



CASTLE

JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ANGLIAN REGIMENT




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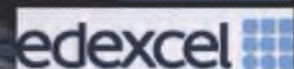
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Hobbies that turn to jobs...

Picture framing is an ideal hobby that can be transformed into a full or part time job when you change careers or retire.....

Retiring or leaving a secure job and striking out in a new business venture is common enough, but to get a running start to succeed at your new career needs preparation and training.

After years of working for an employer running your own business can be hard, you have to dig deep to find the discipline and resolve to make your venture a real success. However doing something you enjoy will relieve some of the problems, so turning a hobby into a job sounds a great idea. With a huge demand for framed artworks of all descriptions Picture framing is an ideal business that can be started as a small home based operation and lead to an amazing full time operation.

Ex Met police officer Duncan McDonald did exactly this. Starting from the humble beings of a spare room he built a framing business with a turnover in excess of quarter of a million pounds. The framing business now runs with 3 full time staff, while Duncan concentrates his efforts on teaching others to build successful framing businesses through a new business DIYframing.

DIYframing was launched to address the needs of many whom where unable to find a good quality-training course in bespoke framing. "The Business Development Week is the "Flagship" of our training programme and is unique to DIY Framing." says Duncan, "Using many years of experience in the framing industry, combined with expert knowledge of how to plan and structure the development of a new business, DIY Framing offers an imaginative and original course, taking people from being complete framing novices to a point where they are able to start up a bespoke framing service from home or business premises. We can honestly say that we do not know of any other company currently providing such an exciting and complete support and training package."

The full programme consists of seven, 1-day sessions. Each day represents a complete workshop or course, which can be booked separately or in any combination. By completing all seven days you really will be able to tackle most framing projects and have the confidence to resolve new challenges as they are presented to you.



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June 2006
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Editor: Lt Col PRC Dixon OBE

Contents

The Colonel-in-Chief	8	Special Features	
The Colonel of the Regiment	8	<i>Gandamack Revisited</i>	85
The Regiment	9	<i>Infantry Golf Championships</i>	93
Personalia	11	<i>The Askari Appeal</i>	93
Regimental Matters	12	<i>Storming the Schwaben Redoubt</i>	94
Mainly About People	14	<i>From Basra to Bermuda</i>	95
The Regimental Museum	16	<i>The Veterans Agency</i>	96
Diary Dates 2006	17	<i>Tough Guy 2006</i>	96
Can You Remember?	18	<i>Regimental Relics at the Tower</i>	97
The Vikings	27	Regimental Association	99
The Poachers	46	<i>Obituaries</i>	102
3rd Battalion	63	Association Branches	120
Colour Section	73	Affiliated ACF and CCF	122

Front cover

Top: 2nd Battalion C Company soldiers on night patrol.

Bottom: 1st Battalion Pte Edwards, D Company.

Back cover

1st Battalion testing the water temperature.

Regiment Internet Website

www.army.mod.uk



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Foreword by the Colonel-in-Chief

His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO was appointed Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Anglian Regiment by Her Majesty The Queen on 21 April 2006.

Born in 1944, the Duke of Gloucester is the second son of the late Duke of Gloucester and the late Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester (late Deputy Colonel-in-Chief The Royal Anglian Regiment 1964-2002 and Colonel-in-Chief 2002-2004).

Educated at Eton he went to Magdalene College, Cambridge where he read architecture. After completing his training, he went into practice as a partner in a firm of London architects. He had planned a full-time career in architecture but, on the death of his elder brother, he became his father's heir and took on increased royal duties and the responsibility for the family estate at Barnwell, in Northamptonshire.

In 1972 Prince Richard (as he was known then) married Birgitte van Deurs. The Duke and Duchess live at Kensington Palace and have three children.

The Duke carries out a significant number of public duties. Some are related to architecture and conservation, in which he is still deeply interested. He was elected a corporate member of the Royal Institute of Architects in 1972 and is President of the Society of the Architect-Artists.

The Duke is Royal Colonel of the 6th Battalion The Rifles, Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Army Medical Corps and Royal Honorary Colonel of The Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia). He was appointed a Knight of the Order of the Garter (KG) in 1997 and in 1974 he was appointed a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order (GCVO).



When I was a small boy I was well aware that my father wore this enormous bearskin with his Guards uniform, but I was also aware that there were other soldiers who were not so flamboyant and that they fought in county regiments and that those who were in the Northamptonshire Regiment treated my mother with great respect because she was their Colonel-in-Chief. This seemed to me much more important than the bearskin, which was just something that made it difficult to get through doors!

I am therefore very proud to think that half a century later I should be asked to take over the role my mother played so conscientiously, as Regiments merged, and the Royal Anglians came into being.

The role as defender of our valued freedom has become more complicated and more skilled as time goes by. I hope that I get closer to understanding these skills as I get to know the Royal Anglians better and follow their fortunes in the years ahead. This week's news reminds me that I will share your set-backs as well as triumphs as your missions come and go.

From the Colonel of the Regiment

The week of writing this foreword has been marked by the tragic news of the death on operations in Iraq of Ptes 'Lewi' Lewaicei and Adam Morris, and the serious wounding in the same incident of Pte Lionel O'Connor. While we are all aware of the significant dangers faced by members of the Regiment on operations, casualties such as these still come as a great shock for everyone, as well as the greatest personal tragedy for the families and close friends of those killed and wounded. All in the Regimental family offer our deepest sympathy to the families of Ptes Lewaicei and Morris, and our sincere best wishes to Pte O'Connor for a rapid recovery. The Poachers are very much in all our thoughts as they continue to strive to fulfil their crucially important mission in a very difficult and dangerous environment.

21 April saw the appointment of His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester as Colonel-in-Chief of the Regiment. His Royal Highness brings considerable experience, breadth of interests and commitment to this role and we are very fortunate to have him as our Colonel-in-Chief. We welcome him warmly and look forward to working closely with him for the future and well being of the Regiment.

On 1 April the East of England Regiment transitioned into 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment and I was delighted to be present for the flag changing ceremony at Beckingham Camp. I highlighted the crucial importance of this development in the December 2005 *Castle*, and we are already seeing the benefits of having our own Territorial battalion back. 3rd Royal Anglian provides a clearly understood Regimental presence in our counties and support in many ways to 1st and 2nd Royal Anglian, our cadet detachments and our Associations, as well as a significant operational capability in its own right.

We have recently received the results of the review of Regimental Headquarters by the General Staff and the Director of Infantry. As expected, we have been able to strengthen RHQ at Bury St Edmunds, including upgrading the Regimental Secretary to C1 MSF, and the Assistant to C2 and, in due course drawing in an extra C2. We have also retained an area outstation for the East Midlands (Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire) with an office in Northampton, and an area outstation in the South (Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex) currently with an office at Warley. The post in Lincoln, which



The Colonel of the Regiment presenting battalion flashes to members of the 3rd Battalion.

has already been gapped for a year, has provided some compensating reduction, and the area office in Norwich will close in 2008. One of the officers in Bury St Edmunds will have responsibility for Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire, and I anticipate that there will be some functional reorganisation of duties among the Regimental staff as a whole to enable the three Area Secretaries to sustain and develop their contacts and influence throughout their counties. Crucial to the success of the new structure will be cementing and developing the closest working relationships between the Area Secretaries and their staff, and the companies of 3rd Royal Anglian in their counties.

We move into the second half of the year, with the 1st Battalion having completed its role training with a successful TESEX and now preparing for a further operational deployment in 2007, with the 2nd Battalion closely engaged in Iraq, and with 3rd Battalion continuing to build its operational capability. I ask all members of the Regimental family to continue to support them in their efforts and to help all those who have suffered bereavement and injury as a result of our Regiment's service not only this year, but in former times.



The Regiment

Colonel-in-Chief

HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO

Colonel of the Regiment

Maj Gen JCB Sutherell CB CBE

President of the Regimental Association

Brig RM Brunt CBE

Deputy Colonels of the Regiment

1st Battalion: Brig PD Jones MBE

2nd Battalion: Lt Gen JC McColl CBE DSO

TA: Col NH Kelsey OBE TD

Honorary Colonel 3rd Battalion

Brig AJK Calder OBE

Deputy Honorary Colonels TA

Norfolk, Suffolk	Col PJS Child
Lincolnshire	Col GWC Newmarch
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire	Col JBC Prescott
Essex, Hertfordshire	Col CAF Thomas TD DL

Alliances

Australia	The Royal Tasmania Regiment
Barbados	The Barbados Regiment
Belize	The Belize Defence Force
Bermuda	The 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 the Royal Malay Regiment
New Zealand	3rd Battalion (Auckland (Countess of Ranfurly's Own) and Northland) Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment
	5th Battalion the Frontier Force Regiment
Pakistan	First City Regiment
South Africa	Regiment de la Rey

The Regiment is affiliated to 158 (Royal Anglian) Transport Regiment RLC(V)
and to the Worshipful Company of Poulterers
1st Battalion has a Bond of Friendship with *HMS Norfolk*

Civic Honours

The Regiment has been granted the honour of the freedom of:
 Bedford, Boston, Brentwood, Bury St Edmunds, Cambridge, Chelmsford,
 Cleethorpes, Colchester, Dunstable, Ely, Grantham, Grimsby, Grays and Thurrock,
 Hertford, Hinckley and Bosworth, Ilford, Ipswich, King's Lynn, Leicester,
 Lincoln, Lowestoft, Luton, Newham, Northampton, Norwich, Peterborough,
 Romford, Southend, Sudbury, Watford, Wellingborough, Wisbech, Great Yarmouth,
 and the Colour of the Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Regimental Locations

Regimental Headquarters

The Keep, Gibraltar Barracks, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3RN
 Tel: 01284-752394. Fax: 752026/Colchester Military 5124
 Email: chief-clerk@anglian.army.mod.uk
 regimental-secretary@anglian.army.mod.uk

Regimental Secretary: Lt Col PRC Dixon OBE
Assistant Regimental Secretary: Maj RC Gould
Regimental Careers Officer: Capt AI Wolstenholme (Sep 06)

Area Office Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire

Britannia House TA Centre,
 325 Aylsham Road, Norwich NR3 2AD
 Tel: 01603-400290
Area Secretary: Col AC Taylor
 Email: ahqroyalanglian2@btconnect.com

Area Office Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire

TA Centre, Clare Street, Northampton NN1 3JQ
 Tel: 01604-635412
Area Secretary: Maj JN Turquand
 Email: ahqroyalanglian3@btconnect.com

Regimental Information Teams

Army Training Regiment, Bassingbourn (127 AYT)
 Tel: 01223-204216
 Goojerat Barracks, Colchester (160 AYT)
 Tel: 01206-782311
 North Luffenham (161 AYT)
 Tel: 01780-727806

Area Office Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex

Blenheim House, Eagle Way,
 Warley, Essex CM13 3BN
 Tel: 01277-213051
Area Secretary: Maj DI Gilchrist
 Email: ahqroyalanglian1@btconnect.com

Regimental Museum

Imperial War Museum, Duxford, Cambs CB2 4QR
 Tel: 01223-835000 Ext 298 or 01223-835638
Regimental Attendant: Mr Andrew Murkin
 Email: royalanglian@museumattendant.freemove.co.uk
 Website: www.royalanglianmuseum.org.uk

Battalion Locations

1st Battalion

Elizabeth Barracks,
 Pirbright,
 Surrey GU24 0DT

Lt Col SW Carver

2nd Battalion

Clive Barracks, Ternhill,
 Market Drayton,
 Shropshire TF9 3QE

Lt Col DP O'Driscoll
 (Des Lt Col SRJ Browne MBE - September 2006)

