the troops prior to the event

Stephen Wall on his selection for promotion to Cpl. I anticipate several more promotions in the coming year. We also said farewell to Pte Catalina Bucur who has transferred to the Regular Army.

And so, we approach the end of another busy year. With some key events in the calendar still to complete, planning is already underway for what will inevitably be a jam-packed 2025.

Exercise RHINO HEART A Testament to Resilience and Camaraderie

by Lt Sam Mercer, 4 Company

In the largest gathering of reserve soldiers in over twenty years, the soldiers from 3 Royal Anglian showcased their mettle and readiness during the two-week exercise known as Ex RHINO HEART. This monumental event took place in Sennelager, Germany, and featured a robust participation from the Royal Anglian Regiment, alongside various cap badges and international partners, including the American National Guard.

The exercise demonstrated the ability to form up on a large scale and work with other members of the military

having not previously met. It highlighted points from the war in Ukraine, such as the extensive use of drones and the need for dispersion tactics, while also showing the benefits of having drones, including identifying enemy forces.

A Junior Commander's Perspective

As a junior commander with the Royal Anglian Regiment, I had the privilege of leading a platoon throughout the exercise, operating as both part of a company and later a battlegroup. The platoon was a diverse mix of soldiers, with 4 separate

cap badges in one platoon. The platoon also integrated soldiers from the US national guard each day, with a different fire team being added daily. Despite the constant ORBAT changes and the tests of our team cohesion, both the platoon and the company worked extremely well together and were able to integrate and operate as a cohesive unit.

The Exercise

Thrust straight into a company level woods and forest clearance in the dark. An instant test for the soldiers who had



3rd Battalion

only met 24 hours previously, with little time to talk during travel. To add to the complexity the Royal Anglian platoon featured members from the US national guard, the Lancs, Rifles and Yorkshire Regiments. Despite this, the platoon worked seamlessly together, advancing through the darkness and clearing multiple positions. The first day had already highlighted the importance of planning and rehearsals and was the most difficult day of the exercise.

The exercise was designed to push the boundaries of conventional training from an enemy perspective, meaning that the friendly forces had to deal with a pressuring and free-thinking enemy. Throughout the course of the exercise this included the enemy charging forwards towards our position, laying booby traps and throwing multiple grenades and running away.

Over the course of two weeks, we undertook two major field exercises that included a multitude of tasks such as advance to contacts, fighting through



19 Bde Yeomanry Jackal



OPFOR in action

dense woods and forests, and engaging in large-scale fighting in built-up areas. Each scenario mimicked real-world combat situations, with an emphasis on an unconventional enemy and a peer-to-peer enemy ability.

The "advance to contact" drills were among the most intense phases of the exercise. The initial exercise contained an advance to contact lane in the middle of the night, providing obvious challenges. However, the second exercise was a much more interesting and realistic lane, with a full battlegroup working towards the same objective. We were able to utilize assets including the drone, which was essential to identify the front line of troops of the other company. It was a good experience being able to communicate with the other companies and cover their approach from a fire support location, before then assaulting our own group of trenches. Having previously assaulted a small compound during a raid and clearing a small sector of the village manned by German troops, the platoon had some experience in operating in built up areas. The urban phase was one of the most enjoyable phases, with aggression and momentum being key, it also highlighted the importance of liaising with other commanders on the ground and the use of fire support.

Working with the American National Guard

A highlight of Ex RHINO HEART was the opportunity to work alongside the American National Guard. Their presence added a valuable dimension to the exercise, fostering a spirit of international cooperation. The American troops brought with them different tactics and perspectives, enriching our training experience. Despite the differences in training and equipment, we quickly found common ground and developed a seamless operational synergy.

Reflections on Leadership and Resilience

As a junior commander, Ex RHINO HEART was a profound learning experience. Leading a team through such a demanding exercise required not only



Multi-national platoons

tactical understanding but also a deep understanding of others plans and being able to take information and advice from other commanders or soldiers that may have a better perspective at that moment. Training with the brigade was notably different from our usual battalion exercises. Normally, we operate as part of a company and are familiar with the other commanders and soldiers, benefiting from an existing level of team cohesion. However, on this exercise, nobody knew each other, necessitating effective communication and liaison with other commanders both on the ground and during the planning process. The larger scale of the exercise also introduced assets such as Jackal vehicles in fire support and FRV occupation roles, as well as the use of bat Simms to simulate mortars and artillery. These elements added complexity and realism, further enhancing the training experience, and testing our adaptability.

The conditions, both in terms of weather and the nature of the drills, demanded the quick thinking and underscored the strength of all of the soldiers.

Conclusion

Ex RHINO HEART was more than just a military exercise; it was a demonstration of the British Army Reserves' readiness and resilience. The experience underscored the importance of rigorous training, international cooperation, and the indomitable spirit of the soldiers. As we packed up our gear and prepared to leave Sennelager, there was a shared sense of accomplishment. We had not only met the challenges head-on but had also strengthened the bonds of camaraderie that are so essential in military life. Cpl Hurst from 4 company also received the commanding officers coin for exceptional work as a section commander, offering knowledge and working hard for his section.



3rd Battalion

Exercise SOBRAON STRIKE

by CSgt James "Ted" Baker

Ex SOBRAON STRIKE was a two-day Platoon level exercise run over the weekend of 18 – 20 October 2024. The subunit strength encompassed personnel from both 4 (Lincolnshire) and 2 (Leicestershire) Company and the exercise was delivered on Catterick training area. The exercise provided a focus on Section level patrol skills, including section attacks and recces, culminating in a Platoon Ambush.

The first day saw the section conduct a set of section attacks within a patrol lane. With no NCOs on the exercise 2Lt Beckett and Lt Mercer took on the roles of section commanders and Pte Kingston as 2ic. This didn't slow the first attack as CONTACT was heard, yet again, through the sunny hills of Catterick training area. A steep ravine and dying but still high ferns where in between the section and the

enemy position. After a few moments of OF&M the plan was put together and a left flanking manoeuvre entailed. The enemy had no clue where the grenade came from and soon "POSITION CLEAR" was called.

Once the patrol lane was finished, around 1300, the section came back to Hudswell Grange where Pte Singh had cooked up a feast, using the No5 cook set. I'd have to quote myself by saying



Ambush sprung

“That weekend I’d eaten the best food while on an exercise!”.

Second half of the day the troops went into an Ambush lesson, taught by Sgt Magwaza, followed by trip flare and Illum lessons. A few of the privates where apprehensive using a live trip flare but soon got over it and even set them up, at night, during the Ambush. Not bad for their first time ever touching one.

Once the lessons where done Lt Mercer and Sgt Grey took over the platoon minus strength to organise and plan for the nights ambush operation. After rehearsals a recce patrol was set up and sent into Ambush Alley to scout

the area. After they returned, final admin and Orders were conducted and under the large Harvest moon the platoon headed to the Ambush site.

Sgt Harvey along with Pte Vickers led the patrol in and set the troops up in the location. Ambush set was called by the platoon commander and the wait was on. Sgt Roach with his enemy squad, Ptes Beezer and Totty, soon came around the corner in classic enemy formation 2, on foot, at the front of a vehicle.

With a blaze of GPMG fire the ambush was initiated. Trip flares and Illum lit up the valley and woodblock and the enemy were soon dispatched. Pte Kingston and Pte Issit conducted

the searches once completed the platoon quickly made their retreat back to the harbour.

SOBRAON STRIKE was both 4 (Lincolnshire) and 2 (Leicestershire) Company’s first tactical exercise after ADX and looked to build up skills and drills used on ADX.

It looked to provide challenging training in the field based around the delivery of section level patrols in order to develop leadership, teamwork, physical fitness, moral and physical courage, as well as core infantry skills that are vital to the delivery of operational capability in a progressive and challenging manner.



3rd Battalion

Armed Forces Day, Cleethorpes, June 2024

by Cpl Webster



4 Company personnel before the march past

The North East Lincs Armed Forces Day Event in Cleethorpes is always a key event in the calendar of 4 Coy. As one of our annual opportunities to engage with the public, from whom we have huge support, it allows us to don our Service Dress and march along the front with members of the other services, veterans and cadets, before sharing stories over a pint. For 4 Coy, the event always covers 2 distinct elements – the recruitment stand, covering the entire weekend, headed up by Sgt Matt Hardy and the Saturday march past, led by WO2 (CSM) Keith Hack.

Although preparations for the event began several weeks earlier, the Armed Forces weekend started on the preceding Friday night with some organised PT, the obligatory (and wholly necessary) drill practice, and kit preparation into the small hours. Pte Christopher Wood required some additional attention as he turned up requiring all of his badges and buttons sewing on to his uniform. Luckily, we had several sewing kits available, with the CSM and LCpl Dominic Parry on hand to demonstrate their needlecraft prowess!

Following a hearty breakfast and some final drill preparations and kit adjustments, members of the Coy made



Pte Josh Bakewell engages with potential recruits of the future.

their way to the march past start point, where we gathered with our families, veterans and other military personnel. It was great to see former 4 Coy OC Maj (retired) Mitch Pegg join us for a chat prior to the march past commencing.

Following the form-up and some final kit checks, the parade stepped off to rapturous applause from members of the public waving union flags, giving everyone an added spring in their step. Following a well-rehearsed 'eyes right' to HRH the Duke of Kent the parade continued smartly to its conclusion.

Immediately after the parade, the Coy dispersed, allowing us to experience

the atmosphere, entertainment and stalls of the wider event – including several flypasts by the Red Arrows amongst others. With local bands performing on the main stage and plenty of street food vendors available, it was incredibly humbling that both bus services and a local chip shop refused to take payment from any member of the Coy in support of the occasion.

Once all members of the Coy were accounted for and changed from Service Dress to civilian attire, we proceeded with the evening's activities, spending considerable time in the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and Parachute

Regiment Association bars where we were well looked after and able to exchange tall tales until late into the night. We also had the opportunity to speak with veterans who served during the Falklands conflict right through to Iraq and Afghanistan – some of whom carry the scars of those conflicts. This for all of us reminded us of why such events are so important. With such great company, a jam-packed night of musical entertainment and outstanding firework display, the Armed Forces weekend lived up to our expectations once again – we look forward to the next one!

Army Engagement Group Grimsby Event

by Sgt Mat Hardy

Grimsby is known for fish. Sometimes, it is known for its football team, Grimsby Town FC, The Mighty Mariners. Mainly though, it is known for fish. But, did

you know that Grimsby is also the most Northern Royal Anglian location in the Royal Anglian footprint?

As well as supplying countless

troops to the 2nd Battalion, Grimsby is also the home of 4 (Lincolnshire) Company of the 3rd Battalion. Every week, Reserve soldiers from The



Pte Sian Potter from 4 Company talks about life as a Reservist mum and business owner



3rd Battalion



Members of 4 Company pose with the Mayor of North East Lincolnshire on the Grand Staircase of Grimsby Town Hall. Can you spot the Lincolnshire Regiment stained glass?

Steelbacks meet at Westward Ho Barracks in Grimsby and at Sobraon Barracks in Lincoln to conduct training. Once a month, these Reserve soldiers conduct a training exercise on one of the many training areas in the country in order to attain all of their Individual Training Requirements for the training year. Sometimes, fitting all of this in is not the most attractive proposition after a 40 hour week at work and all the usual aspects of normal life

In a regular battalion, recruiting is not something that is a huge concern. There is a constant inflow from ITC which is driven by the Armed Forces Careers Offices. Recruit training is handled at ITC and not in Battalion as those of you who have been on a posting there will know. In the Army Reserve it is different and both recruiting, and some recruit training is handled in Company locations just like Grimsby and Lincoln.

Attracting people to join the Army Reserve is a challenging task so we have to come up with new and different ways of spreading the word and getting people to join. My idea was to get the Army Engagement Group (AEG) in to talk to the people of Grimsby and get people talking about the Army.

The AEG are based at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and tour the country engaging with public audiences to inform and attract people to the Army. I felt it would be beneficial to 4 Company as well as the wider regiment if the Army Engagement Group came to Grimsby to spread the good word about the Army. Being on the border of HQ North and HQ Centre (4 Brigade and 7 Brigade in old money).

On the 9th October 2024, the AEG rolled up at Grimsby's historic Town Hall and set up their roadshow for the evening. They were aided and abetted by

Mrs Sheila Stephenson from HQ Centre in Donington, who really has been the glue that has held the planning phases together. This was much the same as roadies setting up for a gig. Led by a familiar face to any Vikings, Maj Si Broomfield, the AEG team converted the huge Assembly Room into an auditorium ready for the presentation and set up a reception desk with typical military IT equipment that was guaranteed to go wrong. In the background local units 150 RLC, and 102 REME set up their information stands in the shadow of the far superior (of course) 3 Royal Anglian stand. Yorkshire and Humberside Reserve Forces & Cadets Association and Yorkshire & Humberside Cadets also provided stands. At 6pm, over 150 invited guests from the local area began to filter in. It was good to see veterans from the 1st, 2nd, both 3rd Battalions and 7th Battalions of the regiment all in

attendance and ready to hear what the AEG had to say.

At 7pm the show was kicked off by CO 3 Royal Anglian, Lt Col Ed Matts, who was the Senior Military Host. After an informative brief about the current local setup and presentations about current ops, a local Army Cadet and local Royal Anglian Reservist, Pte Sian Potter, gave a talk about the lived experience of being a member of their respective organisations.

Before a final Q&A session, the evening was crowned with a medals presentation to soldiers from 3 Royal

Anglian and two retired Steelbacks, Mr Wayne Sheils and Mr Tim Mosey. The Queens' Platinum Jubilee Medal was awarded to two people and seventeen Coronation Medals were presented by the Worshipful Mayor of North East Lincolnshire, Cllr Steve Beasant assisted by his consort and CO 3 Royal Anglian. All of the soldiers received a warm, appreciative applause from the public before wandering off to try and find the buffet.

By the end of the evening, the AEG had crashed down, loaded the van and headed off to a hotel for the night before

doing it all again somewhere else in the country. 5 months of planning, recces and countless emails was done and dusted in a matter of hours. The benefit of this event will not be immediately measurable, but engagement is key to gain the support of the public and inform them of all the good things the Army are doing. We used the opportunity to educate people what the Army Reserve do and gave them the chance to talk to serving Reservists. Time will tell if they spread the message or not but thanks to the AEG, we gave them the chance.

Infantry Cycling

by Cpl Cybulski

The Wales Dragon Ride is regarded as one of the toughest amateur events on the British Cycling calendar - 300km of the toughest terrain Wales has to offer. Three types of people attend events like this. The noble, raising money for charity. The masochist, aiming to stretch and challenge the borders which define pain and suffering. And thirdly, those who were subtly persuaded, without knowing what they were getting themselves into! Fortunately, the Infantry team mostly lay in the centre of those ideals and started the Dragon Ride in the early hours of a pleasant Welsh Sunday full of bravado with a steely spirit, chomping at the bit, ready to attack the oncoming 300km.