3rd Battalion

TA Centre, Blenheim Camp,
 Newmarket Road,
 Bury St Edmunds,
 Suffolk IP33 3SW

Lt Col RCJ Goodin MBE
 (Des Lt Col M Googe - October 2006)

Regimental Representatives

Army Training Regiment, Bassingbourn: Capt OB Ormiston
 Infantry Training Centre, Catterick: Maj SJ Nye MBE
 RMA Sandhurst: Capt DH James-Roll
 Army Foundation College Harrogate: Vacant
 Cambridge University OTC: Capt T Irwin-Parker
 East Midlands University OTC: Lt Col FMG de Planta

Personalia

Honours and Awards

New Year's Honours List

CBE

Col RJ Kemp MBE

MBE

Maj PS Leslie

Operational List (Operation Telic)

MC

Lt Col JM Woodham

**American Award to British Forces -
Legion of Merit (Degree of Officer)**

Maj Gen JC McColl CBE DSO

Operational List (Northern Ireland)

QCVS

Capt PS Thompson

Operational List (Bosnia)

Joint Commanders' Commendation

WO1 DM Caesar

Commissioning

The following was commissioned on 12 April 2006

2Lt BES Rose

Postings

Maj RJ Hare	from HQ 5 Division to 1(UK) Armd Div HQ & Sig Regt	December 2005
Lt Col SPM Blyth	from DETS(A) to Schools' Presentation Team	January 2006
Capt AS Dobbins	from 1st Battalion to HQ 20 Armd Brigade	January 2006
Maj SD Etherington	from DLTP TL to QMG DG Log Land	January 2006
Lt Col EEC Thome	from 1st Battalion to MOD A Block	January 2006
Maj CBK Barry	from Australian Staff College to HQ ARRC	February 2006
Maj AB Beart	from CATD LWC to JFT and PJHQ(UK)	February 2006
Capt MS Woodeson	from Inf Battle School to 3rd Battalion	April 2006
Capt DH James-Roll	from 1st Battalion to RMAS	May 2006
Capt PS Thompson	from 2nd Battalion to ITC Catterick	May 2006
Maj OCC Brown	from JSC and Staff College to CGS DGS	June 2006
Maj IM Chance	from JSC and Staff College to DRFG	June 2006
Maj AG Grinnoneau	from JSC and Staff College to Def Media Ops Centre	June 2006
Capt D Haggart	from 2nd Battalion to CRF	June 2006
Capt C Swallow MBE	from BMATT(Freetown) Sierra Leone to 2nd Battalion	June 2006
Lt AR Macleod	from 2nd Battalion to ITC Catterick	July 2006
Maj SR Smith	from JSC and Staff College to ITDU	July 2006
Capt DW Turner	from ITC Catterick to 2nd Battalion	July 2006
Capt BM Allen	from OPTAG(Ops) to HQ 16 Air Asslt Brigade	August 2006
Maj STH Andrews	from COMUK MARFOR to Inf Battle Sch	August 2006
Maj DSJ Biddick	from HQ 16 Air Asslt Brigade to 1st Battalion	August 2006
Maj JD McCrum MBE	from Episkopi Garrison to HQ BF Cyprus	August 2006
Maj PJ Messenger	from JSC and Staff College to 1st Battalion	August 2006
Maj PM Smith	from HQ BF Cyprus to BMATT(Freetown) Sierra Leone	August 2006
Maj PW Worthy	from Strat Plans to 2nd Battalion	August 2006
Maj JA York	from 1st Battalion to Tank Systems Support IPT	August 2006
Capt I Couch	from HQ RG to 3rd Battalion	September 2006
Capt AI Maclay	from ITC Catterick to 1st Battalion	September 2006
Capt GB Foden	from 2nd Battalion to HQ 3(UK) Division	September 2006
Maj AJ Wadman	from ATR Lichfield to HQ LWCTG(G)	September 2006

Retirements

The following have left the Army. We hope to see them from time to time at Regimental functions:

Col RJ Kemp CBE	March 2006
Gen Sir Michael Walker GCB CMG CBE ADC Gen	April 2006
Maj G Morris	April 2006
Maj DJ Gregory	May 2006

Regimental Matters

New Deputy Colonel of the Regiment Appointed



Brig PD Jones MBE has been appointed to succeed Brig RM Brunt as the Deputy Colonel with special responsibility for the 1st Battalion. Brig Phil Jones was commissioned into the Army in 1980. Early postings were as a platoon commander in 3 Royal Anglian and then in the Infantry Junior Leaders Battalion. He returned to 3 Royal Anglian serving in BAOR, Canada and Northern Ireland.

In 1988 he became Adjutant of the 1st Battalion and then moved to HQ 8 Infantry Brigade in Northern Ireland as SO3 G3(Ops/Air) before attending the Army Staff College.

He returned to 1 Royal Anglian to command a Rifle Company, which was followed by a posting as Chief of Staff 24 Airmobile Brigade. On promotion he became MA to C-in-C AFNORTHWEST. He then served with the UN Observer Mission in Georgia for seven months before returning to command the 1st Battalion in Northern Ireland and also Afghanistan.

On promotion to Colonel he deployed on an operational tour to Bagram as Senior Coalition Adviser, Combined Joint Task Force 180 Afghanistan. He was posted as Assistant Chief of Staff G5 Plans HQ ARRC in December 2003.

On promotion to brigadier in November 2005 he assumed command of HQ 8 Infantry Brigade.

Recruiting

Readers will be aware of the recruiting difficulties facing the infantry. At the time of writing the Royal Anglian Regiment is the best recruited infantry regiment in the Army with both battalions forecasting that they will be over establishment by July 2006. However, there can be no room for complacency. Once again the Colonel of the Regiment has placed recruiting and retention as second to operations in the list of priorities for the year. In the year ending 31 March 2006 the most successful recruiting office for enlisting recruits into the Regiment was Chelmsford (31) followed by Luton

and Peterborough (both 27).

The Regimental recruiting DVD, *First Choice*, has been updated to include footage from Afghanistan and Iraq and new Regimental recruiting literature will soon be available to those involved in recruiting.

The introduction of a rejoining bounty has been announced. All SCBC qualified corporals and SCBC qualified lance corporals recommended for promotion will attract a bounty of £6,000 before tax while all other rejoiners will attract a bounty of £1,900 before tax. There are a number of criteria that will be used to select personnel to rejoin the Colours, full details can be attained from the battalions or on the infantry website at www.army.mod.uk/infantry/join_us.

A New Face at Northampton



We welcome Maj John Turquand as the Area Secretary based at Northampton with responsibility for the counties of Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Rutland and Lincolnshire.

He was commissioned into the 3rd Battalion Royal Regiment of Fusiliers in 1973. During the next 16 years he carried out a number of appointments at Regimental Duty including tours in Northern Ireland and Cyprus.

Having commanded a company at the Queen's Division Depot at Bassingbourn he left the Regular Army in 1989 to follow a career in personnel management. During this period he joined the TA and commanded a company in 5RRF.

In 1999 he rejoined the Regular Army and the next five years saw tours with HQ MND(SW), ATR Lichfield, 2 PWRR and 1RRF.

Regimental Matters

The Tattershall Club

The Tattershall Club is an informal gathering aboard the Tattershall Castle floating pub for retired and serving officers working or living in London. Members usually gather from 1730hrs onwards. Future dates are: 27 July 2006, 28 August 2006 and 30 November 2006.

National Memorial Arboretum

A tree with a plaque bearing the words, 'In memory of those members of the Royal Anglian Regiment who gave their lives in the service of their Country' has been planted in the National Memorial Arboretum as part of the Armed Forces Memorial. The Armed Forces Memorial is not a traditional 'war memorial' that only remembers those killed in conflict. It also recognises the many servicemen and women who have given their lives on duty and those killed by terrorist action.

The tree reference number is 18/38 and it is located in the Army Parade. Anyone visiting the Arboretum, which is in Alrewas, Staffordshire, should enquire at reception regarding the exact location of the tree.

Battalions on The Move

The 1st Battalion is due to move to Bulford in 2010. The 2nd Battalion, now based at Ternhill in Shropshire, will move to Celle, Germany in the middle of 2007. (The 1st Battalion was based in Trenchard Barracks, Celle September 1965 to February 1968 and the 2nd Battalion was in the same Barracks from April 1987 to February 1996).

Regimental Day

The annual Regimental Day will be held at the Imperial War Museum Duxford on Sunday 10 September 2006.

The programme will be:

1000 hrs	Gates Open
1030 hrs	Association Annual General Meeting
1130 hrs	Drumhead Service
1215 hrs	March Past
1230 hrs	Bar, kiosks and stalls open
pm	Band and Drums display
	Free Fall Parachute display
1700 hrs	Bar and stalls close

All serving and ex-members of the Regiment and former Regiments are warmly invited to attend, last year the attendance exceeded 2,000. Entry passes are not required although possession of an Association card will help speed up entry. You are asked to bring along your own picnics or use the refreshment facilities on site. Dogs are not permitted.

The Day's Pay Scheme

Each year the Regiment, the Royal British Legion and the Army Benevolent Fund provide financial assistance to a large number of former soldiers from our Regiment and our antecedent Regiments. Also on occasions assistance is given to serving members and their dependants.

During the last year RHQ paid out over £23,779 in grants with the Army Benevolent Fund providing a further £15,089. The funds that enable us to provide this level of support have been built up over the years by those contributing to the Day's Pay Scheme. To those who do not contribute please remember that one day you might need financial assistance.

The following is an extract of a letter received from a former member of the Regiment:

Dear Sirs

A few months ago I had to contact the Royal British Legion regarding some financial difficulties I was facing. The local field officer promptly contacted some agencies including yourselves. Because of you my house will no longer be repossessed. For this I will be eternally grateful. I was once a proud Viking and your actions have made me just as proud to be an ex-Viking.

RC Chapel at RMA Sandhurst

Roman Catholics may know that the Roman Catholic Chapel at RMA Sandhurst has recently been massively redesigned and refurbished. The work has had to be carried out at private expense using generous donations.

Among the decoration in the Chapel is at the end of each bench a small (4in x 4in) gloss engraved light which is illuminated by fibre optics. Many Regiments, Corps and Schools have donated such lights engraved with their badge. There is still one gap still to be filled, which it is proposed should contain the badge of the Royal Anglian Regiment. The cost is £800.

It is hoped that members or former members of the Regiment, and particularly those who have worshipped in the Chapel during their time there as cadets or on the permanent staff, may wish to contribute, and Regimental Funds might be used as a top-up-basis if required. Donations are now sought (if 32 people were to donate only £25 that would be all that was needed). Anyone wishing to donate should send a cheque to the Regimental Secretary made payable to 'The Royal Anglian Regiment Charity'.

Next Edition of Castle

Contributions for the December's issue of *Castle* should reach the Editor no later than 15 October 2006.

Malaya/Malaysia

According to the Malaysian High Commission, the Malaysian Government has offered a medal called the Pingar Jasa Malaysia to all those who served for three months or more in Malaya/Malaysia during the periods 31 August 1957 to 12 August 1966 (Malay/Malaysia) and 31 August 1957 to 9 August 1965 (Singapore).

The National Malay and Borneo Veterans' Association have offered to co-ordinate applications and may be contacted through Mr Fred Burden, Membership Secretary, National Malay and Borneo Veterans' Association, 44 Meadowgate Avenue, Great Baddow, Chelmsford CM2 7LQ (tel: 01245-495238).

Field of Remembrance

The Field of Remembrance opening ceremony at Westminster will be on Thursday 9 November 2006. The facilities of the Farmers' Club (3 Whitehall Court, SW1) will be available to those attending, although once again a limit of 50 has had to be imposed. Further details will be passed to Royal Anglian officers serving in the MOD. Other members of the Royal Anglian Association wishing to attend should contact RHQ by 21 October while members of Former Regiment Associations should contact their appropriate Regimental Secretary.

Affiliated Regiments

Lt Col Willie White assumed command of the Bermuda Regiment on 27 May 2006.

The Commanding Officer of the 5th Battalion the Frontier Force Regiment, Lt Col Ali Ibahim, recently wrote to RHQ stating that the Battalion is deployed on Earthquake Relief operations in Muzafarabad following the devastating earthquake.

Deaths

RHQ has been notified of the following deaths:

Lt Col R Baylis MBE on 13 May 2006 (*see Obituaries*).

LCpl Chris Collingwood on 27 March 2005 (*see Obituaries*).

Maj B Cornish November (*see Obituaries*).

WO2 D (Lou) Gorbould on 23 January 2006. He served with the 1st Battalion and 5th Battalion.

Col JR Horrell CBE TD DL January 2006. Deputy Honorary Colonel Cams 1995-1999.

Pte J Lewaicei on 13 May 2006 (*see Obituaries*).

Pte A Morris on 13 May 2006 (*see Obituaries*).

Lt Col TCB Swayne CB TD DL on 21 November 2005. Commanding Officer 6th Battalion 1973-1976.

Mainly About People



Drum Major Love of 1st Battalion with CDS at his departure from MOD Main Building on 28 April.

Gen Sir Michael Walker stood down as Chief of the Defence Staff on 28 April 2006. He is due to take up the post of Governor of the Royal Hospital Chelsea in October 2006.

Lt Col James Woodham ran the London Marathon on 23 April raising money for the MS Society with **Maj Simon Etherington** who ran for the Royal British Legion.

As reported in the last edition of *Castle* **Lt Graham Goodey**, now with the 1st Battalion, was the winner of the Queen's Medal at the Sovereign's Parade on 16 December 2005. He is pictured receiving his medal from the inspecting officer, HRH The Duke of Kent.



2Lt Bjorn Rose was commissioned into the Regiment at the Sovereign's Parade on 12 April 2006, he will join the 2nd Battalion.

The following are congratulated on being awarded Infantry Sports Colours: **Pte Jeremy Grant-Jones** (target shooting) and **Capt Peter Connolly** and **Capt Tim Jones** (squash).

Andrew Thomas (Poacher 1993-99) has misplaced the commemorative book that was issued after the Bosnia tour in 1994. If anyone has a spare copy he would be delighted to hear from them (9 Park View Crescent, Great Baddow, Chelmsford CM2 8HU).

Col Roy Jackson (CO 1st Battalion 1969-72) wrote to the Regimental Secretary to say that he was disappointed when reading *The Aden Insurgency* by Jonathan Waller that there was no reference to the 3rd Battalion in the index. The Battalion is mentioned but unfortunately in the index the heading of the 1st Battalion is used.

Col Robin Chisnall recently met up with his former 2IC, now **Brig Ian Liles**, at the Defence Attachés' Course at the Defence Intelligence and Security College at Chicksands. Brig Liles joined the Pompadours in Londonderry from the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and left as an honorary Royal Anglian. Both he and his wife Carol speak fondly of their time with the Regiment and send their best wishes to their many friends in the Regiment. Brig Lyles is now the Defence Attaché in Riyadh.



Mainly About People



Despite the weather in February the six members of the Regiment on the Platoon Commanders' Course kept smiling...they are pictured, from left, 2LTs Sam Perrin, Nick McGinley, Tom Clarke, Graham Goodey, Matt Lambert and Jeff Bennett-Madge.

Cliff Newton of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment, is in the process of compiling his second book entitled *Stand Easy*. It will be a collection of amusing experiences, jokes, tales and anecdotes. All proceeds will go to the Royal Tigers' Regimental Museum Appeal Fund and the Royal British Legion. Anyone who has material for inclusion is requested to send it to The Bishop Tozers Chapel, Middlemarsh Road, Burgh-le-Marsh, Skegness, Lincs PE24 6AD.

Christopher Bull wrote to the Editor to point out an error in the last edition of *Castle*. In the obituary to Paddie Drake it stated that there are only five founding officer members of the 6th Battalion left. In fact he transferred three months before the 6th Battalion was formed from the 5th Battalion.

Stan and Jenny Bullock took a trip to Benidorm for a few days of warm weather. They made contact with Bill and Sue Burford who have recently moved permanently to Spain. A trip to a local beauty spot resulted in an unexpected gathering of four ex-Quartermasters, three of which now live in Spain. Brian and Jean McDonnell, John and Kim Ross. Bill and Sue Burford and the Bullocks had a thoroughly enjoyable reunion.



At the 2005 Eagle and Garter Dinner were five drummers who served with the Royal Leicestershire Regiment 1962-65, the 4th Battalion 1965-67 and the 3rd Battalion until their retirement. The Dinner was the first time in almost 43 years that they had been together. Pictured from left: Dmr Ollie Dent, Dmr Jimmy Wyatt, Cpl Robbie Allen, LCpl Dave Hudson and Dmr Pat Staples.



From left: John Ross, Stan Bullock, Brian McDonnell and Bill Burford.

The Regimental Museum

(Website: www.royalanglianmuseum.org.uk)

Museum on the March

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Regiment's Museum at Duxford in June 1996. Martin Bell, the distinguished war correspondent, former MP and, most importantly, Suffolk Regiment sergeant, opened it and it has come a long way since then. To mark its founding there will be a photographic exhibition in the museum to show the planning and fundraising, the construction and fitting out of the displays, the opening ceremony and milestones since then.

The museum is at Duxford for a host of reasons, but principally because it is a wonderfully well-visited site, the partnership with the Imperial War Museum is invaluable in terms of unsurpassed expertise available on the doorstep and they (the IWM) need us to bring the personal touch to the major military equipments that they display. We try to show a generally uninformed public how the Regiment and its soldiers function, be it on operations, in barracks or off duty, and then keep all that current.

The first of two major enhancements planned this year has just been made to the exhibition area to improve the displays and bring them right up to date. New caption boards tell the story of deployments to Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and the 1st Battalion's and East of England Regiment's tours in south Iraq last year. There is even mention of the 2nd Battalion's current tour in Basra and a look forward to the 1st Battalion going to Afghanistan in 2007. At last soldiers are getting more medals to reflect their operational service. Consequently, the medal case has been greatly enlarged and a case for temporary displays has been added to enable newly acquired objects to be shown quickly, or to create special displays. The first items to go in the case are those brought back from Operation Telic 6 by the Vikings. Another new feature will be a scrapbook of photographs and news clippings to show what the Battalions are doing. So, if your local paper prints an article about the Regiment, don't throw it away, cut it out and send it to the museum for all our visitors to read.

Letting people know that the museum can be part of a really exciting day out at Duxford is an ongoing challenge. We are trying to meet it in several ways. Rod Leonard, a former NCO in the 3rd Battalion, has sponsored the website for a long time. Thanks to his generosity and the work of volunteer webmaster, Robert Plumb (son of Keith Plumb, another 3rd Battalion stalwart), the website is continually improving and being better used. Take a look yourself at www.royalanglianmuseum.org.uk. The website received 2,000 visits monthly in 2005 and already this year the monthly figure is



Dust covers on as major changes start.



Changes to the Heritage Wall.

over 2,250. Additionally, some publicity leaflets have been produced and sent to local museums and libraries. If you know of a local information point, which would be prepared to display leaflets, please contact Andy Murkin at Duxford (01223 835638 or royalanglian@museumattendant.freemove.co.uk). In return, if you are holding an event related to the Regiment, one of its linked TA or cadet groups, or one of its predecessor regiments, send a poster or flyer to the museum and we will display it prominently.

Returning to the 'people' theme - there have been changes at the museum. The Trustee body has changed significantly. We have welcomed onto the Board two successful businessmen and former captains, Steven Bowns (1st Battalion) and Peter Randall (3rd Battalion), along with Michael Jarvis (TA soldier, everything Cambridgeshire Regiment and solicitor) and John Turquand (newly appointed Area Secretary at Northampton). Another key appointee is Martin Boswell who has become the curatorial adviser. Martin is a museum professional. He works for IWM Lambeth, but previously served with 6 Royal Anglian. He was very instrumental in setting up the museum a decade ago. Equally important from the people point of view are newly recruited volunteers, Chris Stacey, Nick Egan, Pop and Sylvia Whitwell and Fred Lawes. They are all very welcome. Volunteers make a vital contribution to any museum and if you think you could help as a volunteer, even in a small way, please get in touch.

Many will fondly remember George Boss. He served with the Royal Leicestershire Regiment and, subsequently the 4th and 3rd Battalions. He was a first class soldier, unique individual and the museum's first attendant from 1996-2003. We could not have been given a better start and fittingly, his wife, Pat, recently unveiled a plaque at his former workstation in the museum.

Finally, thanks to former drummers, Steve Sellwood and Steve Norman, for recent donations of photographs and item of drummers' memorabilia to the museum's collection, and to Col Mike Goldschmidt for photographs of his father, Lt Col KPP Goldschmidt, whose medals are now on display.

Please keep the donation of artefacts of whatever type coming and, even more important, come yourself. Organised groups should contact Andy Murkin prior to their visit so he can help organise the Duxford end and be on hand to show them around.

Colin Groves, Chairman of Trustees
Andy Murkin, Museum Officer

Diary Dates 2006

July

- 22 Northamptonshire Regiment Reunion - Northampton
 29 Suffolk Regiment Officers' Luncheon - Culford
 30 Suffolk Regiment Minden Day Reunion - Bury St Edmunds

September

- 10 Royal Anglian Regimental Day - Duxford
 14 Freedom Parade - Thurrock
 15 Freedom Parade - Chelmsford
 16 Freedom Parade - Colchester
 18-22 Essex Regiment Association Memorial Dedication, Cassino
 20 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment Officers' Lunch - Warley
 30 Royal Anglian and Royal Norfolks Association Dinner - Norwich

October

- 6 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment Officers' Luncheon - Warley
 7 Royal Anglian Regiment Band Concert and Reception - Bury St Edmunds
 14 90th Anniversary of the Taking of the Schwaben Redoubt - Ely

November

- 3 Royal Anglian Regimental Council Meeting - London
 3 Royal Anglian Regiment Officers' Dinner - London
 8 Essex Regiment Association, Cathedral Service and Salamanca Luncheon - Chelmsford
 9 Field of Remembrance Service - Westminster
 12 Remembrance Sunday
 19 Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment Association Wreath Laying and Reunion - Kempston

December

- 2 Royal Leicestershire Regiment Officers' Dinner Club Lincoln - London

A hero's legacy...

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We appeal to you to consider the Army Benevolent Fund in your Will.

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Can You Remember?



O Group, Exercise Eternal Triangle. Maj Henderson, B Company, 1st Battalion.

40 Years Ago

After ten months' concentrated training the 1st Battalion, based in Celle, took part in the 1st Division Exercise External Triangle. During the ten-day exercise the Battalion covered over 300 miles across country and conducted a night assault crossing of the Weser. The 2nd Battalion, still in Dhekelia, dominated the District Rifle Meeting. The 3rd Battalion moved to Tidworth in September from Berlin. A month later they were on their way to Aden for a nine-month unaccompanied tour. The Lord Mayor of Leicester visited the 4th Battalion in Malta during which time she conferred the Freedom of the City of Leicester on the Battalion.



Cpl Alex Keep and the Commanding Officer's vehicle after being blown up by a mine on 3 November 1966. Fortunately there were no casualties.



B Company Team, winners of the Poachers' Falling Plate Competition.



Lt David Kirk, of the 6th Battalion, leads his platoon into action.