It's a hard game trying to break a bike race down into manageable mental chunks (i.e. by time, distance, waypoints, etc.). Fortunately for the infantry team instinct took over and the first 70k were swallowed at high speed with little regard for the cost, and for some that approach paid off. Red Cycling Jerseys, bayonet proudly printed on the back continued to push the pace, earning much appreciation from the larger teams.

Whilst I (the only Royal Anglian soldier in a team made up mainly of Rifles personnel) was exhausted by the 100km mark, it seemed the team was well oiled, and led by seniors representing of the Rifles, and so the spirit endured. There was a serious drive to show off what our trade really means, and that a Reservist could hang

with the big boys. As riders passed me over the Devils staircase (1.5km at 11%) the question was asked, 'where are the rest of your guys?'. 'I'm the rearguard', is all I could reply on the hardest 20% gradients. But soon the 100 mile mark (160km) point was struck, the team back together after a short feed stop with hot roast potatoes and coffee.

The day carried on with climb after climb and a few very familiar names to the blokes. Sennybridge was passed, as was Black Mountain and the Pen Y

Fan. The kms clicked down, the Infantry and Army cycling jerseys ever present. And it was with 30km to go that the final peak was hit and 'the last 30 is downhill' hypothesis was put to the test, and it proved to be true, with the final hour whizzing past and the tide completed in weather that the Battle School rarely offers.

Infantry riders completed some of the toughest terrain Wales has to offer with a determination bred by their trade and cap badge.



Cpl Cybulski at the finish



3rd Battalion

5 (Suffolk & Cambridgeshire) Company

by Maj Matt Ottaway

From the OC

As I write this, I reflect how busy this year has been for..." is a cliché in this publication but it's a cliché for a reason. The Army, the Regiment, the 3rd Battalion and 5 Company are busy and are in uncertain times.

This Castle article is written with the background of a major State on State

conflict in Europe, continued violence in the middle east and a host of other actual and potential flashpoints around the world. It has never been difficult to motivate soldiers to train but currently examples of existing British Army commitments and possible future ones are everywhere and serve as a reminder to all of us of the ultimate purpose of the Army Reserve. As always, the

5 Company team have spent another busy, rewarding and successful year focussed heavily on operations and training with members of the Company completing periods of mobilised service, career courses and a steady drumbeat of training events to maintain standards and develop new skills.

Op INTERFLEX remains a priority for the Army as a whole, members of



Members of 5 Coy marking Schwaben Day



Sgt Lewis Dean of 5 Coy in a US Army Chinook

5 Company have mobilised within the UK providing training to Ukrainian service personnel just as they did in 2023. It is worth highlighting that they are fulfilling vital roles, delivering training directly to the Ukrainians to the highest of standards and alleviating some of the commitments the Regular Army has to meet. This reflects well on them as individuals and the Regiment as well as being a great advert for the employability of Reservists.

WO2 Howe has spent much of the year in mobilised service in the BATUK training wing. There has also been a Force Protection Platoon drawn from across Reservists in 19 Brigade in Kenya, with a healthy contingent of 5 Coy soldiers.

Both mobilised deployments are something you can read more about in this edition of Castle. As demands on the British Army continue to rise

opportunities to mobilise out to places like Kenya will increase and we expect members of the Company continue to deploy next year in a whole range of roles.

Schwaben Platoon in Peterborough continue to uphold the legacy of those Cambridgeshire men who served before them, marking Schwaben day at the Imperial War Museum. In Oct 1916 the 1st Cambridgeshire Regiment took part in the capture of the Schwaben Redoubt, an action within the Battle of the Somme.

The Cambridgeshires were part of the Territorial Force and a part-time volunteer component of the British Army, created to augment British land forces it was a forerunner to the Army Reserve of today.

Recruiting and engagement activity remains vital to our success, and we continue to allocate significant time and

effort to it. With the hard work from many people both within and outside 5 Company we continue to be well recruited in both Bury st Edmunds and Peterborough.

Those new recruits have done well coming through the training pipeline completing various career courses to become fully trained members of the Regiment, able to contribute to wider Defence output. Alongside new recruits joining the Company there have been a few changes of note as people have left.

Maj Robison has moved from being OC to the QM(T) role and will still be working hard with Regimental charity and RHQ so remains very much part of the wider Regimental family. Sgt Maj Wright has moved back to the 1st Battalion and Sgt Maj East has come back to the Steelbacks from the 2nd to help provide training support to both 5 Company and the 3rd Battalion. CSgt



3rd Battalion

Cham has now left Regular service after a full career but is becoming a Reservist so he has not vanished completely; WO2 Pritchard is taking over as the new CIS lead.

The highlight of the year for many in 5 Company has undoubtedly been the Battalions Overseas Training Exercise in Michigan, USA, Ex Northern Strike. The deployment was part of a wider British deployment with troops from across 1 UK Division joining other partner nations, and US National Guard troops to train together. Aviation support, use of different weapons and communication systems and working in a different country will be remembered by all those who participated for years to come.

As the Army continues to navigate high tempo activity and with a new Government, there undoubtedly remains a degree of uncertainty over the Army budget, the size and shape of the Army, and exactly what future role Reservists will fulfil. There is very little we can do to influence the outcome of those discussions so 5 Company will continue to focus on supporting operations and training to be ready for future opportunities when they arrive.



At a Batuk orphanage



Pte Tichanow



OC at Tesco Engagement event

Visiting Instructor at ATR Grantham

by Sgt Lewis Dean



Sgt Dean, Pte Wilkie, Pte Corbishley, Cpl Burrell

Prince William of Gloucester Barracks near Grantham is home to an Army Training Regiment (ATR) where the majority of Soldiers joining the 3rd Battalion do their initial training. Training for a Reserve Soldier consists of two main courses and some online training packages.

The first part is Module 1: Foundation Training. Which consists of five alternate weekends, or nine days consolidated, at an ATR with other recruits from all cap-badges. The second part is Module 2: Battle Camp which is a 15.5-day residential camp for all recruits. This

brings them to a point where they can go on to complete their specialty to arm training; in the case of the Steelbacks the head North to Catterick to become Infantry Soldiers.

In addition to my role as a Platoon Sgt based in Peterborough, I have been acting as a Visiting Instructor (VI) at ATR Grantham since 2022 as both a Section Commander and PTI. As a PTI the key aim is to support the QMSI in running progressive fitness and assisting the recruits conducting their Personal Development Pathway.

This is to build the physical and

mental robustness to meet the physical individual training requirements to be able to complete the Role Fitness Test. My time as a Section Commander is focused on teaching Skill at Arms lessons and providing safety on the ranges. The foundation training module also includes basic field craft, camouflage and concealment and the recruits first night living in the field.

For some who are reading this who may have done 20+ years in the Army this may not seem much! However, for some recruits, after only doing a single weekend introduction this can be quite



3rd Battalion

intense, especially getting hands on with their individual weapon for the first time. For what comes naturally to us can be quite hard for some to grasp and only having a few days to learn vast amounts of information in between other subjects can come as a challenge.

I have had the privilege to train some of our own Steelbacks and seeing them go from getting the weapon out of the armoury for the first time in amazement, to seeing them firing live rounds on the ranges just a few days later is impressive. The recruits need to be flexible and patient when it comes to taking in the information and to see our Steelbacks grasp this and execute good practice on the range is something for them to be proud of.

Recruits work late into the evening packing kit, or prepping for the lessons the following day or for PT prep for their first loaded marches and as a result there is not a lot of time for them to relax, so in this intense learning environment sleep is a must. Grantham being a phase 1 establishment gives the recruits time throughout to get to know new people and about different Units and their different roles. All of which opens their eyes to what the wider Army is and does



Soldiers under training at ATR(G)

that will give them insight for when they deploy on later exercises or operations.

Working at ATR Grantham has been a very rewarding experience seeing the recruits grow into the next generation

of soldiers and then getting the honour of working alongside them on exercises such as Northern Strike where you see them continue to strive for excellence gives great pride in a job well done.

BATUK Force Protection (Kenya)

by Cpl Burrell

British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) is the British Army's largest contingent of soldiers in Africa. Based out of Laikipia Air Base, the British Army regularly conducts joint training with the Kenyan Defence Forces as well as outreach and engagement programmes such as support to the replanting of forestry and pop-up medical clinics in remote regions which treat thousands of patients in areas that have limited regular access to healthcare.

Also in Kenya is the British Peace Support Team and soldiers deployed to BATUK regularly operate across Africa to advance peace and security as well as counter the illegal wildlife trade. BATUK consists of around 100 permanent staff and reinforcing short tour cohort of another 280 personnel. In 2024 some of those 280 were mobilised

soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment.

Our mobilisation to be part of a Force Protection (FP) Platoon started, as any does in the Reserve Army, with a Pre-Trawl-Trawl followed by a confirmatory Trawl with dates and availability of Reserve soldiers slipping either to the left or right as they tackle the challenging balance between life in green and life a civilian. All par for the course in any Reserve deployment but no less difficult to manage.

The selected soldiers from all 5 Companies, across the Regimental footprint, had to commit to a number of training events to meet the physical and medical requirements, as well as hit the ranges for marksmanship tests on both our individual weapons and the GPMG before arriving at the Mission Readiness

Training Centre (MRTC). The 10 Royal Anglian soldiers finally came together with the other troops from across 19 Brigade at MRTC Bassingbourn for our pre-deployment training (PDT). The FP Platoon consisted of troops from the RIFLES, SNIY, and R IRISH alongside the Steelbacks as the first mobilised deployment the newly reformed 19th Light Brigade has delivered.

The comradery between the cap-badges began as soon as the PDT began, and the troops started to find a lot of common ground between each other. After the completion of our training, we were granted some leave which is always helpful to close-down civilian commitments with work, sporting clubs or volunteer organisations Reserve soldiers also have. The next time we met was at Heathrow airport ready for our



19 Brigade BATUK FP Platoon on adventure training

flight to Nairobi in Kenya.

Upon arriving in BATUK, after a slightly bumpy 4-hour bus drive from the Airport, we began our walk around and familiarization of the area and in the days that followed we started our acclimatization package and integration into the FP role. It didn't take me long to realise that the cook house in BATUK probably has some of the best Army food I've ever had!

The Naafi, which now generally just means somewhere to get a coffee on camp in the UK, was brilliant! It was of the standard that I'd only heard stories about from its golden years looking after the military and its people. Plus, there was Karibu club if you wanted a bit more of a luxurious place to relax. The Gym facility was top of the line with everything needed to stay in fighting shape. The welfare facilities in BATUK were also very helpful in assisting you in getting the most out of your time in Kenya.



BATUK FP Mt Kenya



3rd Battalion



BATUK FP in role LCpl Jamie Lovett, Cpl Ryan Burrell , Pte Maksims Smirnovs , Pte Paul Brennan

The FP role in BATUK itself consists of routine activity like; tagging on the sangers, assisting the Royal Military Police (RMP) and ensuring security of the Camp and military housing estates, plus providing security to exercising troops and assisting the Med Centre when a casualty is brought in. I found the FP role can be both challenging and rewarding.

As a bonus if the commanders sort out the rotations you can get a lot of time to see the sites and enjoy the local culture.

The local area is filled with up-and-coming restaurants and pubs catering to the troops of Nyati barracks. It doesn't matter what curio shop you go in to they have a wood carving with your cap badge on it and I too ended up with a bag filled with carvings.

If you are looking to pass the time, there is a local pool or go visit one of the shopping malls.

During one of the first rotations off

for the Royal Anglian contingent we decided to go and help out in one of the local orphanages with the RMP. During this visit we helped the children plant crops that helps feed them and built a fence to keep out the local wildlife. While we were there, there was also a chance to have a bit of fun with the children and even played a few games of football.

One of the best things about the Army is the Adventure Training (AT) possibilities. AT is designed to take you outside of your comfort zone. It aims to develop leadership, resilience, coping strategies, decision making, teamwork, physical fitness and courage. With this comes a huge sense of achievement and camaraderie through tackling challenges together and helping each other.

Between rotations we were able to have an amazing three days of rock climbing, kayaking, and white water rafting which stands out as a highlight. The natural competitive nature in the

Team helps the Troops to try and get the best out of each other. Another opportunity to push ourselves and an all-round good bonding experience for the Steelbacks was competing in the Nairobi Half marathon.

Mt Kenya is visible from the sangers the FP platoon work out of every day. Another challenge the troops set themselves was to get to the summit. So, Royal Anglian soldiers joined a team from the RIFLES to set out to climb it. Not only was this another opportunity for some competitive fun but the view of the sunrise at the top was stunning.

Mobilised opportunities like this are very much the reason many Reserve soldiers join the Army. A rewarding opportunity to genuinely support the Army and what it does, combined with travel, chances to help communities overseas as well as, exciting once in a lifetime challenges like climbing Mt Kenya are everything I was hoping for when I became a Reserve soldier.

BATUK TDS

by WO2 Andy Howe, 5 Company

This time in Kenya I have employed by DIO SPTT (Safe Place To Train) as Training Sergeant Major south. DIO SPTT is conducted by two 10 person teams; these teams comprise of RW (Kenyan range wardens and military persons) one team deals with all matters of safety in the North of Archers Post Training Area (APTA) and the second team deals with the south areas known as Central Laikipia Training Areas (CLTA).

On a day-to-day basis my role has been to conduct animal mapping of training areas while troops are dry training and range clearances of animals and civilians alike from danger areas. This has been by means of helicopter, this provides its own challenges as groups of animals and herds often split or move in different ways to avoid being moved, often attempting to hide from the helicopter in bushes and dry riverbeds. The skill of the pilot in herding and grouping is remarkable think sheep dog in the air moving elephants among other animals away at speed in all types of terrain from scrub land to rocky outcrops over grassland to swaps and boggy areas down riverbeds to over mountains areas.

This is a challenge for both pilot and spotter while juggling maps traces radios and mobile phones and updating range control and troops on the ground of locations of animals and directing both troops and animals away from each



BATUK Training Wing department joined hands with Kenyans to enhance security for rhinos against poaching

other.

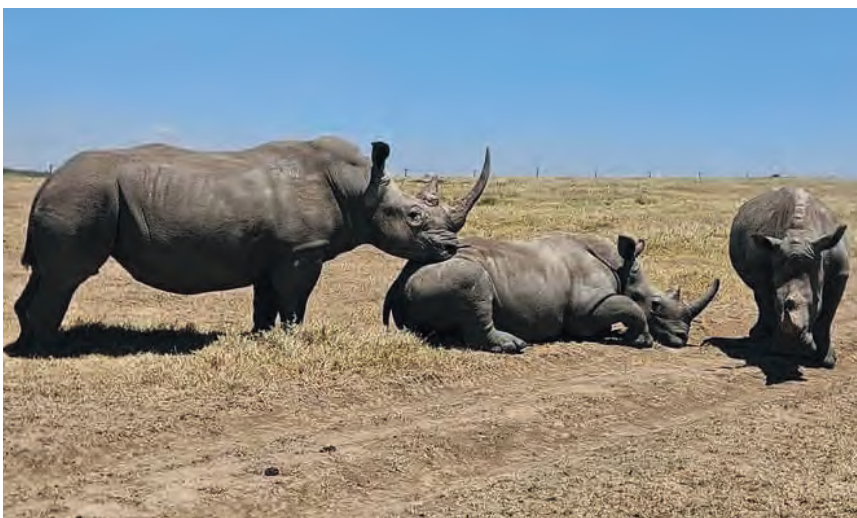
As much of the land is privately owned and the British Army must engage with the landowners to ensure the areas being used are treated well and returned to the condition received on hand over take over. To that end trenches and ranges are required to be

filled in and collapsed and all stores recovered such as razor wire and pickets and rubbish removed.

With ever changing plans from exercising troops and weather conditions and animal patterns changing no two days are the same when conducting these clearances and roles.

I have been fortunate to have seen some great animals only feet from the aircraft which would be impossible from the ground and capture some great sun rises and sun sets in my time in Kenya. I would recommend Kenya as a location for people to visit and a TDS post gives many opportunities to see both wildlife and Kenya natural beauty.

While in Kenya I have also been able to train on wildlife conservation and wildfire prevention and gain a qualification in UAS (Drone) capability with different platforms. The vast open areas and diverse types of terrain both day and night using thermal show how drones have become battle winners in both surveillance and targeting on and within the battle space.



The locals



3rd Battalion

Rowing in the Armed Forces My Journey to Henley Royal Regatta

by Pte Carl Shipley, 1 Company



Pte Carl Shipley on the right of his crew from Henley

Rowing in the Armed Forces is both a personal challenge and a team mission with every training session pushing us to our physical and mental limits. For me the journey to Henley Royal Regatta isn't just about the race, it's about blending the demands of military life and civilian work with the intensity of competitive rowing. Each day is a test of endurance, teamwork, and discipline. With Henley in our sights every training session feels like another step closer to achieving that goal.

Our journey to Henley started on land at 3 Royal Anglian, No. 1 Company where my training took place at my unit. Here the ergometer, or rowing machine was a constantly in my routine. It was challenging both physically and mentally as each session involved driving through intense cardio, strength and core work. The ergo mimics the rowing stroke allowing me to focus on perfecting my technique and becoming fitter.

Land training is a mix of both solo and team efforts. Circuit training and endurance runs are essential to building stamina and they align well with the physical demands of my other military responsibilities. The high standards of fitness in the Armed Forces demands a combination of power and endurance that prepares us not only for rowing but for the unpredictable demands of infantry training. Every stroke, every lift and every sprint reminded me that each step forward brought us closer to Henley.

After the land training at my unit, the opportunity to train as a team in Henley itself was an absolute game-changer. Traveling down to Henley-on-Thames is something I looked forward to, as it's a shift from the solo grind to intense team sessions on the water.

Rowing in an eight-man boat requires a different kind of precision and synchronization that land training can't

quite replicate. We each have our roles in the boat and finding that rhythm together is a challenging yet rewarding process. There's an unspoken unity that forms as we row on the Thames as if each stroke builds our collective strength. Here, I saw our progress in real time watching as our timing and power merged to move the boat faster. Henley was more than just a training ground for us—it was a chance to come together, working as one with the river as our course.

Balancing rowing training with my infantry responsibilities was no small feat. On any given day, I might be transitioning from an early row to a tactical drill then preparing for infantry training in the field. Some days the physical toll is palpable, but I know that each session, whether rowing or combat training added to my overall resilience. Switching gears between the two was a unique challenge but one I embraced knowing that each aspect of my training



UK Armed Forces squad

fuelled the other.

Infantry training demands adaptability, endurance, and strength, qualities that served me well in the boat. In a week, I'd go from the erg to infantry training, drills that build agility and speed. It's exhausting but it brought a level of intensity and mental toughness that drove me through the final meters of each rowing session. Being able to balance both disciplines took a lot of planning but the shared experience with my team kept me grounded. Each of us appreciated what it's like to be pulled in different directions yet were committed to putting in the work to achieve that same goal.

Every rower has Henley Royal Regatta on their radar but for us in the

Armed Forces it represents more than a competition. It's a showcase of the strength, discipline, and teamwork that defines our service. With each training session, I'm driven by the vision of lining up at the start, feeling pride to represent the Royal Anglian Regiment and the UK Armed Forces.

As the regatta approaches, we shift our focus to perfecting our race strategy, building mental sharpness and practicing various race scenarios. Rowing has always required a "never quit" mindset and the intensity of military training has strengthened that tenacity.

The Henley course is notoriously challenging but as I sit in the boat flanked by my teammates, I feel a sense of unity that's rare. We've shared the

early mornings, the sweat, the struggle and when the race begins, I know we'll row not just for ourselves but for each other and for the goal we set out to achieve.

Rowing in the Armed Forces has been an incredible journey blending physical endurance with the discipline of military life.

From the land sessions at my unit to team training at Henley and from balancing infantry duties to the demands of competitive rowing each day is a reminder of our commitment. As we prepare to take our place at the start line of the races ahead of the season, I feel a sense of pride and purpose knowing that every stroke has brought us one step closer to victory.



3rd Battalion

Exercise Future Leader 24

by Maj Matt Ottaway



A group photo of the delegates and members of 3 R ANGLIAN who delivered Ex Future Leader

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) is keen to establish open, strategic and long-lasting relationships with employers, tailoring partnering opportunities to mutual needs and business goals. It is the Reserve Forces and Cadet Association (RFCA) Defence Relationship Management team that provides the MoD with regional and local connections with employers.

The voluntary membership of the East Anglia RFCA includes county groups of local employers supportive of the Defence community. It is these employers, who have pledged to support Defence people under the Armed Forces Covenant, who were offered the opportunity by the East Anglia RFCA to attend Ex Future Leader 24.

Fifty potential leaders from the civilian world of work from across the East Anglian region attended a Military Leadership course at the Royal Norfolk Show Ground in Norwich. Future Leader is a professional development course based on the British Army's approach to leadership and management. The day is designed to build leadership skills, combining theory and practical applications. The event is offered exclusively to local employers as part of the MoD's Employer Recognition Scheme.

After the welcome reception the



An introduction to the Values and Standards of the British Army by the Adjutant, Capt Mike Andrews

day began with an introduction to Op TEAMWORK and how the Army does leadership; the leadership code and values and standards which were brought to life with personal examples

by Capt Mike Andrews. This moved into discussions about a number of ideas around leadership, and what leadership meant to the delegates including: "leadership vs management", the nature

and fundamentals of command. This is not to ram Army doctrine down civilians' throats but to get them to think differently about the way they lead in their organisations and open up new ways of doing business that may be more effective than what they currently do.

There were then opportunities for delegates to put some of the concepts and ideas into practice and meet soldiers and ask questions in a more informal setting in a round robin of activities. The day aimed at developing teamwork, introducing some of the kit and equipment the Army uses and tackling popular misconceptions and highlight the importance we place on equal opportunities for everyone, regardless of gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity or faith.

Projects and practical tasks require leadership, direction and effective management of people and resources. The Reservists from the 3rd Battalion brought this to life in a practical, fun and challenging way. Delegates were encouraged to cooperate, developing team building lessons and identifying leadership qualities.

The emphasis is delivery by Reserve soldiers, as they are from the same community that the delegates are drawn from. All of the civilian participants are currently in, or aspiring to, management positions and were selected by their employers to attend the event in order to gain new perspectives, ideas and leadership skills that are transferable to



An intro to CIS session

their workplace. However, the second order effect is to show off the value of employing members of the Army Reserve, and the core and transferable skills they can bring, it also gives those employers a better understanding of what a Reservist does with their time

in the Army. The day is part of a wider effort by the Army and Defence more generally that strengthen and guide our connections in the region ensuring that Reservists are able thrive with the support of the local communities they are from and serve.



Sgt Paul Bishop overseeing delegates participating in command tasks



3rd Battalion

Op SHEPHERD: Comprehensive Weekend of Training for New Recruits

From Friday 17th to the 19th May 2024, the 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment conducted a crucial recruit training weekend event called 'Op SHEPHERD' at the Stanford Training Area in Thetford (STANTA).

This progressive weekend was designed to introduce new recruits to essential military subjects that would form the foundation of their basic training and also provide opportunities for more seasoned recruits to reinforce their skills in preparation for their final basic training phase — Battle Camp.

The weekend-long training activity exemplified the Battalion's commitment to delivering high-quality training close to home. Op SHEPHERD proved to be a valuable experience for recruits at various stages of their military development, offering a structured environment to absorb lessons and practice skills under the guidance of experienced battalion instructors.

Introducing Recruits to Battalion Training

For many recruits, Op SHEPHERD was their first real exposure to life in the battalion on exercise. The event was especially valuable for those who had not yet completed the Foundation Course, the first formal step in their basic training.

Over the weekend, these pre-foundation recruits were introduced to various military subjects, such as morning routine, hygiene in the field and the basic structure of a soldier's life deployed. By spending time under canvas, recruits had the chance to adjust to the realities of military routine in a

controlled and supportive environment.

According to feedback from both participants and instructors, the weekend served to alleviate the anxiety many new recruits feel before embarking on their foundation course at an Army Training Unit. By removing the "unknowns" that often cause stress, Op SHEPHERD allowed recruits to gain confidence in their abilities and their place in the Regiment, preparing them mentally and physically for the next phase of their training journey.

Strengthening the Skills of Pre-Battle Camp Recruits

For those recruits who had already completed the foundation course, Op SHEPHERD offered a crucial opportunity to practice and refine their skills before progressing to the final stage of their basic training: Battle Camp. The lessons focused on key areas that would be tested during Battle Camp, such as personal routine, time management, and fieldcraft.

Post-foundation recruits took full advantage of the weekend to review and hone their performance in areas like morning routine, ensuring they were fully prepared for the rigors of Battle Camp. This kind of preparatory work is essential for recruits, as it allows them to approach their final assessments with confidence and precision.

Gold Standard Instruction

The success of Op SHEPHERD can be largely attributed to the high calibre of instruction delivered over the weekend. Battalion Junior Non-Commissioned Officers (JNCOs) and a Warrant Officer

from across various companies led the sessions, ensuring that every lesson was of the highest standard. These instructors brought a wealth of experience and expertise to their roles, helping both pre-foundation and post-foundation recruits reach new levels of proficiency.

The quality of the instruction was reflected in the external praise received by the Battalion's recruits in the months following the event. Since May 2024, 3 Royal Anglian recruits have been singled out for their exceptional preparedness and performance in both the foundation and Battle Camp courses, a testament to the success of OP SHEPHERD and the Battalion's approach to training.

A Model for Future Training Events

Op SHEPHERD highlighted the Battalion's ability to organize and execute high-quality training events without requiring recruits to travel long distances. By hosting the training weekend at STANTA, a nearby facility, the Regiment demonstrated that it can provide valuable training experiences within a local setting.

This format not only supports logistical efficiency but also maximizes the impact of the training itself. The weekend under canvas gave recruits the time and space they needed to familiarise themselves with military routines, build confidence, and focus on areas of improvement, all without the pressures of formal assessments.

As a result, Op SHEPHERD set a new standard for pre-foundation and post-foundation training, establishing itself as a model for future training events within the Battalion.

19 Bde Junior Officer Development Weekend

by Capt Mike Andrews

As the 3 R ANGLIAN Junior Officer cohort has continued to develop and grow over the past 12-months, it is difficult to get a large proportion together to train and integrate. However, 26-28 Apr 24 saw the Adjts of 3 R ANGLIAN and 6 RIFLES host a 19 Brigade Junior Officer Development weekend at Kendrew Barracks, the home of our Regular Battalions. The intent for the weekend was simply; subaltern development in a low-pressure learning environment with the opportunity to grow a Battalion and Brigade Mess culture.

The first of what will likely become a series of Junior Officer weekends was a great success. Over a period of



Subalterns engaged in JOLP2 training



19 Bde Junior Officers training together

3-days, 13 subalterns were delivered briefs on current lessons learnt from Eastern Europe and how it is impacting the British Army's TTPs and taught the fundamentals of trench warfare followed by Battle Exercises on the newly designed trench lanes on the back area of Kendrew Barracks. The battle lessons, delivered by CSgt Ward and WO2 Fairbrother of 2 Coy, demonstrated the complexities and strain of trench warfare, characterised by its difficulty to retain command and control whilst maintaining momentum in the attack. Plenty of lessons learned for the new Platoon Commanders, but useful training guides which can be taken back to their own Platoons for further refinement.

Following a packed day of physical and conceptual training, Saturday evening in the Mess gave the opportunity for 360 feedback on how the subalterns are finding Pl Comd in the Army Reserves and where they would like to development further. Some interesting ideas which can be fed into the Battalion HQ to continue to refine how we operate and deliver. Most importantly, all enjoyed time together over food and drink, drawing closer the bonds of junior officers which is increasingly difficult to achieve in the Army Reserves due to time and geography.

The final day consisted of further conceptual training in the form of



3rd Battalion



YOs in the trench complex overseen by Capt Mike Andrews, Adjt 3 R ANGLIAN

Junior Officer Leadership Programme (JOLP) 2, the purpose of which is to deepen a new Platoon Commander's understanding of the variety of roles, responsibilities, and the function of other important departments in the Battalion. An often-laborious task when taken on as an individual, completing the course as a group allowed for some unique questions and conversation,

which certainly helped break down the lessons into manageable and enjoyable periods.

The feedback from the students was over-whelming positive, demonstrating the desire of our junior officers to develop professionally in order to lead with more certainty and confidence within their own sub-units. Having now proven the concept within 19 Brigade, further

weekends are already in planning as we look to visit other units to host a series of conceptual development weekends, the next of which will likely focus on the complexities of Urban Warfare, and how advancements in technology play vital part of the Pl Comds' ability to receive and fuse actionable intelligence in a timely manner.



Regimental Band

Royal Anglian Band

by CSgt Neil Carey



The band is pleased to report that we are well recruited and going from strength to strength under the direction of Captain Jason Griffiths. This year we have welcomed WO2 Andy Lennox who has joined the band on Euphonium, after retiring from the Royal Corps of Army Music as a WO1.

He brings nearly 40 years of experience to the band. December 2023 saw the band providing musical support to the regimental carol service in Bury St Edmunds. This wonderful event is now well established and very well attended, allowing the extended regimental family to come together to celebrate Christmas in the beautiful setting of St Mary's

church. The new year allowed the band to continue with some intensive musical and military training in preparation for the year ahead. We perfected new repertoire as well as completing all of our ITR's for the end of the training year.