35 Years Ago

The 1st Battalion, having returned from block leave in June, were soon confronted with an escalation of shooting incidents as Orange fever built up. The Battalion suffered its first casualty when LCpl Turner was hit in the head by a ricochet. The 2nd Battalion's move to Münster in May was soon followed by training in Vogelsang and then a Brigade FTX in October. The 3rd Battalion was also a mechanised battalion in Germany. Life for them was equally as busy, with B Company training in Denmark and numerous visits to Soltau and Sennelager. The summer months for Tiger Company were spent with a full programme of drills, rehearsals and demonstrations at Sandhurst and Mons. The 6th and 7th Battalions held their first annual camp since their formation.



Right: 'Fire!' - Ptes Mick Last, Dave Read and Cpl Mick Poole give it a face full of CS, watched anxiously by Maj Patrick Stone.



The Corps of Drums of the Vikings in Denmark with B Company.

Can You Remember?



Marching through Lowestoft.

30 Years Ago

Following a busy winter in their AMF(L) role the 1st Battalion soon adapted to life in drill boots. The Battalion lined the route for the State Visit of the President of Brazil and in June A and B Companies marched through Lowestoft and King's Lynn. After a busy last six months in Münster the 2nd Battalion moved to Gordon Barracks in Gillingham. However, soon the Battalion was off to Gibraltar for a three-week spell followed by a trip to Norway. The 3rd Battalion soon settled into their new lifestyle in Cyprus. Hang gliding and sailing became popular and the Cyprus Walkabout team of Capt Walsh, Cpl Twell and LCpl Devaney were convincing winners. The 5th Battalion held its annual camp at Barry Buddon, the 6th Battalion went to Otterburn and the 7th Battalion resided at Bellerby Camp on the Catterick Training area.



Maj Ray Pond, Capt Robin Greenham, Capt Tom Longland and Lt Col Barnes help Sgt Ashcroft celebrate the last APC leaving Oxford Barracks.



Right: D Company, 7th Battalion, winners of the Falling Plate Competition.

Can You Remember?**25 Years Ago**

The 1st Battalion from April 1981 onwards spent most of its time preparing for deployment to Fermanagh in Northern Ireland in August. The 2nd Battalion, based in Ebrington Barracks, Londonderry, had a busy time often with all four companies deployed to cover both Strabane and Londonderry. The 3rd Battalion returned from Cyprus in May 1989 to a programme of recruiting in the counties of Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex. On 22 July the Pompadours celebrated Salamanca Day, which saw the Eagle Standard of the French 62nd Regiment captured at the Battle of Salamanca on parade. Both the 5th and 7th Battalions spent annual camp at a very wet Otterburn.



Above: Salamanca Day. 169 years after its capture, the Eagle Standard is carried through the ranks by CSgt Luckman.



Left: 4 (Hertfordshire) Company, 5th Battalion, team Eastern District Skill at Arms Meeting. Cpl Hickman, LCpl Hornett, Cpl Batchelor, Cpl Morgan, Pte Hutchins, Cpl Hurnett, CSgt Dolan, Maj Kelsey, WO2 Lacey, Sgt Verden.

Below: 1st Battalion shooting team after the Divisional Rifle Meeting.

Back from left: LCpl Fleming, Pte Woods, Pte Leffek, LCpl Dawkins, WO1 (RSM) Rose, LCpl Ringer, Pte Hurren, Pte Graham, Pte Smith. Front from left: LCpl Dickinson, Cpl Weaire, Cpl Norman, Lt Hare, Lt Col Hart, Lt Zmitrowicz, Sgt Wharton, Cpl Mason, LCpl Stollery.



Can You Remember?

20 Years Ago

The 1st Battalion braved a cold summer in Londonderry. The normal Orange Order celebrations in July and August ensured that everyone was kept busy. The first recce of Gibraltar took place in June. The 2nd Battalion's tour in South Armagh lasted from April to September 1986, sadly Ptes Carl Davies and Michael Bartrum were killed by an 800lb device at Glasdrumman.

For the 3rd Battalion the second half of 1986 meant BATUS, a full PRE, a new Commanding Officer and Northern Ireland training.

Exercise Alamein, a five-day exercise tested all aspects of BATUS training and this was followed by adventure training in the Rockies. Lt Col Colin Groves handed over command to Lt Col Alan Behagg and the Battalion moved to Belfast in November. The 5th Battalion had a successful annual camp on Salisbury Plain, the 6th Battalion's shooting team excelled at Bisley with three individuals in the TA 50 and the 7th Battalion attracted over 500 men to annual camp at Warcop.



Members of the Milan Platoon with the Assistant Adjutant as honorary member on the Glasdrummon OP.



A platoon advances in line with fascines.

Can You Remember?

**The Colours
on parade for
Minden Day in
Londonderry.**

15 Years Ago

The Vikings returned to Fermanagh almost exactly 10 years after their last tour there. This time the Battalion's TAOR consisted of most of County Fermanagh and a portion of County Tyrone, an area of 800 square miles. It was not a quiet tour, the incident that made more media impact than any was the 8,800lb tractor bomb attack on Annahmartin VCP.

The second half of 1991 saw the 2nd Battalion complete their Gulf tour and readjust to life in BAOR with a hectic autumn of training and exercises. The 3rd Battalion exchanged Roman Camp, Colchester

for Ebrington Barracks, Londonderry in June 1991. Those who had served in Londonderry before were surprised at the changes that had occurred; huge new areas of housing on both sides of the River Foyle together with the Springtown and Pennyburn industrial estates. The Creggan had changed little! Despite the announcement on TA Options hanging over the heads of the TA life for the Battalions went on. The 5th Battalion moved to Sennybridge for their annual camp, the 6th Battalion braved Otterburn and the 7th Battalion's Camp was in Scotland.



RQMS and TQMS lead the way as Lt Col Lacey is pulled out of camp.

Can You Remember?



Above: Clearing an 8,800lb tractor bomb targeted on Annagmartin PVCP.

Right: Gen de Billière meets the Recce Platoon, 2nd Battalion.



Below: CSgt Salter feeds the hungry officers and SNCOs of 2 Company, 5th Battalion.



Can You Remember?

10 Years Ago

After eight years in Colchester the Vikings moved up the road to Oakington where they were up and running in time for Minden Day. As early as July the Battalion started training for Northern Ireland finally deploying to Belfast in November 1996. Warminster for the 2nd Battalion was certainly no sleepy hollow with the Battalion completing over 100 exercises in the year. Taking advantage of their first home posting for nine years the Poachers were extremely busy on the recruiting front. Capt Grinnoneau led a KAPE tour and A and C Companies represented the Battalion at a Freedom Parade in Leicester. The 6th Battalion, for the first time in its 25-year history, went overseas for its annual camp to Arlon, a small town in Belgium. Not to be outdone the 7th Battalion sent a company to Gibraltar and held its annual camp in Scotland.

Right: The Commanding Officer congratulates Dmr Gater on being nominated his bugler.

Below: Gen Sir Roger Wheeler presents the Warren Shield to 3 Platoon A Company, the Poachers.



C Company 6th Battalion advance to contact through a Belgian village.

Can You Remember?

5 Years Ago

The Vikings, having moved from Northern Ireland to Elizabeth Barracks Pirbright, had a busy six months as it converted to the mechanised role. A Company deployed to BATUS for three months in support of the Light Dragoons. The 2nd Battalion spent the early part of the summer of 2001 winding up its NIBAT 3 commitment. The Colonel of the Regiment took the salute at the Talavera Day Parade. The East of England Regiment deployed on Exercise Lions Pride 1 in Cyprus. Lt Col Clive Newell PWRR handed over command of the Battalion to Lt Col Nigel fitch.



Right: Maj Heap, OC A (Norfolk) Company, presenting Minden roses on Minden Day on the prairies of BATUS, Canada.

Below: Talavera Day - the Colonel of the Regiment inspects B Company.



1st Battalion The Vikings

Introduction by the Commanding Officer

Anyone who hoped that after a busy 2005 including a successful tour in Iraq on Operation Telic 6, we would have a more relaxed 2006, has been disappointed. The pace of life continues at breakneck speed!

I am writing this piece from Westdown Camp in the middle of Salisbury Plain where we are preparing to conduct Exercise Wessex Warrior - the culmination of our 'Training Year' - which has been crammed into just 11 weeks. During this short period we have reformed Support Company to a conventional orbat and completed the normal cycle of CAST, CATT and company-level exercises as well as a five-day battlegroup exercise. The Battlegroup has swelled to just under 1,000 soldiers including some old friends, most notably 28/143 Battery from 19 Regiment Royal Artillery who were with us in Iraq.

On completion of Tesex the pace will slacken slightly over the summer for some, but not all of the Battalion. Both A and B Companies, along with significant parts of Support Company, will deploy to BATUS in Canada to provide OPFOR for other units and we will be running the largest potential NCO cadre we have had for some time. We have also taken on the task of running a pre-Brecon course on behalf of all six Regular Battalions in the Queen's Division which will take place in July. In the background we will be handing over our Saxon vehicles as they are put into retirement, in preparation for taking delivery of upgraded FV432s at some point in the future.

Other plans for the summer include each company conducting a week of adventure training, Battlefield tours to Normandy and Monte Cassino, and the celebration of Minden Day in traditional style. In September, C (Essex) Company will be taking part in freedom parades in Thurrock, Chelmsford and Colchester to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the raising of the Essex Regiment. In October our attention will once again turn to operations with the Battalion warned off to deploy to Afghanistan on Operation Herrick 6 in April 2007.

Despite the work pressures, morale remains high. This is best reflected in the Battalion manning remaining one of the best in the infantry and a termination rate below the average. Perhaps most importantly, with the prospect of two operational tours in two years a new generation of junior commanders are getting the best possible experience and grounding to continue the Viking reputation as a highly professional organisation that makes things happen.



A (Norfolk) Company live firing at Sennybridge.

A (Norfolk) Company

Maj Justin Hughes writes:

It is nice to be home. Having thoroughly enjoyed our extended period of post-tour leave over Christmas A (Norfolk) Company is fully committed to another busy year. In January we welcomed CSM Kev Main and CSgt Caleb Smith to the family as the first of several key personnel changes this year.

While officially titled a training year the Battalion is squeezing 12 months into five with Tesex scheduled for May 2006 before focusing on our next operational deployment. In preparation for this the company has enjoyed a progressive programme of individual and collective training culminating in a two-week exercise in Sennybridge at the end of March. Although busy members of the company have managed to get away on the Battalion ski camp, Regimental sports and, for a lucky few, a short attachment with the Bermuda Regiment.

In late February Lt Gavin Hudson (1

Platoon Commander) led a team to Copehill Down Village for a vehicle capability demonstration for the Minister of Defence Procurement (Lord Drayson). The reason for the demonstration was to assist Lord Drayson's understanding of the issues faced by the Army due to the expected in-service delay of FRES (Future Rapid Effects System - a family of medium armoured vehicles) the system slated to replace the aging Saxon fleet. Shortly after the demonstration it was announced that Saxon would be withdrawn from service early and replaced with an interim capability prior to the arrival of FRES.

The company spent a week in February at Longmoor completing an urban operations package before deploying to Sennybridge on Exercise Norfolk Warrior for a week's field training followed by a week of live firing. Unsurprisingly it was rather wet but the exercise was a complete success and the company mounted operations across the spectrum of conventional warfare. Dry



Exercise Norfolk Warrior.

The Vikings

training, although satisfying, pales when compared to live firing and the second week was spent turning rounds into brass on a very good range package organised by Capt Rob Smit (Company 2IC). As the final explosions and shots rang out on the platoon attack range it was clear that everyone had benefited from the time away.

We now look forward to the Commanding Officer's Exercise, some Easter leave and Tesex before gearing up for a company deployment to Canada (June - August) supporting the King's Royal Hussars Battlegroup which has picked up the OPFOR task this year.