On the 23rd March the band returned to St Mary's church in Bury St Edmunds to provide musical support to the laying up of the 6th Battalion colours. As well as providing incidental and ecclesiastical music the band and Director of Music liaised with the Battalion Colour Party to ensure a dignified ceremony consummate with the gravitas of the event. In a change of mood, the band returned to the same

venue on the 18th May to perform our Spring Concert. This was a chance for the band to showcase its ability with whole band features as well as section features such as the clarinet and cornet sections. The first half of the concert concluded with a 'patrol' version of the Great Escape theme where the band gradually disappeared leaving only a lonely piccolo on stage.

On the 16th June the Leicester Tigers Association ceased to be active. This occasion was marked by a service in Leicester Cathedral led by the Bishop of Leicester. The band was proud to provide musical support for this event, playing throughout the service and



Regimental Band

then playing for the final march past of the remaining veterans on parade. The association standard is now laid up in Leicester Cathedral for future generations to see.

Unusually, this year the band's ADX coincided with the last two weeks of the school term (6th to the 20th July). This meant that the band could undertake some school engagement work as part of our deployment. To this end, we spent the day at Bedford Modern School on the 9th July rehearsing with Bedford Modern students as well as students from the wider Bedford Borough school community. The band held joint rehearsals, delivered a careers event and performed a joint concert to school students and staff. In addition to this, the band provided musical support to RAF Wittering at the Wittering Village Fete as well as undertaking training and team building activities.

After a fairly quiet August, the band provided musical support for a very special Regimental Gathering at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford. The occasion marked the 60th anniversary of the forming of the Royal Anglian Regiment with many veterans attending. The band provided music for the drumhead service and march past in the morning. The afternoon saw us providing entertainment while veterans ate lunch and we closed proceedings with a Sunset and flag lowering ceremony. The band are immensely proud to have contributed to such an historic event.

The regiment is very keen to support its In Pensioner veterans at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea. To this end, the band provided musical support to the Royal Anglian church service at the Royal Hospital on Sunday 29th September. We entertained the In Pensioners and guests prior to the service as well as marching the In Pensioners into the chapel. The band are pleased to provide this support and are getting to know our regimental In Pensioners by attending such events.

Building on the success of the school engagement event in July, the band organised and delivered a similar event at Kimbolton School. This time working with the school's CCF band. The band



The Director of Music in action during the Spring Concert

attended the school on the 19th October working on suitable repertoire such as The Mandalorian theme as well as music to Avengers End Game. Again, the band delivered demonstrations, rehearsal workshops, a careers presentation as well as a joint concert. We are hoping to develop these events into annual occasions in addition to expanding to new schools and venues over the next couple of years.

As always, the band returned to IWM Duxford on Sunday 10th November to provide musical support to the regimental Remembrance Sunday service at the Royal Anglian memorial. The event, as expected was extremely well attended. We are looking forward

to a varied and rewarding 2025 with the band constantly improving and seeking to explore new ways to engage with the regimental and wider community. In addition to the full band engagements our woodwind ensemble is busy throughout the year providing musical support to mess functions throughout the regimental area.

Also, our principal cornet, LCpl Hobson is equally busy travelling the catchment playing Last Post at funerals as well as commemorating various events. Although well recruited, we are always looking to add to our military music community so are always keen to meet potential musical recruits to join this successful and vibrant band.



Regimental Library Reviews

Fierce Valor

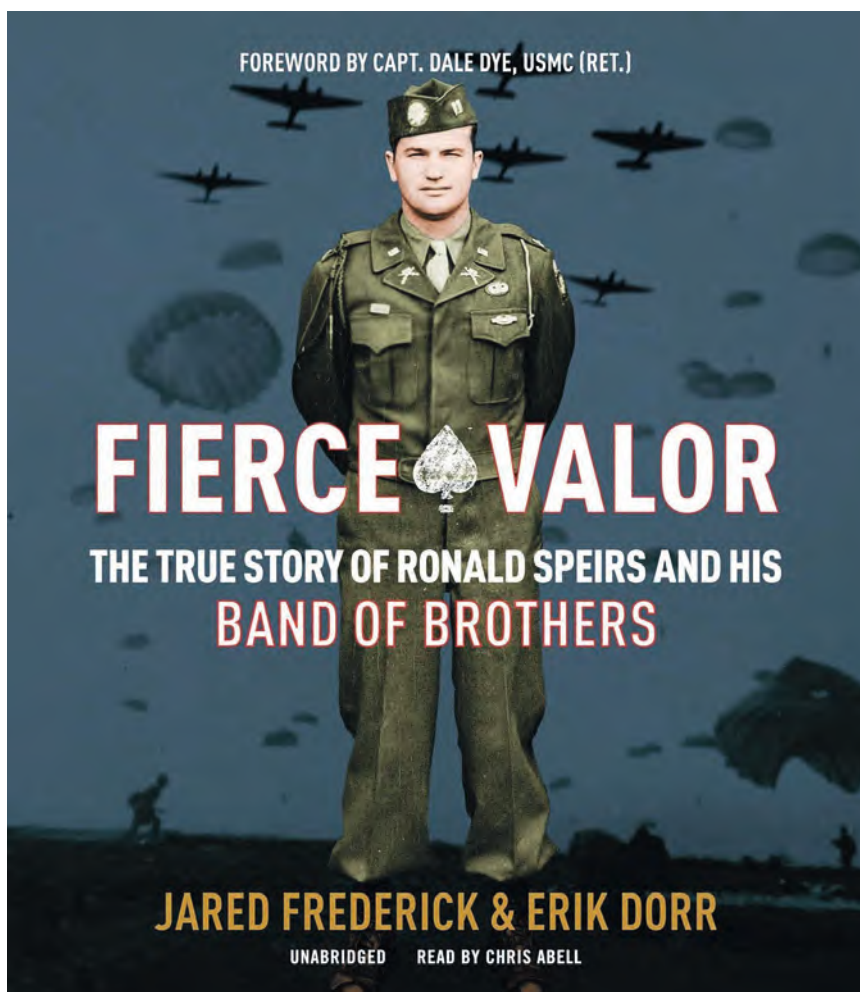
The true story of Ronald Speirs from Band of Brothers

Jared Frederick and Erik Dorr

There are not many members of the Regiment that are not familiar with Stephen E Ambrose's *Band of Brothers*, and they will be drawn to this complex portrait of the controversial Ronald Speirs, an iconic commander of Easy Company during World War II, whose ferocious courage in three foreign conflicts was matched by his devotion to duty and the bittersweet passions of wartime romance. *Fight Like You Mean to Win*"

His comrades called him "Killer." Of the elite paratroopers who served in the venerated "Band of Brothers" during the Second World War, none were more enigmatic than Ronald Speirs. Rumoured to have gunned down enemy prisoners and even one of his own disobedient sergeants, Speirs became a foxhole legend among his troops. But who was the real Lieutenant Speirs?

In *Fierce Valor*, historians Jared Frederick and Erik Dorr unveil the fuller story of Easy Company's longest-serving commander. Tested by trials of extreme training, military rivalry, and lost love, Speirs's international odyssey begins as an immigrant child in Prohibition-era Boston and continues through the bloody campaigns of France, Holland, and Germany. But 1945 did not mark an end to Speirs's military adventures.





ITC Catterick

2024 has been a busy year at the Infantry Training Centre, with a number of changes taking place in both the delivery of training and the organisation of ITC itself. In line with CGS' priorities both the Basic Training and Initial Trade Training (ITT) courses have been redesigned to focus on high end warfighting. In addition, ITC now trains recruits from the Royal Armoured Corps (RAC), and this sees combined Infantry and RAC training teams delivering Basic Training to RAC recruits.

One of the key changes to take place this year has been the introduction of Common Military Syllabus Future Soldier or CMS (FS) for short. CMS (FS) is the new basic training syllabus that all soldiers, regardless of job role, complete before they move onto more specialised training in their Initial Trade Training. CMS (FS) sees more time in the field, more complex exercises, and a greater focus on using technology to improve training. Recruits are all now issued with an iPad and enrolled onto the Defence Learning Environment in Week 1. This enables the recruits to conduct revision in their own time and to conduct certain assessments digitally.

For those of you reading this





wondering if the Infantry Training Centre has gone soft, fear not. Despite the use of technology, CMS (FS) is still Basic Training and the Basic Skillset required of a soldier hasn't changed. The ability to shoot, move, communicate, and medicate is still the core of the course and the increased time in the field (10 days more compared with the old course) means that recruits get plenty of exposure to challenging soldiering as they progress through the course. Overall CMS (FS) has been well received by both Recruits and Permanent Staff and sets recruits up for success in their ITT.

Speaking of ITT, the Combat Infantryman's Course has been redesigned to bring it in line with current doctrine. The new course sees an increased focus on the Urban Environment, CBRN and Defence. As part of the course, recruits also complete their Cat B driving licences allowing them to arrive at their Battalions able to drive.

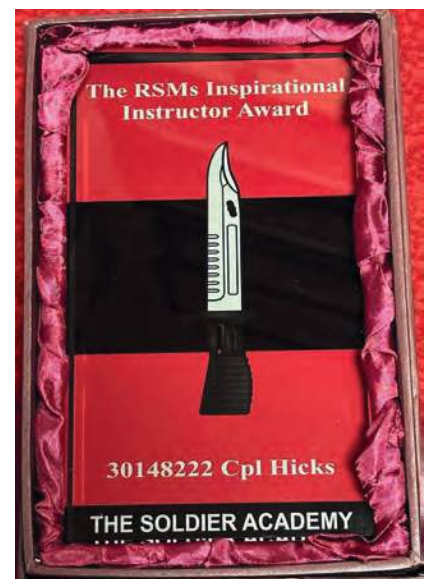
In addition to the changes listed above, 2025 will see a major change in the structure of ITC. From April 2025, 1ITB will exclusively deliver CMS(FS) to Infantry and RAC recruits. This means that all infantry recruits regardless of capbadge will be trained

together by Infantry Instructors from across the Army. 2ITB will exclusively deliver ITT. This means that from 2025, instructors posted to ITC will either deliver CMS(FS) or ITT only. This will enable greater stability for the Training Teams and will allow instructors to become experts in either the delivery of Basic Training or in the delivery of ITT, this should also provide recruits with better quality training.



Cpl Jack Hicks, RSM's Inspirational Instructor Award winner

To sum up, 2024 has been a very busy year for ITC and has seen the organisation and the training it delivers change substantially. One constant, however, has been the requirement for motivated instructors to deliver the training. A posting to ITC provides a once in a career opportunity to shape the next generation of Infantry soldiers and provides a challenging but highly rewarding posting.





Special Feature

Op GRAPPLE - 30 Years Anniversary 2 Royal Anglian Bosnia tour 1994

Andy 'Tommo' Thomas reflects...

After 30 years I feel compelled to at least reflect and remember a forgotten time, place and tour. May 1994 we deployed to Bosnia Herzegovina, after seeing the footage of horrendous atrocities and ethnic cleansing shown around the world.

Upon arrival via Split and an awful journey up country to Vitez we bedded in to our camp to be - Vitez School .

Going through the tour and post tour it made me appreciate what we and I have personally and in our privileged lives. The actual destruction of the entire region was hard and emotionally draining for me and I assume some others too after leaving there.

I don't think many had seen anything like it especially in a European country.

Lack of food and water and clothing especially for the kids was hard to endure and experience. We did escort humanitarian vehicle convoys.





The fighting between Serb Croatian and Muslim forces continued. Although Croats and Muslims were at a peace but aligned both against Serbian forces.

For me personally the people and close relationships we managed to build during our time in Bosnia did change my views and outlook on life. Never

take anything for granted and respect all people.

During our six-month deployment it mainly consisted of patrols guards and checkpoints in around the Vitez pocket, although our company, C Company, did have deployments to A and B Company locations in Jelajah and Gorni Vacuf. I'd

also like to add working with other nations like the French Swedish and Canadian was rewarding and we all learned from each other!

To summarise wearing the blue beret of the United Nations in Bosnia, was most certainly not an easy task or position to be in. All sides lied about





Special Feature



their actions and at times fired upon the white vehicles of the UN.

All sides declared us (UNPROFOR) of being pro Muslim or pro Serb or pro Croat from all different angles . An extremely difficult and almost unworkable peacekeeping mission in a complex civil war!

We returned having lost Captain Wormald but as I write this, it will liveth forever more as people and time forget!







Affiliated Cadets



Cadets at Ely Remembrance Day service

I'm delighted to be writing in this edition of Castle to reflect on another excellent year of endeavour and achievement for our Cadets.

The Regiment takes great pride in our affiliated Army and Combined Cadet Force Cadets and we are genuinely thrilled that those who wear our cap badge have continued to excel.

Our Cadets continue to show remarkable dedication and the personal courage to do something different and challenge themselves – whether preparing their uniform for a week-night parade, patrolling in the rain on weekend exercises or demonstrating fieldcraft prowess at annual camps, you will find our Cadets out there learning and doing great things. We should be clear that this is not for everyone and the fact that our Cadets choose to do something different should be celebrated – in this day and age, there are surely less demanding distractions...

There have been many highlights this year and we have again increased our support to Cadet events. With so much going on, it's very hard to select my favourites to mention here, however



Cadets from Cambs ACF parachuting

three events do stand out.

In August I was kindly invited to visit the Essex ACF Annual Camp at Longmoor which was an outstanding example of what Cadets can achieve; military skills, motorbikes, ranges, clay pigeon shooting and visits to *HMS Victory* were all in the mix and it was a joy to witness incredible levels of attendance and smiling faces everywhere. The next event was our Regimental 60th Anniversary at Duxford where we had more Cadets on parade than ever before – watching them march past with our Veterans and serving soldiers was a genuine spectacle and the presentation of Cadet Coins by

our Colonel-in-Chief and the Colonel of the Regiment was an occasion that recipients will remember forever. My final reflection is the large number of our Cadets, across all our counties, that took part in Remembrance this year.

Whether confidently engaging with the public to sell poppies with the Royal British Legion or taking part in solemn acts of Remembrance, our Cadets were most prominent and amply demonstrated their unique dedication and pride in what they do.

Of course, much of this achievement would not happen without the selfless commitment of ACF and CCF Instructors who take precious time

to organise imaginative, varied and challenging events for their Cadets. Their contribution is nothing short of outstanding - the growing numbers of Royal Anglian Cadets is a fantastic recognition of their efforts and I offer our Regiment's sincere thanks. I've said it before, but if you think you can make a valuable contribution to the next generation, why not volunteer to help out?

In summary, another outstanding year with plenty more on the horizon in 2025. Many congratulations to all our Cadets and your instructors - thank you for stepping up to the challenge and doing all that you do.

Providing specially trained assistance dogs for injured and disabled men and women of the UK Armed Forces and UK Civilian Emergency Services.