Bermuda Regiment Attachment

Cpl Matt Dodd, A Company writes:
Bermuda...this to less well educated people like me, conjures up images of sun-licked beaches in the Caribbean. It could not have been further from the truth, less the sun-licked beaches. Bermuda is a small island around 21 square miles in size and 700 miles east of the North American coast. The Caribbean is around 1,000 miles to the southwest. Ecology wise it is the most northerly coral reef in the world with warm waters fed from the south, this also brings surprisingly warm weather for its location.

On 5 January 2006 myself and Cpl Byrne-

Evans (D Company) left the snow and cold winds at Gatwick on a flight to Bermuda. The flight lasting six and a half hours deposited us at Bermuda International Airport at around 2030hrs. The first thing you notice there is the humidity which at the time was around 85 per cent. Perspiring heavily we collected our luggage and headed to our home for the next few weeks, Warwick Camp, the home of the Bermuda Regiment.

The Camp is situated on the south of the island overlooking the crystal blue sea, a beautiful site in the glorious sunshine of the Bermudan winter sun. Cpl Byrne-Evans and I were to become overseas instructors for their annual recruit camp. The Bermudan Regiment is mainly a TA battalion with a handful of full time staff including two Royal Anglians, WO2 Phil Kerton as OC Training Wing and Maj Andy Price as Training Major.

Arriving on a Thursday with training not due to start until Sunday gave us plenty of time to find out what we were to do and what was expected of us during our time there. We found that we would sit in on the squad instructors and assist them in all aspects of teaching and lessons. The instructors were only recruits the year before, who after pass out are selected for a JNCO Cadre before becoming the instructors for the following year's recruits. We spent Friday going around with WO2 Kerton meeting all the

different people in the Regiment and our first chance to see the other two overseas instructors from Jamaica, Sgts Bruff and Campbell. That evening we had our first taste of Bermudan hospitality, the national drink, Dark 'n' Stormy, which is a blend of a locally produced dark rum with ginger beer, which is very nice may I add! Because of the high cost of living many people hold two or even three jobs to get by, with most of these being in the tourist industry. It seemed like everywhere we went there were members of the Regiment on the door or at the bar of just about every pub and club, not a bad thing with instant free access for the military. The next day was our introduction to the weapon that they use the Mini Ruger 14 which is a 5.56 calibre semi-automatic rifle.

The Regiment is not made up of volunteers like the British Army, but of conscripts. Every Bermudan male over the age of 18 is legally bound to do three years' National Service. On Sunday morning between 150 and 200 recruits would be expected to walk through the front gate. This is a big occasion for the island with extended families turning up to watch their friends and loved ones leave for two whole weeks. Many people turn up just to see if there is any trouble between the recruits and the immaculately turned out RP staff. Only last year there was a scuffle between a recruit and RP which ended up with the recruit hurt and all over the front



Marching the new Bermuda Regiment recruits onto the square.

The Vikings

page of the local news. This only stirs up trouble with the Anti-National Service groups, but this is a small minority and the majority support it including ex members of the Regiment.

Sunday morning arrived and the crowds with it. The camp gates are finally opened and reluctantly the recruits made their way inside for the first day of recruit camp and three years' National Service. A very small number of recruits had to be ushered in by the RP staff. A few friends and family were crying outside after saying goodbye, with the remainder trying to catch the last glimpse of their loved ones. The afternoon and evening were spent with the platoon staff in their lines sorting out kit and equipment ready for the first day of work.

Monday morning 0610hrs, first PT lesson for the troops which consisted of warm up and stretching. This was all that was done especially considering this may be the first physical exercise some of the recruits have ever done. After a quick shower and breakfast they headed to the armoury for personal weapon issue. For the remainder of the day they conducted weapon handling lessons under their section commanders. This is where our role kicked in assisting the section commanders with their lessons, to be fair they were trained to a good level for the amount of time they have had and only small points were raised. The troops' average day would end around 2200hrs, with lights out at 2300hrs. This was the daily routine throughout the two weeks with three range packages and an overnight exercise.

The ranges were conducted either in 25m range on camp or the 100m range on the beach, firing out to sea. This was a logistical nightmare due to the fact that the civilian population would try to enter the range at different locations, including the sea. This was sometimes not helped by the fact that some of the troops acting as sentries were not always overly alert. The whole Bermudan attitude is 'chill, take your time, it will get done'.

During the two weeks several VIPs visited Warwick Camp including the Premier, the leader of the opposition party and the British Governor. The Governor explained all the good that the Regiment does for the island's population such as helping out when the island is hit by hurricanes or tropical storms. When this occurs the troops are recalled and sent to help clean the island routes and assist in reinstalling any damaged communications. Members of the Regiment are also public order specialists and have been used to support the local police on a number of occasions.

A number of functions were organised during the two weeks involving lots of rum, whisky and a number of weird concoctions but the worst thing is you were still woken up at 0545hrs by reggae being played at full blast by the Training Company CSM. A large amount of port was also drunk by the drill WO2s as there is a great rivalry between the four of them to see whose platoon would win the drill competition. During the whole

two weeks the sections and the platoons were marked in everything to go towards the inter-section and platoon competitions. The results would be announced on their pass out parade, which is a big island affair with families turning up to watch. The final Sunday arrived and the weather gods were looking down on the Regiment with glorious sunshine. The turnout was large and the crowd in good spirits when the platoons came out one by one and wowed the crowd with their newly acquired skills. At the end of the day families were finally allowed to go and see their loved ones and they were granted a week's leave prior to completing the remainder of their three-year commitment.

The recruit camp over, Cpl Byrnc-Evans and I were given some R and R. The Regiment hired us a scooter each to visit the island at our own pleasure. People will be surprised to find out that the island speed limit is only 22 mph. Most of the population get around on scooters, as cars are heavily taxed. There are many things to do on the island and all manner of water sports with very attractive places to visit. All the buildings on the island are painted in assorted pastel colours with white roofs. Each roof is then painted with lime so that rain water collected on them is sterilised and stored in tanks for use around the house. This has been a fabulous time and I highly recommend this to anyone given the opportunity, the people are fantastic and the scenery reminiscent of paradise, but make sure you take lots of money as Bermuda is the R and R capital of 'rum and reggae'.

B (Suffolk) Company

Maj Mick Aston, writes:

'Back home but just as busy' is how I would sum up B (Suffolk) Company's start to 2006. After some well-earned rest

at the completion of Operation Telic 6, the company has got straight back into the swing of training for conventional operations and the tempo has remained high.

With Tesex in May as the company's main effort we launched into section-level training soon after returning from leave in January. The focus was initially on individual and low-level team and section drills all of which will be battle-winners in May. The company ran a very challenging and successful exercise on Salisbury Plain at the end of January which culminated in a hotly-contested section competition eventually won by Cpl Jay Owen's section of 6 Platoon. Cpl Matt Water's theatrical first-aid stand was the biggest success of the day, catching almost all members of the company out and requiring some lateral thought from the section commanders. We followed up this activity with some good work on the ranges and a week's field firing at Sennybridge later in February which also proved to be quite demanding, primarily due to the freezing, wet conditions.

Platoon and company level training has progressed well with our final activity being a company exercise to Thetford in late March. Combining all the aspects of offensive and defensive operations required for Tesex and future operations the exercise, although only five days long, was nonetheless difficult and challenging for everyone involved. The company worked extremely hard during the exercise with immense benefit as we proved that we can pull everything together and focus combat power at company level. Some force-on-force activities with C (Essex) Company proved interesting and a good run-out for both companies. As a company we are ready for Tesex and looking forward to inflicting some 'hurt' on 1 DWR, the OPFOR for the exercise.

Not all our activity has been confined to



Cpl Matt Waters, B Company contemplating the principles of defence on Exercise Eagle Flash.

The Vikings



B Company out and about on CO's PT.

warfighting training. We had approximately 15 members of the company take part in the Battalion Ski Camp to Les Arcs. While most had a very enjoyable time there were some activities that strained Anglo-French relations, although these are best discussed elsewhere!

Post-Tesex the most of the company will be getting ready to deploy to BATUS as the infantry OPFOR company as part of the KRH Battlegroup. Although not all of the company will deploy we are taking many of the new members who did not have the opportunity to deploy to Iraq. The company had a great time out there last year with many a story still told so everyone is up for it.

On the personnel front we have had a few key appointments changeover since our return from Iraq. Firstly, WO2 Tim Newton has taken over as the CSM returning to the company from Battalion HQ. 2Lt George-Seal Coon took over 7 Platoon from Capt Ollie Ormiston who has been posted to ATR Bassingbourn. Cpl Jay Owen and Cpl Stef Martin have both returned to take up section posts in 6 and 7 Platoons respectively; we should see both of these JNCOs on Platoon Sergeants' Battle Course (PSBC) in the summer. We have had good results on various promotion courses with (now) LCpl Dunsmore passing the Poachers' PNCO cadre in December and Cpl Larry Holmes successfully completing PSBC in March. LCpl Jason Tower is due back in May at the end of Section Commanders' Battle Course. All of these soldiers are congratulated for their excellent effort!

Finally the company continues to receive high quality soldiers from ITC Catterick; we have had approximately 20 new arrivals since January. All have fitted into the company well and are part of the B (Suffolk) Company family. These soldiers will be the foundation of our success this year and as we approach Afghanistan in 2007.



Pte 'Donk' Murphy and Pte Terry Whatley enjoying defence...again.

C (Essex) Company*Lt Mark Taylor writes:*

The company returned from its post-tour leave in mid January. While some were more than ready to return to work, the majority had to drag themselves away from their New Year television guides and comfy sofas leaving behind a trail of Christmas compulsory Cadbury's Roses wrappers, to begin the year's training. The rumours about our possible deployment to Afghanistan in 2007 were already beginning but the main effort for the company was clear: develop a capable fighting sub-unit to conduct conventional operations on Tesex in the spring. Not a particularly difficult task at first glance, but with the reconstitution of D Company from the Iraq Orbat, C Company was left with a lot of new faces most of whom were fresh out of training at ITC Catterick. A plan was needed.

The company had about two and a half months to develop our own SOPs and get us up to full speed. For those who were remaining it had been over 18 months since we last covered conventional warfare and a fair amount of 'dusting off' was required before teaching the new soldiers of the company how to conduct our business the 'Essex' way!

Section level training took precedence in February with the section commanders covering everything from range cards to recce patrols, map reading to fire and manoeuvre. This culminated in a recce patrol exercise on Salisbury Plain where the targets were elements of 3(UK) Division HQ and their supporting parts who were conducting their main exercise of the year. Cpl Butcher's patrol reported enough information on a



Sgt Kitson, Cpl Armon, Capt Kelly and Cpl Mulley welcome a visiting Kenyan officer to C Company on Exercise Lion Strike.

rebroadcast station's activities to force them to be moved, including recovering a 'stag list' complete with passwords for the next 24 hours! Cpl Armon and LCpl Mayer got so close they were inside the camouflage netting of part of a trunk node and looking at the amount of signals equipment they recovered, were probably better equipped than the CIS Platoon! Cpl Mulley's mind was elsewhere and was concentrating hard on recovering mission critical information such as the number of female signallers in a Signals Squadron. The exercise was a great success for the recce patrols who provided

a real nuisance to the Division HQ causing several sites to be shut down and relocated as a result of the intelligence they were gathering.

The company also had the benefit at the end of February of the FIBUA training team based out of Copehill Down on Salisbury Plain. They were brought in to instruct on a three-day exercise in Longmoor village and provided some realistic and hard training that was thoroughly enjoyed by the soldiers.

Exercise Eagle Strike 1, the first of three company exercises, took place in early



Cpl Everitt and his team wait for the assault to start.

The Vikings

March on the Thetford training area. The weather was typically British (bleak and unpredictable) and after a couple of days the novelty of being cold, wet and windswept had really worn off. The immortal words 'bring back the sweltering heat of Ramalah Bridge, all is forgiven!' echoed around the company! The exercise was aimed at producing platoon and company SOPs and introduce us to the way that the OC wanted us all to operate on Tesex, hence working at night at both platoon and company level was a prominent feature. 11 Platoon's cyalume light show may have amused the CQMS, CSgt Clark, but provided valuable IFF lessons for conducting complicated night operations particularly when working in woods. This exercise also saw the company 2IC, Capt Kelly, out of the safety of OB and even acting as enemy! In fact it was even reported that he fired his rifle... I doubt we'll see the likes of those days again!

Following rapidly on the back of Eagle Strike 1 came Exercise Lion Strike. This was an exercise to support the training of staff officers who were returning to their respective battalions to command. We deployed as a light role company to Salisbury Plain to assist the DWR BG who were providing the majority of the exercising troops and catered for all our needs including providing a burger van at every assembly area!

The course students rotated through command appointments allowing myself and Capt Meddings to get a real feel for life as a platoon signaller! Suffice to say we may be more considerate in future having been thrashed across the Plain during several attacks each day! Although we weren't exercising within our own Battalion we got a very good grasp of battlegroup operations and the integration with other arms such as artillery and armour. Helicopters and close air support were a regular feature and the exercise definitely added value at commander level through the co-ordination of these many assets. It also allowed the platoons to practise their SOPs from the previous week and by the end they were all very slick in their procedures and well rehearsed.

The company has just returned from the third exercise, Exercise Eagle Strike 2, designed as a continuation of the previous exercises but concentrating on company operations. We returned to Thetford for this and were assisted by B Company who provided the enemy to attack our prepared defensive position on the favoured ground of Frog Hill. The benefit of Exercise Lion Strike was evident throughout, as the platoons slipped easily into the attack with lead sections rolling enemy positions with relative ease. At one stage this gave the company so little to do that the enemy had to be relocated to provide a 'bit more of a challenge'.

In among all this we also said goodbye to CSM Dave Granfield and welcomed WO2 Pete Ramm as his replacement. Sgt Kitson

also spent his last exercise in the field for some time and now resides in Peterborough Recruiting Office. Capt Meddings escaped to ITC Catterick only to discover his new OC would be Maj Nye. Capt Pete Martin made an early bid for freedom in January to take up residence in ATR Winchester's gym.

Military Leadership and Education Without the Need for CS95 – C(Essex) Company's Realities of War

Capt Will Meddings writes:

Post-Christmas, C Company HQ was looking for a way to give the soldiers a constructive but enjoyable week that would take us away from exercises but still provide valuable training. It was decided that the best way to achieve this would be to take our lance corporals away on adventurous training combined with evening leadership training, and to send the remainder of the soldiers on visits to a series of museums. The museums and visits were a combination of Royal Anglian related locations and military museums.

The 'Realities of War' week, as it became known, developed into a round robin of visits by each platoon. On one day the Imperial War Museum was visited in the morning and the National Army Museum in the afternoon. On the next the Regimental Museum was visited at Duxford in the morning and the Royal Anglian Museum in Chelmsford in the afternoon. 9 Platoon also managed a visit to the Royal Hospital Chelsea on their first day.

In each case the curators and staff of the museum put on much more than was usually available to the casual visitor. The staff at the National Army Museum provided 45-minute presentations on infantry weapons development, the Essex Regiment in the First World War, and the Essex Regiment in the Second World War. There was plenty of time to visit the display halls of the museum to see the exhibits. Ian Hook, curator of the Royal



Sgt Shand in front of the Viking board at Duxford, depicting what the Battalion got up to on Operation Telic 6.

Anglian Museum in Chelmsford, spoke for 40 minutes on the exhibits in his museum. His enthusiasm and obvious knowledge of the history and deployments of the Regiment were excellent, and he provided one of the favourite visits. Similarly Andrew Murkin at Duxford not only sneaked us in the back of the museum, but also took each platoon around the excellent displays, which now include a presentation of kit, equipment and photographs from our tour of Iraq. A final thank you must, of course, go to the pensioners at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, who excellently hosted 9 Platoon and showed them around the premises. Needless to say, good use was made of the fact that after the boozy early afternoon visit 9 Platoon were now in London during the late afternoon with no more than a two-hour coach trip to a museum the next morning!

The remainder of the company travelled up to the Lake District on the Monday afternoon, arriving at the 20-bed lodge late on Monday night. The lodge was situated in the centre of the village of Ambleside, and provided ample facilities for the 15 people present. This included a chef, Pte Gurung, who more



Soldiers of 11 Platoon, C Company with Mr Ian Hook, the Essex Regiment museum curator.

The Vikings

than adequately fed the group for the week. The plan was to spend the day on the hills with the lance corporals leading each leg of the day under the supervision of the two MLTs, Capt Meddings and CSgt Clark. In the evenings the routes would be plotted and planned, dinner eaten, and then this would be followed up by a discussion session chaired by Maj York. The format proved to be very effective. An early start each morning meant that we were on the mountains by 1030hrs and came back to the minibuses by around 1700hrs having covered around 15km each day. The combination of difficult ground and low cloud meant that conditions varied throughout the day, with the tops of each peak being in bright sunshine, while the lower slopes shrouded themselves in cloud at very short notice. As you dropped further the mountain tarns were frozen and the ground was frost covered all day. Everyone learned important navigation lessons, and all came back having improved their map reading after each enjoyable day. A quick wash up session was then held when each group would discuss what they had learned ready for the next route being issued and planned before dinner.

The second evening gave us the chance to visit the only 'disco bar' in the tiny village. After expecting it to be full of pointy-headed Norfolk-type northerners we were pleasantly surprised to find that Wednesday was actually student night for the Ambleside campus of the local university. Top marks to LCpls Stewardson and Garner, members of the British Emergency Whale Rescue Team, on a week off after their difficult and harrowing attempt to rescue the stranded whale in the Thames. The mammoth journey back to Pirbright allowed all involved some much needed rest the next morning!

All in all the week allowed the majority of the soldiers to have a relaxed and educational week out of barracks, and gave the lance corporals the opportunity to fine tune their navigation and leadership in a complicated but non-military environment.

Exercise Gallipoli Ace

Maj James York writes:

Lt Col Carver and Maj York accompanied 12 Mechanised Brigade Headquarters to Turkey this March for a battlefield tour of the Gallipoli Campaign. While certainly not an opportunity for winter sun it proved to be a highly educational and stimulating tour. It also managed to take in a trip across the Bosphorus to Troy (inevitable as the Brigade Commander, Brig Lorimer, has a degree in classics).

As we discovered from our reading packs there have been many scholarly accounts of the Campaign so I will not attempt to recount it here, but rather describe some of our impressions of Campaign, so well known, but possibly little understood. Our understanding was greatly aided by a Kiwi, Dr Chris Pugsley from RMAS and a local Turkish scholar Mr Kenan Celik. Together their encyclopaedic knowledge ensured that



W Beach, Gallipoli Peninsula the landing site of the of Essex Regiment soon after 25 April 1915 (exact date unknown).

we never strayed far from the tactical weeds despite the Chief of Staff's best efforts. The Campaign did, however, demonstrate the need for clear linkage between what is possible at the tactical and operational level and what is desired at the strategic level.

Over three days we visited each of the main areas of operations, starting with the southern tip of the peninsula and focusing mainly on the British 29th Division landings. We then moved on to the ANZAC landings before finally considering the landings at Sulva Bay. The impression of these visits was the complexity of the task that had been laid upon the mostly inexperienced soldiers and staff. Inspired plans at the strategic and operational level simply could not be executed due to command, communication and logistical weaknesses inherent in such a scratch force. For the Allies it proved to be a lesson in knowing the limitations of the force you have in hand to complete a task. Despite great ingenuity at all levels, failure to overcome the Turkish firepower at places such as V Beach led to great loss of life.

One of the strongest impressions from

our visit to the peninsula was importance of particular versions of history to each side. We arrived immediately before the Turkish National Day and preparations were in full swing. Our Turkish guide, evidently proud of Turkish success, challenged our own views and illustrated how the Turks won the campaign rather than the Allies losing it. Dr Pugsley demonstrated the reality of the ANZAC citizen army, laying bare its strengths and weaknesses. It was a sobering story obviously missed by Peter Weir and Mel Gibson when they made the 1981 film 'Gallipoli'. Whatever the historical fact it was clear from our visit how central the campaign was to the identity of the Turkish and the ANZAC forces. Modern day realities also intervened and the theme of modern Turkish memorials was of comradeship between enemies.

The small size of the cemeteries belied the massive loss of life on both sides. The true figures could only be grasped by looking at the sides of memorials listing the dead with no known grave. Several of our former Regiments were represented

The Vikings



The grave of Pte HG Bond, Essex Regiment at Twelve Tree Copse, Gallipoli.

on the Helles Memorial. Dry history was brought home by our visit to Twelve Tree Copse Cemetery. It was here that we saw the cost of the diversionary feint launched on the 6 August, mentioned in passing during another battle's description. Henry George Bond was one of the many Essex Regiment soldiers to fall that day, but one of the few to have a known grave.

Anti-Tank Platoon Javelin Numbers Cadre

Capt Alex Dart writes:

The old and bold of Anti-Tank Platoon, having taken their expertise to the four corners of the Battalion on Operation Telic 6, needed regrouping with some new blood to recreate the Battalion's anti-tank capability. To gain insight a mini cadre was run in Iraq with the Milan weapon system culminating with 52 missiles being fired at a T 54/55

variant at 1700m, and an MTLB at 1450m in the desert. Post-tour the new platoon formed with a scaling of 42 personnel, and conducted low-level training. Meanwhile Capt Dart and Cpls Guy, Hicks, Metcalfe and Toynton went on the two-week conversion course for the Javelin weapon system. Cpl Guy was also commended by the Wiltshire Police and Ambulance Brigades for resuscitating an elderly man who had collapsed in the street in Warminster; luckily his first aid ITD was still in date! He has subsequently been formally recognised with a GOC's commendation.

CSgt Keating, previously posted at ITDU, was in an ideal position as the platoon 2IC having trialled Javelin, and soon the platoon took shape. With some post-tour leave out of the way, our weapons arrived, and a numbers cadre commenced. The cadre lasted four weeks and focused heavily on training with the Javelin, with the emphasis



Pte Turner and Pte Barrlitt bringing the Javelin into action on the Numbers Cadre.

placed on drills and the initial shoots on the indoor trainer. The gunner skills test was passed by all and a series of written shoots conducted as battle exercises were included. With Cpl Toynton's love of army fighting vehicles (AFV), the whole platoon passed at the level 3 AFV standard. The week-long cadre exercise on SPTA focused on all phases of war utilising the Javelin Weapons Effects Simulator (JAVWES) capability to teach enemy vehicle engagement very effectively. With the increased surveillance capability of the command launch unit over its predecessor, the platoon spent over 36 hours in sub-surface observatiuon posts practising this skill successfully.

The platoon is now conducting continuation training prior to CATT, Tesex and the BATUS OPFOR commitment this summer. The Javelin weapon is a vast improvement in capability, surveillance and training aids over its predecessor, and the platoon will no doubt be in high demand for tasking in the future.

D(Cambridgeshire) Company

Maj Charlie Calder writes:

One of the key events for the Battalion on return from Iraq was to re-form D Company which had been split between the rifle companies and the Brigade Surveillance Company for the tour. The intent was that the company would comprise Recce Platoon, Sniper Platoon, Drums/SF Platoon, Anti-Tank Platoon and Mortar Platoon. The first stage of the process was to get D Company personnel posted back to the company and re-establish the company HQ. Once this had been done the existing platoons ran induction cadres to select and recruit soldiers from the rifle companies for the reformed platoons. Thus by Christmas leave D Company was re-established at 178 personnel all up.