Support Us

By fundraising
Donation
Spreading the word!

www.houndsforheroes.com
email: info@houndsforheroes.com

Hounds For Heroes is registered in England and Wales as a charitable company, limited by guarantee
Company Number: 1134359
Registered Address: 17 Warwick Gardens, Rayleigh Essex. SS6 8TO

Medical Detection Dogs

2008 CELEBRATING 10 YEARS 2018

of
Dogs saving lives

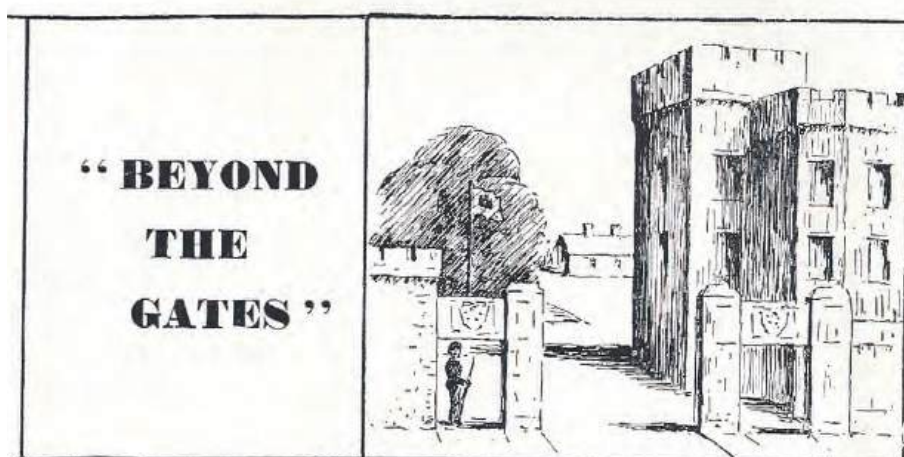


Please help us to continue our life-saving work and make a donation today by texting
SNIF17 £5 to 70070
www.medicaldetectiondogs.org.uk

Registered Charity in England and Wales No. 1124533 and in Scotland No. SC044434



Regimental Association



The Royal Anglian Regiment Regimental Association



President of the Regimental Association
Major General SL Porter CBE

County Colonels

Norfolk: Lieutenant Colonel MA Nicholas MBE DL

Suffolk: Lieutenant Colonel MH Wenham

Essex: Colonel CAF Thomas TD DL

Cambridgeshire: Lieutenant Colonel D Denson TD

Lincolnshire: Lieutenant Colonel SJ Bacon

Leicestershire: Captain TR Wilkes

Northamptonshire: Lieutenant Colonel RHL Blomfield MBE TD

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire: Major JN Whatley DL

1 Company, 5 (V) Royal Anglian Regiment Annual Reunion



Ex members of No 1 Company, 5 R Anglian gathered at the Hotel Victoria in Lowestoft for our 13th annual reunion. Around sixty members attended for an enjoyable curry and cold meats buffet. This was followed by loyal toasts to HM the King, the Royal Anglian Regiment and absent friends.

The reunion was the brainchild of ex OC of 1 Company, Major Roger

Hammersley in 2010, when around twenty ex members attended and then held every year in September at various venues around the Lowestoft area before finally settling on our permanent location at the Hotel Victoria.

Membership has steadily grown from modest beginnings, and today stands at 108 members. But we are always seeking new members, who served with

1 Company, 5 Royal Anglian, who will always be made welcome.

Our 2025 reunion will be held at the Hotel Victoria in Lowestoft on Thursday, 18th September.

Contact details are:

Dave Gurney

gurney.dave@talktalk.net

Terry Thacker

terrythacker@btinternet.com

80th Anniversary of the Liberation of Venray 1944

The 2nd Battalion, The Lincolnshire Regiment, including a contingent from the Bermuda Volunteer Rifles, were part of the forces that liberated Venray in October 1944. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the liberation and the Lincolnshire Regimental Association were delighted to be invited by Mayor Uitdehaag of Venray to participate in the

event. The Lincoln Branch Chairman, Major (Retd) Jim Freeman, his wife Sue (Lincoln Branch Secretary) and three Standard Bearers, Mr Dave Metcalfe MBE, Mr Fraser Finlay and Mr Shann Palmer were joined by Mr Jon Hale. As the point of contact with Venray, Jon had discovered that commemorative chocolate bars are distributed to local

children in memory of chocolate being distributed by the Regiment in 1944. The chocolate for this year was generously privately donated by Mr Carlo Feller and Association members Mr & Mrs R Cook, Jon Hale and Maj & Mrs Freeman.

The Anniversary Commemorations took place over two days. On Saturday



Regimental Association



Association Standards on the memorial cross at the Overloon CWG Cemetery on 12 October



Fraser Finlay presenting a chocolate bar to the son and father of the grave adoption families on 12 October



The gravestones of Ptes W Patterson and RM White in Overloon CWG Cemetery

12 October the group moved to Overloon Commonwealth War Graves (CWG) cemetery where there are 32 Lincolnshire Regiment graves. The team planted a wooden cross on each grave which had been kindly donated by the Grimsby Branch. Jon Hale laid a wreath and Sue Freeman read a poem submitted by George Hardy, a long-standing member of the Association and whose son is currently serving in the Regiment.

The party were very well received by the local populace in the cemetery before moving to the village hall in Overloon for a reception by the Adoptiegraven Committee Overloon.



Commemorative chocolate bar back cover



The German War Cemetery at Overloon



Regimental Association



The Standard Party marching to the Venray CWG cemetery on 13 October

The graves are tended by local families who appreciated the visit and the placing of the wooden crosses.

On Sunday 13 October at the CWG Cemetery Venray the party participated in the very moving service along with several hundred people and representatives from the CWGC and the British Embassy. The Standard Party marched into position and, as the Last Post and National Anthems were played, Standards were dipped.

Wreaths were laid including one by Maj Freeman on behalf of the Regimental Association. Jon Hale and Sue Freeman were invited to distribute the commemorative chocolate bars to the local scouts and children. Following the service there was the Mayor's reception and a premiere of a film made by a Dutch veteran outlining the campaign from Normandy to the Battle of Overloon. This was followed by a tree planting ceremony in the centre of

Venray along with representatives of British families.

On Monday 14 October the party visited the German War cemetery near Overloon where there are 32,000 individual graves. They also visited the Oorlog Hoort Museum in Overloon which commemorates the battle and has the remains of a crashed Lancaster Bomber. In summary, this was a very enjoyable and unique visit which was appreciated by all the participants.



Standards being dipped during the last post at Venray CWG Cemetery on 13 October



Sue Freeman and Jon Hale presenting commemorative chocolate bars to local scouts and children at Venray



Mayor's reception at the Venray Council Chambers



Regimental Association



Helmond Remembered – 25 September 1944



The memorial at Norfolkplein

On 25 September 1944, the First Battalion the Royal Norfolk Regiment liberated Helmond in the Netherlands. As a result a great rapport was set up and even 70 years later there were still annual visits to the town, now a city.

On the 40th anniversary in 1984, a very large event was held, at which a memorial was erected in one of the town squares, which was renamed Royal Norfolkplein to commemorate the liberation and the relationship with the Regiment. Nine oak trees were also planted around the square.

In The Netherlands, their equivalent of Remembrance Sunday is remembered on the first weekend of May each year. At this event, the 80th year, the Regiment was invited to participate.

On the Friday night, 3 May, there was a football match between two local teams and prior to the kick off, all veterans present were invited to parade on the pitch, to the accompaniment of a Scottish piper, and the cheers of the spectators.

Saturday morning, there was a visit to the Mierlo War Cemetery, which is just outside Helmond, where 10 Royal Norfolk Regiment and 3 Suffolk Regiment soldiers were buried. Wreaths were laid. Incidentally, there was a representative from Burnley, Lancashire with us, as one of the Royal Norfolk soldiers, who was killed nearby in 1944, had come from Burnley and was buried in the Burnley Cemetery.

On Saturday afternoon, there was

a parade at Royal Norfolkplein, with speech by the mayor on behalf of the city of Helmond, a response on behalf of the Regiment, and also by the Helmond Veterans Association. Wreaths were laid at the memorial by all three organisations. This ceremony was covered by the local television and local newspapers.

Saturday evening, the main event, was the city's annual remembrance which lasted an hour and a half. The names of all those from Helmond who were killed during the war were read out, wreaths were laid, a two minute silence was observed and speeches made, which included references to the Royal Norfolk Regiment. Sadly, it rained throughout this very moving outside occasion.

TOTALLY FREE AND ANONYMOUS MENTAL HEALTH APP

A gift to you, from the Regiment

We are delighted to continue to offer the totally free mental health app called Leafyard for all Royal Anglian veterans and families.

Leafyard has been tried and tested by us and other regiments across the country and has been proven to support the specific needs of serving personnel, veterans and their families. Leafyard takes the form of an anonymous journey and helps you and your family feel calmer, happier, and more mentally resilient.

Scan the QR code to sign up for your free, anonymous access to Leafyard.

ROYAL ANGLIAN





Regimental Association



Cambridgeshire

A Review of 2024



Association members Ely Reunion 2024

The Association was pleased to support the Regimental initiative "The Big Breakfast" last February and our thanks to all those (Martin Eaton and others) who worked behind the scenes to make it happen.

Our Ely Reunion, in July, continues to be the highlight of the year for our Association and it was good to see an increase in those attending in 2024. The service was very much a regimental family affair being held in front of our Regimental Chapel in Ely Cathedral with the Vice Lord Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire, Brigadier Tim Seal TD ADC VR DL, being present. All the Branches were represented and laid wreaths; for the Service we were supported by the Dean and Chapter and our Association padre Maj Alan Jesson TD.

Following the service we moved into the Lady Chapel for refreshments with the opportunity to renew friendships. The Association President thanked the Vice Lord Lieutenant and Association members for their continued support. Our thanks also to the Association Secretary (Col. Colin Elsdon) for all his behind the scenes support and hard work to help make it happen together with the support of our Area Secretaries at Regt HQ. and the grant to cover our costs.

Members of the Association attended the annual Royal Anglian gathering at Duxford in September to celebrate 60 years since the formation of the Royal Anglian Regiment.

In addition, Association Members



Vice Lord Lieutenant and Association members, Ely 2024

attended Remembrance Day Services at Wisbech, Whittlesey, March, Ely, Cambridge and Duxford. Unfortunately, we were unable to attend the field of Remembrance at Westminster.

Events planned for 2025

22 February - Royal Anglian Big Breakfast for details see Facebook and or Royal Anglian Regt webpage.

April - Cambridgeshire Association AGM - Details to follow.

13th July - Ely Reunion. On this occasion

we will be remembering and celebrating 80 years since Victory in Japan. We will follow the format of the last two years. Commencing with a small parade, a service in the Cathedral and light tea in the Lady Chapel. Timings etc. will be advised in due course but in the meantime please note the date in your diaries now and pass on the "word"...

7 September 2025: Regimental Day at Duxford. Details to follow.

Lt Col David Denson TD
Chairman

**“IT FELT
LIKE HOME
RIGHT
AWAY.”**

**WE ARE WELCOMING
APPLICATIONS TO
BECOME A CHELSEA
PENSIONER.**

To find out more, contact our admissions team:



020 7881 5204



admissions@chelsea-pensioners.org.uk



www.chelsea-pensioners.co.uk/become-chelsea-pensioner



CHELSEA
PENSIONERS





Regimental Association



Lincolnshire

Sobroan Dinner 8 February 2024



Lincoln Branch Sobroan Dinner

The Lincoln Branch held their annual Sobroan dinner on the 8th February in Sobroan Barracks. Despite the appalling weather over 35 members sat down to enjoy a meal and to celebrate this very important battle honour. Syd Elmes read a recital of the battle amongst other celebrations. The evening finished with a loyal toast and specially made cakes.

The Grimsby Branch held their annual Sobroan Dinner at the Royal Humber Hotel on Sat 20th April. Over 120 members and guests sat down to a delicious 3 course meal with wine. This was followed by a loyal toast and the traditional raffle. The dinner continued well into the evening with a disco and live music provided by Sadie-Marie

Ebbon. Thanks must go to the organising committee and to Jamie Taylor, for his generous donation of port for all the tables. In addition, the Royal Humber Hotel donated very generous raffle prizes of a room with breakfast for one night and an evening meal for two with wine. Another very enjoyable function for the Grimsby Branch.

60th Anniversary of the Formation of the Regiment



60th Anniversary Celebration at Sobroan Barracks

The Lincoln Branch held an early celebration of the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Regiment at Sobroan Barracks on the 9 May. 65 people attended with a buffet followed by a quiz on the Regiment and events of 1964. The quiz was won by Syd Elmes, former Chairman of the Grimsby

Branch.

After the head scratching challenge there followed a raffle and group photo. The celebration cake depicted the journey of the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment to the Royal Anglian Regiment with excellent art work. Cabinets displayed the relevant regimental cap badges and

buttons of the transition period.

The evening concluded with a Loyal toast to the King, a Regimental toast followed by the singing of the Lincolnshire Poacher, the Regimental march Rule Britannia, and God save the King. Another very enjoyable event at Lincoln.



60th Anniversary display table



Syd Elmes receiving the prize for winning the Regimental quiz from Jim Freeman



Regimental insignia from times past with the splendid celebration cake in the foreground



Regimental Association



Lincolnshire

Regimental Day - Duxford - 1 September 2024

The Association fielded a substantial turnout for the 60th Anniversary of the Regiment at Duxford on the 1st Sep with individuals from across the County and further afield including a 55-seater coach from Lincoln and a mini bus load from Grimsby and Spalding.

The Association was delighted that they were able to host some very

supportive friends from the County, including Kate Fenn from the City of Lincoln Council and her husband Andrew. Kate was instrumental in facilitating the 2nd Battalion's Freedom Parade in Lincoln in 2022.

We also welcomed another friend from Spalding, Jan Whitbourn. Jan is a

local Councillor who has been looking after veterans' interests in the Town for many years. She has supported our Spalding Branch in many activities not least a monthly breakfast club, coach trips around the UK and Christmas functions. All participants thoroughly enjoyed a very memorable day.

Malaysian Veterans Final Reunion at Lincoln

On 1 June 2024 Royal Lincolnshire Regiment veterans of the Malaysian Campaign held their final reunion at the Lincoln Imp Pub after 60 years. The event was organised by the Bond family, daughters Caroline Hopkinson and Sandra Pinguey, and son Alan Bond, in remembrance of their father Corporal Alan Bond MM.

The veterans were supported by the Lincoln branch with over 40 people attending to celebrate the final reunion. Seven actual veterans from the campaign attended a poignant gathering to remember the last of many hundreds of National and Regular Servicemen who served with the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment in Malaysia.

The framed photograph along with the veterans, shows Corporal Alan Bond MM who first started the reunion after the Campaign which was held annually in Lincoln until this year. Sadly, it is the end of an era.