The focus for the New Year was to run a series of support weapons numbers cadres to qualify the influx of new personnel. However, at the same time, considerable work was required in the G4 area to return all the company's equipment table to the right place. The cadres got underway in late January which culminated in some demanding exercises on Salisbury Plain and Sennybridge in March. In particular Recce Platoon and Anti-Tank Platoon were faced with significant challenges as Recce Platoon had to get to grips with the CVR(T) once more and Anti-Tank Platoon had to convert from Milan to Javelin. Throughout this period driver training was a particular focus in order to ensure that the whole company would be able to get out of the front gate on exercise.

The final part of the D Company package was to take part in full in the Battlegroup's CATT simulation exercise in early April. This was followed immediately by a deployment onto Salisbury Plain for a short company exercise to test out the new

The Vikings

D Company SOIs and to confirm that the various elements in the Company were ready to group with the rest of the Battlegroup for the CO's exercise.

In a mere 12 weeks a considerable amount has been achieved in reforming and retraining the company. In true Army fashion it was all done just in time but the company is now ready to deploy for Tesex.

Exercise Atlantic Challenge 2005

*Sgt Wayne Harrod, D Company,
writes:*

After achieving so much following elective amputation of my left leg in June 2004, I was looking for yet another challenge, and as a new member to the British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association (BLESMA) I did not have to look far. The Atlantic Race Challenge (ARC) 2005, a full on race from Gran Canaria to St Lucia, seemed to fit the bill. However, two criteria had to be met. Firstly, all competitors had to be in or to have served in the forces and secondly competitors had to be amputees.

So my name went onto a list of many for the training. To help myself with this I managed to get away on a couple of training weekends while serving at ATR Winchester. These proved to be a very steep learning curve as you quickly realise that when you stand on a rope and you don't have any feeling in one foot you will soon hit the deck and during rough seas maintaining your balance is a battle in itself.

I later went on my Competent Crew Course where I first met a few other crew members and Colin Rouse who was going to be our skipper on the ARC. This was the start of the team bonding and briefings to take us to the next course. In late September 2005 I was yet again in Portsmouth but this time carrying out sea survival training which was mandatory for all BLESMA members who were going to race. This also was the first time I met the remainder of the team and the yacht which was a Farr 65 called *The Spirit of Juno*. So with craft and team we then cruised around the Solent carrying out team drills and procedures.

Finally on 18 November I and some of the crew landed in Gran Canaria to be met by the remaining crew members and a yacht in much need of repair as it had been badly damaged on the way to Gran Canaria. With the start only two days away we were wondering if we would make the start line. Countless hours were spent repairing an engine, putting on a new mainsail and foresail and filling the ship with stores. In the nick of time we were ready. The day of the race was on us with all the briefings completed, route plotted and weather checked we ambled out to the start with over 200 yachts jostling for prime position.

At 1300hrs on 20 November the gun fired and the race was on. Within a couple of hours the fleet had split up and our crew split up into watches consisting of three four-man teams with two first mates and the skipper. The watches were two four-hour stags from 9am till 9pm followed by four three-hour

stags during the night. The watch system was rest, followed by mother watch which involved cooking, cleaning the yacht and stand by in case something happened and then sailing watch.

We sailed well for two days going south then west to be becalmed in still water for three days just sitting getting pushed by the tide while the sail just hung on the mast, but at least the sun had started on the tan. We were also visited by an RAF Nimrod to take pictures of the team. This was our last look at another person for 10 days.

The wind then slowly picked up but was sending us north west but at least we were moving. With normal ship drills carrying on it was hard for some full leg amputees to move around the boat, and to carry out tasks of repairs and maintaining the crew on watch took time. This coupled with the age of the crew ranging from early 30s to 76 meant that people got on with what they could.

We were still heading north west under light winds, so progress was slow. In the first four days all we had done was 76 miles. However, a change wasn't far away as the weather turned into hurricane Delta which subsequently hit the Canary Islands before Christmas last year. We spent two days in the storm with storm sails rigged but still moving fast. We were being slammed by 40ft waves coupled with sleet and rain. Keeping your balance was difficult and limb pain was starting to take its toll along with the rigours of sea sickness. Night sailing brought on new skills with black walls of water rising up on two sides of the boat. It



Sgt Harrod, third from left, with the crew of *The Spirit of Juno*, all members of the British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association (BLESMA).

The Vikings

was tiring as your skills at the helm had to be instinctive. Moving around below deck was just as dangerous as the waves started to pour in. Rest was also hard to get when being thrown around your small bunk with all your kit but in all 14 cases there was at least plenty of leg room!

As we passed the storm we had our first casualty; the freezer broke so the team watched as we tried to cook most of the meat. But with only three gas bottles on board the choice was made to start throwing the meat overboard together with loaves of mouldy bread. We salvaged what we could and gave King Neptune a mighty meal.

During this period of good weather with the boat moving gracefully west we dried out the boat, cleaned and packed the storm sails, sorted out our bunks which had to be disinfected every three days, checked the stores and maintained watch. In short life was a bit easier. As we hit the 10-day mark we still had not hit the trade winds, which push you on to the Caribbean. The miles were ticking away slowly but we had still not got halfway; the sun was getting hotter and the Atlantic suddenly became a large place to be in the middle of. This also brought on new company in the form of a large school of dolphins, a family of killer whales, a lone sperm whale and a sea turtle just chilling in the sun.

As we tacked yet again we then picked up the trade winds which brought on the Atlantic swell; great rollers pushing the yacht ever

west. The speed of the boat picked up so from driving a Ford Mondeo the craft turned into a Ferrari and now on the helm speed was everything trying out different sails to move the boat faster but in a controlled manner, each watch claiming to have the top speed. However an ex-infantryman on my watch called 'Tommo' managed 17.9 knots; that was when you learned how good the yacht was. It did not take long then to start to see other boats in the race as we all closed in on St Lucia. The good feeling was that we were doing the overtaking.

The days now flew by but the *Spirit of Juno* showed chinks in her armour as pulleys were breaking, different blocks seized and sails were tearing. Meanwhile on watch we were ever vigilant for larger craft on the ocean. Then came more casualties with two legs in the team breaking including one of mine. It was a bit weird walking forwards but your foot pointing backwards as the bolts had rusted with the salt and broken off. However with spare parts on board and every one an expert it didn't take long to have my sea leg back on.

Soon on the horizon small cloud forms could be seen, excitement appeared on the boat and we looked to Dave the navigator to pinpoint the location. Good news, it was the small island of Martinique, some 60 miles north of St Lucia. As we carried on during the day the boat became a hive of activity always checking the chart, checking for other boats, checking wind direction. We

wanted to finish within the day.

St Lucia loomed in the early evening of Day 19 with the sun setting behind its mountains. We could see lights of small fishing harbours and as we rounded Pigeon Island the finish line could be seen controlled by a smaller old style yacht. With great relief we crossed the line in 19 days, 11 hours and 43 minutes with 3,310 miles covered. With the yacht prepared for mooring you could hear the steel bands on the beaches, smell the Caribbean food on the breeze. However, we were not prepared for the welcoming committee we received. Most of the crews who had finished the race were on the pier awaiting the *Spirit of Juno* and team BLESMA.

Over the next couple of days many rum punches were drunk and the sea stories got bigger. For myself I missed the laughs on board, sitting around having lunch on deck listening to the crew stories on how they got injured, being shown how to navigate by the stars at night and not using the compass during the day but to watch the sails, wind direction, clouds, and horizon to keep the boat level.

This was an achievement I didn't know I could do when in 2004 I laid on my back after having my operation. What made this happen was having a strong family behind me and the support of BLESMA and my fellow crew members. Lastly thanks to the CO of the Vikings who let me take on the challenge of the ARC.

WE, THE LIMBLESS, LOOK TO YOU FOR HELP

We come from two World Wars, Korea, Kenya, Malaya, Aden, Cyprus, Ulster. The Falklands and all those areas of turmoil where peace must be restored

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BLESMA
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EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION



THE FIRST STEP
by a recent, young double amputee

The Vikings



Estonian Army snipers train in harsh conditions.

Training the Estonian Army

LCpl Goodship, D Company, writes: Just before Christmas leave the Battalion asked for volunteers to go to Estonia and help the Estonian Army which is in training for a forthcoming tour of Afghanistan. With nothing better to do and interested by the challenge I volunteered for this rare opportunity.

My role during the posting was to teach the Estonian army about how to use vehicles in a conventional and peace support role and how this fits in with infantry section tactics. I arrived in Tallin early in the morning and was met by one of the instructors from the Peace Support Operation Centre in Paldiski. He was a Royal Marine with a wealth of experience training foreign forces and immediately I became enthused about my role with the training team.

My first experience with the platoon came the day after I was placed in a more than adequate hotel which the Estonian MOD had kindly supplied. The platoon was going through a platoon attack which they were taught the week before. Through this I was introduced to how the Estonian Army work tactically and was quite amazed as I had it in my mind that they would use antiquated Soviet tactics. The reality was quite different as I soon realised they used our tactics and were even using our own translated pamphlets. Not surprisingly the attack went well as the platoon had been working together for about two months.

After my initial baptism of fire I developed a training programme with the other instructors teaching the basics of using their armoured vehicle, the Finnish SISU amphibious APC. The vehicle can carry ten soldiers with ease with a crew of three. With the basic platoon strength being 41 personnel this large load capacity is essential. The lessons taught over the cadre included how to dismount and use the vehicle in ambushes, contact drills and using the vehicles as extra fire support, taking advantage of the three 50mm calibre machine guns on the vehicles.

Also with the help from other instructors we taught the platoon how to search people and vehicles, conducting vehicle checkpoints and other peace support operations. This was made easy because many of the instructors have completed OPTAG training for Iraq which the BMATT Czechoslovakia ran. They helped me greatly with the interpretation from English into Estonian.

Overall it was a hectic two weeks but when I left I was more than happy to have had the pleasure of teaching some well motivated soldiers in a new environment. I wish them all the best on their forthcoming tour with the 3 PARA Battlegroup in Afghanistan.

Viking GPMG(SF) Cadre

Capt Dave Robinson writes:

The Drums Platoon, fresh from its Operation Telic 6 role as a rifle platoon, was re-rolled

as the GPMG(SF) Platoon on return to Pirbright. GPMG(SF) is a skill which has seen a decline in recent times with the introduction of manoeuvre support sections. With those days now past the Drums Platoon prepared themselves for the physical rigours of re-learning the lost art of the sustained fire role.

The cadre (30 January - 3 March) began with a week learning in detail the GPMG in its light role. All lessons were taught including the much favoured air defence role giving all those taking part a strong knowledge of the weapon system as well as gaining a basic working relationship of their gun pairs. On completion of this all students completed their GPMG (LR) Annual Weapons Assessment (AWA) with Dmr Frank Armstrong having the best shoot of the day and all passing well proving that the AWA is not the mythically hard shoot it has the reputation of being.

With light role taught and tested the platoon went on to learn the sustained fire role with the emphasis on slick drills and good working partnerships coming as a shock to some. This phase culminated in the GPMG(SF) Weapon Handling Tests which all students passed well.

A confirmatory blank exercise in Aldershot taught students the details of working as gun sections. This exercise ended with a gun pairs' competition which tested all skills taught to date. Dmr Matty Willan and Dmr Timothy Shepard obviously craved some extra fitness by this point and decided to run an extra 3km after coming geographically unstuck on an extraction exercise. The winning gun pair was Dmr Jonathan Cuccinello and Dmr Kelly Curtis with strong scores in all disciplines.