Cpl Bond's moving memorial stone





R LINCS veterans - from left: Mick Reams, Colin Coggan, Colin White, Dave Orbell, Brian Short, Syd Elmes and Sid



The Bond family enjoying the occasion despite the weather!



Regimental Association



Lincolnshire

7 Royal Anglian Reunion Lunch, Lincoln



On 5 October, 7 R Anglian and the County Association held their annual reunion at Lincoln. 82 people attended enjoying an excellent three course lunch with wine for the princely sum of £22. It was another notable event which included a Loyal Toast, the National Anthem and a full rendition of the Lincolnshire Poacher.

There was a dedication of a new centrepiece for the "Fallen" made by Paul "Nobby" Hudson, and a minute's silence held for former member Steve Boam, who died the previous month from muscular dystrophy.

It was also a poignant moment for Colonel Geoff Newmarsh, ex 7 R ANGLIAN and former County Colonel, as he attended his last 7 R ANGLIAN event before emigrating to Australia. Thanks must go to the organising Committee for another hugely successful reunion.



7 RANGLIAN organising committee. From left: Capt K Martin, WO2 R Lock, Maj J Freeman, Capt B Barbour, Capt J Watson



Members of A Company



Members of B Company



Regimental Association



Lincolnshire

Remembrance Day celebrations in Lincolnshire



Association members and wreath layers at the Lincoln Memorial by Sobraon Barracks

The Association celebrated Remembrance Day on Sunday 11 November across the County with Standards parading in Lincoln Cathedral,

Grimsby, Cleethorpes and Spalding along with individual representatives in Grantham, Bourne, Market Deeping and Stamford. They were joined by

2Lt Adam Bevan of A (Lincs) Coy, 2 R ANGLIAN who laid a wreath in his home town of Boston.



Boston Remembrance.

Grimsby Branch Visit to Normandy for D-Day 80th Anniversary



The team visiting the beaches.

Nine members of the Branch undertook a short trip to Normandy to coincide with the D-Day 80th Anniversary celebrations in June this year. The visit included

laying a wreath, visiting the beaches and defensive positions, also meeting many other ex-service personnel. Highlights

(other than the wine and food) included a group trip in a DUKW with a beach landing!



The survivors!



Regimental Association



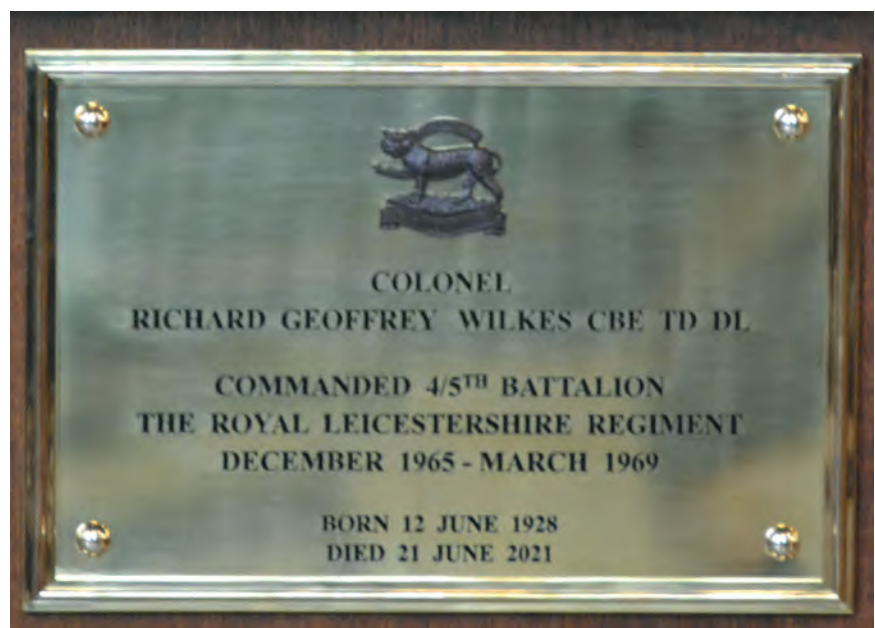
Leicestershire

Royal Tigers' Weekend 2024



Royal Tigers' Weekend 15-16 June 2024
reverted to its traditional format.

An Association General Meeting was held at Devonshire Place followed by dinner on the Saturday. Ticket prices were heavily subsidised to attract members to attend and we had 60 sit down for dinner. The meal was excellent, well above the standard we had been used to, since again it had been decided to push the boat out for this special occasion. After coffee had been served and the port passed, the assembled diners rose to toast the King and the Regiment, proposed by the President, Brig Andrew Fisher. The Association Chairman, Capt Tim Wilkes, then had great pleasure in presenting each member of the General Committee, as well as Marc Clay, with a fine statuette of a silvered tiger mounted on a heavy slate base,







Regimental
Association



Leicestershire





with an appropriate inscription adorned thereon. Mr Roger Jones, Chairman of the General Committee, responded with warm words of thanks to the Trustees for the well-deserved recognition of the work and service of all members of the committee.

On Sunday morning the weather gods shone upon us. Many members assembled at the Cathedral in Leicester for a final service, which was taken by the Dean, The Very Rev Karen Rooms, with a sermon by the Bishop of Leicester, the Rt Rev Martyn Snow, during which he reflected on the poignancy of the moment as “a reminder to us that our actions and influence outlast our own time here on earth” and the importance of thanksgiving as a means of “remembering who we are, what values have shaped us and our hopes for the future.”

The Association Secretary, Captain Ty Smith, committed the Association Standard to the Dean “for the safe keeping in this Holy Church for evermore”. Performing his final duty as Standard Bearer, Sgt Robbie Allen was immaculately turned out and drilled perfectly. During the service two new plaques were unveiled in the Regimental Chapel to past Commanding Officers. The first was to Colonel RG Wilkes CBE TD DL, who was the last Commanding Officer of the 4/5th Battalion The Royal Leicestershire Regiment and for many years was Chairman of the Regimental Trustees. The second was to Colonel T Holloway, who was the last Commanding Officer of the 4th Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment.

Family members were in attendance and joined us as our guests afterwards. It was for everyone present a very

emotional service, especially when our Association Standard was handed over to the Dean for the last time.

Afterwards, instead of the usual parade marching to the Town Hall, this year a static parade was held outside the Cathedral, which allowed all members, regardless of health or mobility, to participate.

The Band of The Royal Anglian Regiment, who had also attended the Service, played whilst the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire reviewed the members on parade, accompanied by the High Sheriff and the President and Chairman of the Association. The Band of The Royal Anglian Regiment, who attended the Service, played throughout. This was another poignant moment in the day, as the Tigers were dismissed from the parade for the final time. There were a few damp eyes as the Regimental



Regimental Association



Leicestershire



March was played and memories of past times returned.

After dismissal, Mr RE Jones, Association Parade Marshall for 34 years, handed over his famous Regimental pace stick [owned previously by WO1 (RSM) JT Meredith DCM MSM 1942 – 1953 and WO1 (RSM) TJ Marston MBE

MSM 1953 – 1961] to the Regimental Museum.

Members then returned to Devonshire Place to continue the reunion. Drinks were followed by a splendid buffet lunch, well up to the standard presented the evening before. Members were joined by many guests,

including the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire and Mrs Kapur, the Lord Mayor of Leicester and the Lady

Mayoress, the High Sheriff, the Chairman of Leicestershire County Council, the Dean of Leicester Cathedral, as well as members of the Wilkes and Holloway families.

Following toasts to the King and the Regiment, the Association Chairman gave a speech, in which he publicly thanked the many people there present for their support, help and dedication. The Lord Lieutenant then spoke to thank the Regiment for their hospitality and their many years of service.

It was a very enjoyable weekend, and it gave us much pleasure to entertain so many guests for our magnificent service and impressive parade on this memorable occasion. Although tinged with the sadness by the drawing to a close a chapter in the annals of the Regiment, we look forward to many years as the Royal Anglian Regimental Association (Leicestershire) and maintaining our deep and excellent relationships and friendships with our City and County.

We therefore fall out on an upbeat and optimistic note, knowing that our Regiment, the Tigers, will never be forgotten, and that others will come after us to honour, respect and remember one of the British Army's finest county Regiments. Come on the Tigers!





Regimental Association



Northamptonshire

Talavera Dinner 2024



An enjoyable evening was had by all at the Talavera Dinner held in The Freemasons Hall, Northampton on Saturday 27th July 2024. The event was organised by Major (Retd) Les Carr and members of Finedon Branch The Royal Anglian Regiment Association.

Colonel Robert Blomfield MBE, the County Colonel Northampton presided over the Dinner

Guests included Brigadier (Retd) David Russell-Parsons OBE HM Deputy Lord Lieutenant Northamptonshire, Councillor Jon-Paul Carr Mayor of Wellingborough and Councillor Tom Partridge-Underwood from Wellingborough Council. Major Andrew Lucas OC C Coy 2 R ANGLIAN and Major Jordan Peplow OC A Coy Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland ACF.

The dinner was preceded by a wonderful display by the Corps of Drums of A Coy Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland ACF and musical entertainment was provided by The Rushden Town Band.

The next Talavera Dinner will be held at the same venue on 26 July 2025



and is open to both serving and retired members of the Regiment. If you would like to attend next year's dinner further

details can be obtained from Major (Retd) Les Carr at the following email address: talaveradinner@btinternet.com



Regimental
Association



Bedfordshire
& Hertfordshire

Bedford Branch Report 2024



In January 2024, the Branch agreed to a by-law change regarding the Branch election period of office. This was changed from annual to bi-annual.

At the March Biannual General Meeting, the following members were successful and took up office for the two-year period.

The President is excluded in the election process but is recorded as being Col Tony Winton OBE DL.

Chairman: Maj John Whatley DL VR

Vice Chair: Kevin Arnold

Secretary: Basil Hirniak

Asst Secretary: Pauline Buck

Treasurer: Flt Lt Vince Hislop

Auditor: Izzy Mason

Welfare: Capt Anne Chesworth-Showell

Brasses: Phil Kino

Social Committee: Kevin Arnold, Terry McHugh, Terry Paul, Brian Soper

Standard Bearers: Kevin Arnold, Clive Homan, Terry Paul, Brian Sutton.

Social Committee

The Branch Social Committee has been hard at work during 2024 and have successfully planned the following

events that took place or are soon to take place: -

Lunch at the RAFA Club: May 2024

Wardown Park Luton: Jun 2024

Blenheim Day Lunch: Aug 2024

Lunch at the RAFA Club: Aug 2024

Regimental Gathering: Sept 2024

Naseby Battlefield visit: Sept 2024

Lunch at the RAFA Club: 23 Nov 2024

Christmas Lunch: Sunday 1 Dec 2024

Bedford Embankment

Regimental Bench

Context, the Bench Dedication is a lease that lasts for 15 years. The lease had expired in 2019, but the Regimental dedication plaque had remained in situ until the council undertook replacements of rotten benches in 2022. In doing so, our rental, and plaque disappeared. The Secretary visited the Borough Hall and confirmed the person who needed to be contacted was Bjorn Hove. The Secretary then wrote to Bjorn, who was very helpful, and the Branch agreed to reapply for a plaque to be affixed to a bench, as close to the war memorial, on Bedford Embankment. This is due to

take place at any time now.

Memorial Garden and Wall

There has been 1 interment in 2024. A wife of an already interred comrade.

The Secretary had also chased North Bedfordshire Borough Council frequently during 2024 regarding the wall repair after a joint visit to the site on Tuesday 2nd April 2024. The most up to date position is dated 7th November. Stephen met with the building works department on site mid-September to discuss how they will be planning to move forward with the works. They have decided to carry out the rebuilding of the wall in three phases.

Phase 1 will consist of taking down and rebuilding the section of wall to the rear of the garden.

Phases 2 and 3 will follow on and will consist of taking down and rebuilding the section of boundary wall which is adjacent to the care home and amenity green space.

Between each section of new wall, an expansion joint will be implemented.



There were two large shrubs along the proposed sections of wall (2 and 3) which will be required to be removed prior to the being wall being taken down.

They are planning to start the works to phase 1 within the next couple of weeks with a view of completing this section one before the end of the year. Sections 2 & 3 will follow on in the new year.

Mausoleum Roof

Due to the severe inclement weather, earlier in 2024, the roof and ceiling have sustained weather damage. This is currently being investigated by the loss adjusters. Things are moving forward slowly but at least things are moving.

Veteran Breakfasts and the Regimental Big Breakfast

The RAFA Club in Ashburnham Road, played host again for the Regimental Big Breakfast. It was very well attended. There were 2 new faces present, however; they have chosen not to join the Branch.

The RAFA club also holds monthly Armed Forces & Veterans Club breakfasts on 1 Sunday in every month.

A Veterans Community Network

Brunch is held, usually, on the first Saturday of every month at the North End Club, Roff Avenue (car park via Chandos Street [off of Tavistock Street]) Bedford.

QEII Platinum Jubilee Tree

Dedication and Blenheim Day Lunch

On the 11th of August, the Branch held it's Blenheim Day Lunch. The Branch was very happy to have in attendance representatives from the Lieutenancy, OC D Coy 2 RANG, Kempston Town Council and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Bedfordshire.

Prior to Lunch, a short service of remembrance took place which incorporated the long-awaited dedication of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Tree, that is located within the memorial garden grounds.

50 members and VIPs really enjoyed the lunch event which had on display, around the dining area, various displays linked to the Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Regiment together with both volumes of the Books of Remembrance.

At the end of the lunch, the President and Chairman presented Honorary Vice- President's Certificates to Barry

Watson and Trevor Hardwick, for their sterling support of and contribution to the Branch over many years. Barry was the long serving auditor of the Branch Accounts and Trevor continues to be the Branch Bugler.

Regimental Gathering

The Branch attended the Regimental Gathering and really enjoyed the 60th Anniversary Event.

The Keep:

150th Anniversary of Opening.

There is a project currently underway by the Bedfordshire Province of Freemasonry, in that a glass fronted display area is being created at the Keep to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the opening of the Keep in 2026 and that the Branch has been invited to assist with the project.

Branch President

At the time of writing this report, the sad news of the passing of the Branch President, Col. Tony Winton OBE DL was received.

**Basil Hirniak
Branch Secretary.**



Regimental Association



Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire

Christmas Lunch 2023



On 3rd December 2023, over 50 members and guests of the Bedford branch attended the annual Christmas Lunch at the Keep. The attendees were entertained by a lovely singer who had an appropriate and welcomed song list. The meal was excellent and was enjoyed by all in attendance. At the end of the meal, a free raffle took place with many attendees winning prizes. Pictured Seated at this table amongst others are Regimental and Branch Honorary Padre the Rev Stephen Smith, Branch President Col Tony Winton OBE DL, who sadly has since passed away, and Capt Anne Chesworth-Showell.

Visit to Naseby in Northamptonshire

On 20th July 2024, nine members and guests of the Bedford Branch attended a battlefield tour at Naseby in Northamptonshire, hosted by www.naseby.com

All members found the tour to be very interesting and, at times, very dramatic.

The land in which the battle took place has changed very little with the passage of time and the excellent information on the battle and equipment used was highly informative.

Most of us knew of the battle but very few of us knew that the outcome of this battle would have a lasting effect up to this day and was really the catalyst for the birth of British and world democracy.

We as a branch would encourage other members of the Royal Anglian family to attend this tour run entirely by volunteers, who give so much of their time to continue to educate visitors to the site.

All in all a thoroughly enjoyable day followed by a few drinks in a local pub in the village of Naseby prior to departing for home.



Brian Sutton, Terry McHugh, Kevin Arnold, Clive Henman, Jeff Henman, Maj John Whatley DL VR, Brian Soper



Deaths and Obituaries

Name	Date of Death or Month Bulletin Issued	Regiment
Steven West	2 January 2024	1st Battalion, 7 Royal Anglian
Peter Welby-Everard	2 January 2024	East Anglian Regiment, 1st Battalion, 2nd Battalion and 3rd Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment
Dale Widdowson	17 January 2024	1st Battalion Royal Anglian
Jack Jennings	19 January 2024	Cambridgeshire Regiment
Brigadier Bob Pike	February 2024	1st Beds and Herts Battalion, East Anglian Regiment, 1st and 3rd Royal Anglian
Lieutenant Tom Henson MC	February 2024	Royal Norfolk Regiment
Spencer Neilly	14 February 2024	2nd Royal Anglian
Stephen Paul Johnson	7 March 2024	Royal Anglian
Ivor Ernest Read	27 February 2024	Royal Norfolk Regiment
Victor Drake	20 March 2024	Royal Lincolnshire Regiment
Major David Napier	22 March 2024	1st and 2nd Royal Anglian
Trevor 'Sadie' Sadler	25 March 2024	East Anglian Regt, Royal Anglian
Timothy Almond	April 2024	2nd Royal Anglian
Gary Hill	April 2024	2nd Royal Anglian
Ronald David Thompson	April 2024	Royal Leicestershire Regiment, 4th Royal Anglian
Colin 'Mac' Mccolgan	3 May 2024	Suffolk Regiment, Northamptonshire Regiment, 2nd East Anglian, Royal Anglian Regiment
Major Bertrand 'Bob' Day	11 May 2024	Essex Regiment, Royal Anglian Regiment
Chris Swallow	13 May 2024	2nd Royal Anglian
Major James White	22 May 2024	Northamptonshire Regiment, Royal Anglian Regiment
Anthony James Bradwell	30 May 2024	Lincolnshire Regiment, Yorkshire Light Infantry
Darren Mountain	1 June 2024	Royal Anglian Regiment
Richard Granger	12 June 2024	1st Royal Anglian
Major GH Bradshaw MBE	1 July 2024	Royal Leicestershire Regiment, 1st Royal Anglian, 7th Royal Anglian, 3rd Royal Anglian
Colonel Richard Henry Robinson	13 July 2024	Lincolnshire Regiment, Leicestershire Regiment, 4 Royal Anglian
Simon Harrison	August 2024	2nd Royal Anglian
Paul Bennett	16 August 2024	3rd Royal Anglian
Graham Grocock	23 August 2024	2nd Royal Anglian
Major David Nevile	24 August 2024	Royal Leicestershire, Parachute Regiment
Anthony Valentine	September 2024	East Anglian Regiment
Major Andrew Dexter	5 September 2024	4th Royal Anglian, 3rd Royal Anglian
Major Patrick King	10 September 2024	Royal Army Ordnance Corps Beds and Herts Regiment, East Anglian Regiment, 4th Royal Anglian, 1st Royal Anglian
Terence Neal	10 September 2024	1st Royal Anglian
Captain Trevor Taylor	14 September 2024	Royal Leicestershire Regiment, 7th Royal Anglian (TA)
Darren Aspinall	28 September 2024	2nd Royal Anglian, 1st Royal Anglian
Gordon Alfred William Wright	1 October 2024	Essex Regiment
Ian Clarke	13 October 2024	2nd Royal Anglian
Liam Love	9 October 2024	1st Royal Anglian, 2nd Royal Anglian
Raven 'Harry' Hughes	31 October 2024	1st Suffolk Regiment
Shaun Roberts	1 November 2024	1st Royal Anglian, 2nd Royal Anglian
Ian Hooton	November 2024	2nd Royal Anglian
Robert Kemley	November 2024	2nd Royal Anglian
Tony Winton OBE	7th November 2024	3rd Battalion
Nigel Lewis MBE	14th November 2024	Suffolk Regt and 1st Royal Anglian



Obituaries

Brigadier WRW Pike



Brigadier William Robert Walter Pike, known to one and all as Bob died on 22nd January 2024 aged 89. He was born on 21st December 1934 in Shanghai where his father was serving with the Municipal Police.

In 1942 following Japan's entry into WWII Bob, aged eight, and his mother were interned in the notorious Lunghwa Civil Assembly Centre PoW camp where they were fortunate to survive nearly three years' incarceration. His father was interned in a separate camp. After the war the family was repatriated to the UK and settled in Lincolnshire from where Bob was sent to nearby Stamford School. It was here that he developed his love of cricket, a game he played for many years until well into middle age.

He was also a good hockey and rugby player, a fine rifle shot, and he won a number of prizes including the Crichton-Maitland Prize for Commonsense. He left school in 1953 and went directly to Sandhurst from where in 1955 he was commissioned into the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment, then based in Assaye Barracks, Tidworth. By an extraordinary coincidence he was to serve there twice more during his career.

From Tidworth the Battalion was posted to Goslar in BAOR where duties patrolling the border between West and East Germany were combined with skiing and other sports in the nearby Harz

mountains, and a great deal of training. Following amalgamation with the Essex Regiment in June 1958 to form the 3rd East Anglian Regiment Bob was posted as a training officer to the Regimental Depot at Warley but in 1960 all training for the East Anglian Brigade was concentrated in Bury St Edmunds. Later that year he chose to use his accumulated leave to drive to the Battalion which was now based in Malacca in Malaya as part of 28 Commonwealth Brigade. Together with Peter Sincock, a brother officer also returning to the Battalion and Cpl Phil Carroll they drove overland in an Austin Gypsy, a distance of some 11,200 miles.

The MOD had been parsimonious in the time they were allowed, informing them that for every day they took longer than the sixty days allocated they would lose seniority and half a day's pay. They made it by the skin of their teeth in fifty-eight days but only after spending all of the penultimate night of the journey winching the vehicle along a logging track through the jungle of southern Thailand. On arrival in Malacca they were greeted by the Battalion complete with Band lined up on the square. He became 2IC B Company and bought a very smart open topped Sunbeam Talbot. Being one of the few officers to own a car he was socially much in demand.

The Battalion's return to England in 1962 was notable as it was the last time a battalion was moved by troopship before all such movements were carried out by air. However, Bob missed the three-week voyage in HMT Nevasa as his father was not well and he had been flown home shortly before embarkation. On return to duty Bob became Adjutant, firstly to Lt Col (later Maj Gen) Mike Holme and then to Lt Col Cliff Norbury.

It was a difficult time as the Battalion arrived home 1,000 strong but immediately lost all National Servicemen, and after six months staging at Shoeburyness moved to Ballykinler in Northern Ireland just over 300 strong. To make sure 'the young gentlemen' were not late on parade he was well known for holding subalterns' sword drills the morning after regimental guest nights. Ballykinler was followed by Staff College from where, in 1966, Bob

was posted to HQ Director of Borneo Operations as GSO2 Ops.

It was here while on leave in Hong Kong he met Cecelia Elizabeth 'Libbie' Shekury who was to become his wife. Remarkably she and her family had also been interned in Shanghai during the war but in a different camp to Bob and his mother. Borneo was followed by a short time as GSO2 Ops/Int in Bangkok with HQ South East Asia Treaty Organisation during which time he and Libbie were married. In January 1968 he returned to 3rd Battalion, then based in Assaye Barracks as OC D Company. Following the Battalion's move to Aldershot in October 1969 it deployed to Cyprus for a six-month emergency tour with UNFICYP.

From there in January 1970 Bob went as GSO2 at HQ Queen's Division at Basingbourn before being appointed 2IC 1st Battalion, first in Londonderry and then in Cyprus. However, in May 1973 his time there was cut short when he was promoted and appointed MA to GOC Northern Ireland.

In December 1974 Bob returned once more to Assaye Barracks to become CO 1st Battalion whose role as part of the AMF(L) entailed reinforcing NATO's flanks in Norway and Turkey. He cared deeply for those under his command and was known affectionately by his soldiers as 'Uncle Bob'. After command Bob was seconded firstly to HQ UKLF as GSO1SD and then in 1979 for a year as MA to the Military Secretary. Promoted Colonel in 1980 he went as Col GS to HQ Eastern District in Colchester until March 1984 when he went on secondment to be COS of the Royal Brunei Armed Forces. On promotion to Brigadier in 1986 his final posting was as Defence Advisor in the British High Commission in Delhi. A wonderful place for him and Libbie to round off a long and distinguished career.

On retirement the family settled in Over Wallop in Hampshire where Bob and Libbie had originally bought a house in 1967. Bob joined the Army Welfare Services in Bulford and Larkhill as an RO and four years later became a full-time civil servant as Regional Controller South West Region with the

Defence Housing Executive where he was responsible for some 1,500 married quarters spread between Brize Norton in Oxfordshire and Culdrose in Cornwall.

Finally retiring in 1994 Bob settled down to village life taking an active part in local affairs. Well known for his prodigious vegetables he became Treasurer of the Over Wallop horticultural society where, at the Annual Flower Show his spicy pickled onions and chutneys were much in demand.

Bob was an unassuming man with great charm and a delightful sense of humour who exuded a quiet air of competence and authority. He was also a firm but fair disciplinarian but never brusque in demanding the high standards he set and expected. He had the gift of being able to make everybody he spoke to, be they field marshal or new recruit, feel comfortable and at ease. He was well liked, respected and looked up to by all those who worked for and with him. Very much a family man he counted among his greatest achievements the fact that he passed on his love for and skill at fly fishing to his two sons.

Libbie died in 2010; Bob is survived by their sons, Ashley and Christopher. He will be sorely missed by all of us who had the pleasure of knowing him.

KW

Colonel RH Robinson OBE MA



Educated at Stamford School (where he was in the rugby, athletics and boxing teams), Richard Robinson spent three

years (1951-54) as a trooper in the British South Africa Police, involved in policing the outback of Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

On return to UK he joined the Army. After training at Eaton Hall OCS, he was commissioned into the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment in July 1955 and served in 1 R Lincolns in Malaya. He transferred to the Royal Leicestershire Regiment in July 1958 and became Intelligence Officer of the 1st Battalion stationed in Plymouth.

From 1959-62 he was a Company 2IC at the All Arms Junior Leaders Battalion in Tonfanau (North Wales), and was appointed Adjutant of 4/5 R Leicesters TA in Leicester 1962-64. He then returned to 4 R ANGLIAN as OC C Company just before the Aden tour. When the Battalion returned to Watchet in 1965 he took over as Adjutant in Malta.

On promotion to Major in 1967 he served as a Staff Officer in HQ 7th Armoured Brigade in Soltau, BAOR, before returning to 4 R Anglian to command B Company in Bahrain 1969-70.

He was awarded the MBE for his work as GSO2 (Ops/SD), HQ Southern Command, Hounslow 1970-71. He then became an Instructor of the Company Commanders' Division at the School of Infantry 1972-73.

On promotion to Lieutenant Colonel in 1973, he was appointed Commander, Union Defence Force, United Arab Emirates (in 1975 the Force, having increased in strength and equipment, was renamed Al Yarmouk Brigade). In 1976 he was awarded United Arab Emirate's Distinguished Service Medal and a year later he was awarded the OBE.

Staff appointments in the MOD and HQ Wales followed, and promotion to Colonel, during which he was also Colonel Commandant, Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force 1984-87.

He retired from the Army in April 1987 and became the Domus Bursar of St John's College, Cambridge. He was admitted to the Degree of Master of Arts by the University of Cambridge in May 1990. He handed over the appointment of Bursar in 2002, although remaining

a Fellow of the College, where his tact, knowledge and experience remained much appreciated.

After retirement, he became a Trustee of The Royal Tigers' Association, becoming its President and Chairman. He also joined both the local branch of The Royal British Legion, becoming its President, and the Parish Council. He was always immaculately dressed, calm and with a great sense of humour.

He was a dedicated and professional officer, with high standards but who was very approachable and saw to the needs and welfare of those he led with great affection.

Major Andrew Dexter



On the Lady Be Good expedition in the Libyan Desert, 1968

Andrew Dexter had a brief spell in industry before deciding civvy street was not for him. He attended Mons Officer Cadet School in 1964 and was commissioned into the Regiment in 1965, joining the 4th Battalion at Watchet in 1965 and seeing active service in Aden followed by Malta and Libya, then to the 3rd Battalion in Paderborn where he was mortar platoon commander, and another operational tour, Belfast 1972.

He transferred to the Royal Army



Obituaries

Ordnance Corps in 1973, returning straight back to Northern Ireland as a watchkeeper in HQ 39 Infantry Brigade, followed by a series of postings in UK, Germany and Zimbabwe before leaving the Army as a major in 1988. His second career was in international logistics in Taiwan, Malaysia and the UK, before finally retiring to Cyprus in 2004, where he died peacefully at home on 5 September this year. He leaves his beloved wife Pat, whom he met in Malta in 1968, sons Tim, Ashley and Rupert, who served as a captain in the RRF, and 8 grandchildren.

A survivor of two shooting wars, Andrew was always cool in a crisis. For all the upheavals of an action-packed life, he viewed the world with a degree of quiet equanimity and liked nothing more than to paint and fish. Above all his family always came first in his life aside from his military duty.

Corporal Victor Drake



Cpl Victor McDonald Drake died on 20 March 2024 aged 98. Victor was born on 28 February 1926 at Skellingthorpe.

He was conscripted for the Army in 1944 but not called up until 5 April 1945. The war in Europe had ceased in May so, after training, Victor was posted to C Company 2nd Battalion. The Battalion was earmarked for duty in the Far East but, as that conflict ended, Victor was sent to the Middle East.

He flew to Egypt in a Stirling bomber and along with the rest of the Battalion



Victor in Geneifa, Egypt, September 1946

he transferred to Palestine. Victor served with the 2nd Battalion in Palestine until he left the theatre in early 1948 arriving back in the UK on 20 January 1948.

After leave, Victor was demobbed in the spring of 1948 returning to Lincolnshire where he settled and brought up his family.

Victor was an active member of the Regimental Association for many years. The funeral was a private affair.

Harry Hughes

Local legend Harry Hughes was born in 1925 at a time when the country was still recovering from the Great War and heading towards the economic slump of the 1930s.

He was born in Capel St Mary into a large Suffolk family and was given the birth name of Raven due to the mop of black hair he was born with, but this quickly became Harry.

Life for the young Harry and his siblings was tough. The family moved to Hadleigh when Harry was a boy and he attended Bridge Street School, but school was not a priority as he was expected to help to support the family by working with his dad. When he wasn't helping his dad he would find whatever work he could and growing up in rural Suffolk he quickly became adept at finding a meal for the pot, much

to the annoyance of the local keepers who would not think twice at taking a shotgun to any unwanted poachers.

Unbeknown to Harry at the time, living off the land and avoiding getting shot at would become very useful skills in the years to come. As Harry reached his teenage years the world was plunged into another world war and his older brothers were called up. Jimmy and Ronnie both served with the Army and Charlie was with the RAF. Ronnie was with the Suffolks in the Far East and like many men from this region, ended up as a prisoner of war.

When Harry turned 18 in December 1943 he was immediately called up. He reported to the Suffolk Regiment the following February and commenced his basic training. At the same time the entire country was in training and gearing up for something big. On 6 June 1944, D-Day, when Allied forces launched the largest amphibious invasion in the history of warfare. Codenamed Operation 'Overlord', the Allied landings on the beaches of Normandy marked the start of a long and costly campaign to liberate north-west Europe from Nazi occupation. Harry's parent regiment, the 1st Battalion Suffolk Regiment landed at Sword Beach on D-Day and were tasked with capturing a bunker system, which they did, but only after losing two officers and five men and 24 wounded. When the Suffolks moved inland, replacements were needed and Harry soon received his movement orders. He caught up with the Regiment in Normandy and was immediately thrown into the thick of it.

As a member of D Company, Harry fought through France, Belgium, Holland and into Germany right up to VE Day, by which time the battalion had lost 215 men killed in action and hundreds more wounded.

But that wasn't the end of it for Harry or the Suffolks, they were redeployed to Palestine to support the Palestinian police who were struggling to control the rising tensions between the Arab and Israeli militias. The British troops often found themselves in the firing line from all sides.

Despite the difficult work regime,

Harry who was a natural sportsman, still found time to play football and hockey for the regimental teams.

He was demobbed and returned home in September 1947 and he settled back into civilian life. He married and had three daughters and by 1953, Harry and family had moved into Guthrum Road, where he remained for the rest of his life. His love for football continued and he became the first team goalkeeper at Hadleigh United Football Club for many years. He also became a regular on the Hadleigh pub darts scene.

Over the years Harry always enjoyed the pub where he made lots of friends. His hostelry of choice was The George, and in recent decades he would often be found in 'Harry's corner' in the snug where he would sit with his glass of Manns beer and a friendly smile for everyone who passed by. The loud music never bothered him, he simply turned down the volume on his hearing aids. Harry kept himself very active and even well into his eighties he could be found up on the conch walking the dogs, or in his immaculate garden tending to his very productive veg patch or adding more colour to his borders.

In 2015 Harry was recognised for his wartime service by the President of the Republic of France who appointed Harry to the rank of Chevalier in the Order national de la Legion d'honneur. Harry was formally presented with his award, by Mrs Diana Hunt the Deputy Lieutenant at a ceremony organised by the Hadleigh Royal British Legion in the Guildhall. This year he was a guest of honour at the nation service of commemoration to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire where he met and impressed Prince Edward the Duke of Edinburgh.

Harry made friends wherever he went and it is no exaggeration to say that he was universally loved by all who knew him. One recent comment made following the announcement of his passings said of Harry the he was 'simply the best'. If town's have national treasures, then Harry was ours and he will be sorely missed.

Private Anthony James Bradwell



Private Anthony James Bradwell died on 30t May 2024 aged 86.

Tony was born on 8 August 1937 and after growing up in Grimsby, started work in the Fish Docks aged 15. Tony decided that he was not going to wait to be conscripted for National Service and, in 1955, at the age of 18, he joined the Regular Army.

Tony underwent 10 weeks of training at Sobroan Barracks, Lincoln which he enjoyed. In November 1955 he sailed from Southampton on a troop ship bound for Singapore and Malaya to join the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment which was already in theatre. After basic training Tony, who had joined D Company, undertook a series of operations in the jungle.

One such operation was a night ambush, which was a notable success, killing 3 insurgents. Tony remained with the Regiment and moved with them to Africa and then back to UK and Lincoln in 1958. On hearing of the proposed amalgamation of the Regiment with the Northamptonshire Regiment, Tony joined the Yorkshire Light Infantry and returned to Malaya for a further 3 years.

After marriage to Lillian, Tony left the Army in 1964 returning to work in the Grimsby Fish Docks and then the Steel Works. Tony and Lillian had 5 children and many grand and great grandchildren. Tony was an active member of the Great Grimsby Branch of the Regimental Association.

The funeral took place at St Peters Church, St Peter's Avenue, Cleethorpes on the 12th June 2024 and was well attended by family, friends and the Association who provided a guard of honour.

Brian Ivett Royal Lincolnshire Regiment



Brian Ivett passed away on 18 October 2024. He was called up for National Service and enlisted in the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment. After completing his basic training, he was posted to the 1st Battalion in Malaya.

He held the job of Platoon Signaller and in the jungle used morse code to send messages back to base. He also served on the aircraft carrier, Bulwark, patrolling the Red Sea for three months before returning to Southampton. During this time he went to Aden, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Kuwait. After a short leave, it was back to duty and off to Germany for just 2 months before being demobbed on 3rd January 1959. Brian returned to his job at A H Clarks for a year and married his sweetheart Pam.

He then moved to Perkin's engines in Peterborough where he worked for 42 years until his retirement in 2001. Pam and Brian have two daughters, three grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Both Brian and Pam were very active members of the Spalding Branch for many decades. Brian was the Standard Bearer and Pam the Branch Treasurer. Pam predeceased Brian in 2022 and they are both sorely missed.



Proud to support Army boxing

Sport is critically important to Army life, whether our soldiers are serving in campaigns overseas, providing essential logistical and operational support in the UK, or recovering from injuries sustained in combat.

Team Army raises funds for Army sports through sponsorship contracts and charitable donations, ensuring that funding is distributed fairly across more than 40 sports disciplines.

We help industry partners and the private sector to meet their corporate goals, through valuable networking opportunities provided by sporting events. Team Army sponsors become involved with Army sports at the level they choose, through gold, silver or bronze sponsorship options.

The funding we generate also supports adaptive sports that play a key role in the rehabilitation of injured soldiers.

Team Army is endorsed by the UK Ministry of Defence's Executive Committee Army Board (ECAB) and works in partnership with the Army Sports Control Board, which regulates all sport played in the Army.

We continuously campaign to increase the funding that supports our Army sports associations with a steady income stream and simpler administration.

If you want to know more about Team Army or discuss it further with our CEO, Major General Lamont Kirkland CBE, please contact Gerald Callus at gerald.callus@teamarmy.org or on 07427 175 530, who will facilitate the next steps.

"There is a direct link between the Army's sporting excellence and its operational success. The superb support provided by Team Army will enhance our soldiers' ability to achieve both these outcomes"

General Sir Peter Wall KCB CBE ADC Gen.

www.teamarmy.org

Team Army is an **ETHOS** initiative, www.ethosfundraising.org
The Team Army Sports Foundation is a registered charity, number 07773783

Royal Anglian DIRECT

The Official Online Store of The Royal Anglian Regiment

- Combat Clothing
- Off Parade
- Royal Anglian Clothing
- Survival Kit
- Uniform Clothing & Accessories
- Webbing & Carriage

The official e-commerce website of The Royal Anglian Regiment. All items selected and contained within the site have been formally approved and signed off by the Regiment. The operation is run by a joint Royal Anglian and AMMO Management Committee who will ensure that the stock meets the needs of soldiers and veterans. A profit share of sales is passed to the Royal Anglian Regimental Benevolent Charity, and is used to support the welfare and benevolence activities of the Regiment.

www.royalangiandirect.co.uk
shop@royalangiandirect.co.uk



**THE COMBAT CLIPPER COMPANY,
PROVIDING TACTICAL GROOMING
SOLUTIONS FOR ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL.**

The Combat Clipper Company is a business founded by CSgt Young, 2 Royal Anglian. He launched the site on the 10th June 2024. HIS MISSION is to provide serving personnel and beard enthusiasts alike with top-tier grooming products designed for optimal tactical and durable performance in modern warfare situations and everyday life.

The establishment of The Combat Clipper Company comes in response to the recent introduction of a beard policy within the British Armed Forces, highlighting the need for specialised grooming solutions tailored to the unique requirements of armed forces soldiers.

As a company founded by military professionals, the Combat Clipper Company has rigorously tested its products to ensure they meet the highest standards of performance and durability in the field. From precision clippers to grooming kits, every product is designed with the needs of Armed Forces personnel in mind, offering reliability and functionality in even the most demanding conditions.



In addition to its commitment to providing top-tier grooming solutions, The Combat Clipper Company is dedicated to giving back to the military community. The company has pledged to donate a % of its profits to The Combat Stress Company, an organisation that offers clinical treatment and support to veterans from the British Armed Forces, with a specific focus on individuals facing complex mental health challenges.

"We are proud to launch Combat Clipper Company and to support our fellow service members with products that are not only practical but also contribute to their well-being," said Teague, Founder of The Combat Clipper Company. "By partnering with The Combat Stress Charity, we hope to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who have served our country."

WWW.COMBATCLIPPERCOMPANY.CO.UK

ABF
THE SOLDIERS'
CHARITY
The Army's National Charity



**FOR SOLDIERS
FOR VETERANS
FOR FAMILIES
FOR LIFE**

ABF The Soldiers' Charity is the Army's national charity, here for soldiers, former soldiers and their families for life.

We are one of the largest funders in the sector, supporting 60,000 people by awarding grants to individuals and 43 other charities and organisations that support the Army family.

When we hear of a person or family in need, we aim to respond within 48 hours.

SUPPORTING
60,000
INDIVIDUALS &
43
ORGANISATIONS

SEARCH ABF THE
SOLDIERS' CHARITY
TO FIND OUT MORE

SUPPORT US
AND YOU SUPPORT
THE WHOLE ARMY FAMILY

These are just some of the 43 charities and organisations we supported in the 2020-21 financial year:



ABF The Soldiers' Charity is a registered charity in England and Wales (1165420) & Scotland (SC039199). Registered as a company limited by guarantee in England & Wales (07974609). Registered Office: Mountbatten House, 12 Elizabeth Street, London, SW1W 9RB.

**HELP for
HEROES**
Support For Our Wounded



**ORDINARY PEOPLE,
EXTRAORDINARY EFFORTS**



DO YOUR BIT TO HELP OUR BLOKES

www.helpforheroes.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1120920

The Royal Anglian Regiment Website

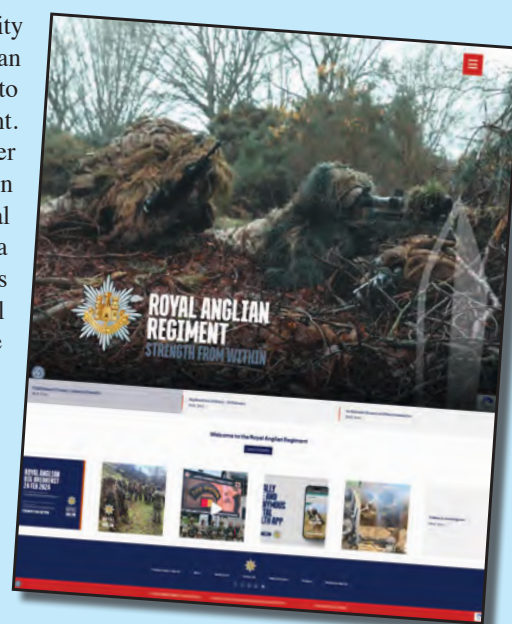
After a lot of hard work and some serious thought about its layout and design, we have a new Regimental Website at royalanglianregiment.com.

The website retains the well-proven features of the earlier version, it gives members of the regimental family access to a regularly updated news feed, our Diary of Events, and the Regimental Shop. We have further enhanced royalanglianregiment.com by incorporating the Royal Anglian Regiment Museum within the site, thereby allowing visitors digital access to the Museum and its archives.

In addition, website users will be able to access a steadily expanding archive of Regimental publications. The website now holds digital back copies of Royal Anglian News (RAN), back issues of our Annual Journal (Castle), and it will eventually include all past Regt Bulletins. This will create an unrivalled archive of our Regt history for future generations.

This new digital community has been named the Royal Anglian Digital Muster, it will be open to all Royal Anglians past and present. An additional feature of the Muster will be a facility for any Association Member to upload a personal biography of their service as a Royal Anglian. These biographies will be located within the Digital Muster. Access to the DM will be granted on registration with RHQ and subsequent verification.

The idea being to capture our collective and personal histories of our time within the Regiment. In this our 60th year, the creation of the Royal Anglian Digital Muster offers us all a unique and precious opportunity. Few Regiment's have the opportunity to capture and collate their history while it is all still within living memory. Please visit royalanglianregiment.com and take the opportunity to contribute to the



Royal Anglian story.

If you have not visited royalanglianregiment.com, please take the time to register and connect with the Royal Anglian Family.

To: RHQ, The Royal Anglian Regiment
The Keep
Gibraltar Barracks
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 3RN

THE ROYAL ANGLIAN REGIMENT BENEVOLENCE CHARITY

DONATION FORM

Donor's Full Name and Address

Name (capitals):

Address:

..... Post Code:

Gift Aid Declaration

I request that The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Charity (Registered Number 1085050) treat all donations I have made since January 2010, and any future donations, as Gift Aid donations, unless I notify you otherwise.

Signature: Date:/...../.....

Notes:

1. You must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax that the Charity reclaims on your donations, which is currently 28p for each £1 you give.
2. You must cancel this declaration if, in future, you no longer pay UK tax.

Standing Order

To (Name and address of your Bank):

..... Post Code:

Please make regular payments of £..... every month ☐, quarter ☐, year ☐ to The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Charity from the following account number:

sort code: starting on:/...../..... and ending on:/...../.....

or until further notice.

Account Name:

Signature: Date:/...../.....

Please pay to: The Royal Bank of Scotland, Holts Branch, Lawrie House, Victoria Road, Farnborough GU14 7NR; Sort Code: 16-19-26, Account No 14811362.

Single Gift

I would like to make a donation to the Benevolence Charity of £..... and enclose a cheque for this sum payable to The Royal Anglian Regiment Benevolent Charity. Please ensure you complete the Gift Aid declaration above if you want your donation to increase by 25%.

CPL Shaun Roberts
27/1/89 - 1/11/2024