The highlight of the cadre was the week-long live firing exercise on Sennybridge Training Area. With snow inbound the



Dmr Jonathon Cuccinello and Dmr Kelly Curtis firing at a depth target.

The Vikings



Dmr Ross Silvey spotting for Dmr Doc Raulton on the GPMG (SF) Cadre.

fledgling SF Platoon crammed in as much live firing as possible knowing that live firing is by far the best training available for the weapons system. Dmr Ross Silvey and Pte Dean Prior had particularly strong performances in these tough conditions. When weather halted training for a day the SF Platoon sought to continue their development with a snowball assault on the Sniper Platoon which ended in LCpl 'Goody' Goodship taking a cold bath in a nearby stream.

With live firing and the GPMG(SF) AWA completed, the platoon is now all trained up to gunner standard. Some have taken on the additional responsibility of gun controller and will complete a cadre for that in the future. The cadre has brought the GPMG(SF) Platoon up to section level training and all are looking forward to moving on to working as a platoon on Tesex. They all now appreciate the demands of working with this heavy, cumbersome kit which is awful to clean and carry, but an absolute joy to fire.

Viking Mortar Cadre

Capt Paul Steel writes:

On returning from Operation Telic the Mortar Platoon was reformed and immediately began the lengthy process of rebuilding a fairly depleted platoon. In November an induction cadre was held that gave the potential new mortarmen a chance to see how the platoon operated and also allowed the platoon staff to see if there was anyone who would not be up to the task. This involved introductions to the mortar equipment, the

role and make up of the platoon and a number of fitness tests. All involved started to get to grips with the basics, with some picking it up a lot quicker than others.

After a well-earned Christmas leave everyone returned bursting with enthusiasm and raring to get on with the cadre. That said there was the odd individual seen sporting a mullet and sideburns that nearly gave the CSM a heart attack. The cadre started with everyone learning the basic principles of mortaring and how to use the equipment. This progressed over the next three weeks until the detachments were ready to deploy on a week field firing camp on Salisbury Plain. The weather was exceptionally unpleasant for the entire week and really tested the Number Ones as they were trying to put firing information on the sights with very numb fingers. The drills were initially quite slow with the new members of the platoon getting to grips with their role within the detachments. However, as the week progressed, so did the standard and by the final day the platoon was able to fire on a basic fire plan without any problems.

The only misfire of the week was credited to Pte Grange-Cook who did not believe WO2 Freeman that he would have to carry the round into the impact area so that it could be destroyed until he was physically shown the charge that had been made for the job. On completion of the field firing all members



Mortar Platoon live firing on Salisbury Plain.

The Vikings



Mortars live firing at night.

of the platoon became qualified mortarmen. Throughout the cadre period the platoon had numerous people attending various driving cadres, everything from Cat B theory to C+E. This has now put the platoon into a very healthy position and it is now just about fully manned for drivers.

The weeks following the cadre were very hectic with the emphasis switching to the tactical deployment of the mortar sections concentrating on coming in and out of action so that the drills became second nature in preparation for the CO's Exercise in April and Tesex. During this period the mortar fire controllers took part in a combined exercise with 19 Regiment Royal Artillery, working alongside the forward observation officers. The aim of this was to build up a good working relationship so that it would be easier to co-operate with each other on subsequent training.

Overall, the period since our return from Operation Telic 6 has been exceptionally hectic but has also been very successful. The platoon has started to bond very well and is now building up a healthy rivalry with the Anti-Tank Platoon. We have managed to rebuild the platoon and are now at a stage where we are ready to deploy on battalion-level exercises and provide a high level of support.

the return from Iraq there have been changes and Recce Platoon is no exception. I'm new to the job of Platoon Commander as Sgt Thurston is to be Platoon 2IC; there are new section commanders, gunners and drivers. These changes have resulted in the need to train new crews for the fleet of eight CVRT in time for Tesex.

The first stage has been to get the right numbers of drivers with a tracked vehicle licence. The course is an intensive four weeks in which the students have learned all about the workings of a CVRT and how to keep them running. Also it has encompassed a number of recovery exercises on the cross country driving area, most of which seem to happen near to or in deep water. I guess it must be coincidence that the CVRTs break down near water all the time! Such is the need for drivers a second cadre has had to be run. Cpl Ling and LCpl Eggleton have combined their teaching skills to train eight new drivers all of whom will be essential to the smooth running of Recce Platoon for Tesex and beyond.

After the drivers the turret crews needed to be trained. A couple of commanders have had to do the CVRT commanders' course and seven members of the Platoon have had to master the skills required for the 30mm Rarden cannon and the L37 machine gun. After some early worries of fingers being removed by the rammer, the drills started to bed in and all students on the course have benefited from the knowledge of the gunnery instructors. The highlight for the new gunners will be in the autumn when they will fire their Initial Gunners Test at Lulworth.

Finally, once the crews are trained the platoon will have a chance to learn and practise the tactical lessons required to operate effectively as the eyes and ears of the Battlegroup. This will be done both on Salisbury Plain and also in the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (CATT). Subject areas will be vehicle movement, observation

Recce Platoon

Capt Andy Wilde writes:

Recce Platoon... driving, gunnery and then tactics it seems to be never ending!

As with most areas of the Battalion since



Cpl Roberts, Vikings' Recce Platoon.

The Vikings

skills, occupation of hides and observation posts and interaction with armour and engineers, all of which are key elements to being a recon soldier

The challenge for the platoon now is Tesex where the newly learned skills will be tested fully. The platoon will be putting into practice all the things that have been worked on since early January and no doubt the time and effort put in will pay off, but Tesex in May is not the end. The platoon will deploy to Canada as part of the OPFOR recon company in the summer which will be an excellent learning opportunity and provide the platoon with another new challenge and a chance to see things from the other side of the fence as well as the possibility of some adventure training and R and R in Canada.

Sniper Cadre

Capt Dave Robinson writes:

On return from Operation Telic 6, the Viking Sniper Platoon was reformed with the aim of regenerating ready for Tesex in May 2006. The platoon had suffered due to being split to the rifle companies for operations and there was a requirement to almost completely re-man and train. To that end a selection cadre was run in September 2005 with applicants from all the rifle companies. The week-long cadre identified those who would go to Brecon the following year. Strong performances from Cpl Dan Byrne-Evans and Pte Dean Bailey ensured their places while others identified areas of their basic soldiering skills which required development.

The cadre started in earnest towards the end of January 2006. CSM Ellis was drafted in from HQ Company to provide the experienced head to run the cadre. A



A different view from where the enemy is!

week in camp conducting lessons on sniping skills and training on the L96 rifle was quickly followed by a range week including the sniper badge test shoots. Impressive shooting from Pte Teddy Reucker and Pte Dean Bailey topped the week which saw all 12 cadre students pass the badge test shoots.

With little rest, the platoon deployed to Brecon for the three-week fieldcraft phase.

The fieldcraft phase concentrates on the core sniper skills of observation, judging distance, stalking and map reading. The first week of the cadre saw most embarrassed by their lack of map reading prowess but after some careful guidance from CSM Ellis and Sgt Faupel most became competent users of the compass.

The first stalks also proved a challenge for most. In particular Pte Clay Donnachie found himself struggling to identify the observation post when he walked not 40m past it with CSM Ellis politely pointing out that a knife would be more use at that range than an L96!

As the fieldcraft phase progressed the snipers' skills improved vastly as the weather in Brecon deteriorated at the same pace. Stalking in the snow proved a challenge for all but even when training had to be halted the ever inventive B Company sniper instructors (Sgt Culshaw and Cpl James Owen) began developing the seventh sniper skill of 'metal tray snow sledging' to raise morale.

The badge test week took up the final week of the fieldcraft phase. With poor weather now the norm the snipers had an extra concern during the test phase of the cadre. Fierce preparation of white bed sheets as additions to ghillie suits helped some to pass the stalk while full warm kit was deployed for the static observation and judging distance stands.

With the badge test week completed all students returned to camp for a week of continuation training. In total five snipers passed the cadre: Cpl Dan Byrne-Evans, LCpl Jock Flight, Pte Alexander Hawkins, Pte Dean Bailey and Pte Tom Mann. Most



Pte Donnachie making good use of dead ground.

The Vikings



Sniper candidates on a cold observation stand.

other students came within one or two disciplines of passing and will be swept up in a re-test planned for June.

The sniper cadre has proved a great success. It is one of the most demanding courses open to a private soldier in the British Army and those who completed it should all feel a sense of achievement at their endeavours. As a platoon we are now in good shape to move on to higher level training in preparation for Tesex and Afghanistan in the future.

AGC(SPS) Detachment

2Lt Gemma Leek writes:

The Vikings' AGC(SPS) Detachment has had an extremely busy time since administratively recovering the Battalion from Operation Telic 6. The majority of the Battalion saw the end of 2005 bring closure to a year of extremely hard work. Yet while on leave, many members of the detachment, in particular the RAO, Capt Thomas, had a feeling of dread and foreboding. The reason for the grey cloud permanently lodged over all AGC (SPS) personnel's heads was the Measurement of Fighting Power Inspection (MFPI). The MFPI, which is the AGC version of Tesex, was to take place in February, leaving the detachment with a limited amount of time - four weeks to be exact - to prepare. The lead up to the inspection involved a daily routine of over 12-hour days, and working weekends for all. However the hard work was not in vain and the AGC (SPS) Detachment can happily report that the Battalion passed with flying colours, and has now set the standard for the rest of the Brigade's units.

The inspection had meant that since returning from tour, social lives and

sports were things which other people experienced, however post-MFPI we ensured that this was not to become the 'norm'. Although extremely busy providing clerical support to training, such as CAST and CPXs, the detachment ensured that its budding sports stars got numerous opportunities to demonstrate their skill. The detachment Commander, 2Lt Leek, and the RAO, WO2 Gibbons, competed as part of the Battalion's orienteering squad. Sgt McFadyen and Sgt Portlock form a formidable element of the AGC football team on a monthly basis. What's more the detachment still manages to play an on par round of golf on the occasional spare Wednesday afternoon.

As this journal goes to press, the AGC is undergoing a period of transformation, with the introduction of our own branch-specific Tactical Recognition Flashes (TRFs). They are currently a matter which generates debate and differences of opinion across all ranks throughout the Battalion. Whatever opinion you hold, the TRFs represent a dramatic change in the Corps physical presence with the Regiments/Corps which it serves. This visible symbol represents the existing fact that the Battalion's AGC (SPS) personnel are in the unique and extremely privileged position of belonging to the small, close-knit family of the Vikings as well as the wider AGC community.

Exercise Eagle Flash – Commanding Officer's Exercise 2006

Capt Dave James-Roll writes:

There is a sense of *déjà-vu* around the Battalion at the moment. The training year is following exactly the same course as the

year prior to deploying to Operation Telic 6. In the past four months we have seen more of Salisbury Plain than our own homes and it was time to deploy there once again. This time it was going to be different though; this was the culmination of the Battalion's training before going on Tesex. If we were not ready now, we never would be.

Exercise Eagle Flash was so named to honour the disbanded 44th of Foot and to embrace the latest round of changes, Future Infantry Structure, in which we the Vikings retained our identity (unlike the Dukes who we will be doing battle with on Tesex). It was designed as the CO's exercise to practise all elements of the Battlegroup in high intensity war fighting in all phases of war. The companies had been on exercise, honing their own skills for the previous two months and Exercise Eagle Flash was the opportunity for the CO to see and assess them all. It was also the first, and last, opportunity for the Battlegroup to exercise before Tesex. It consisted of four phases; Phase 1 was the road move down, Phase 2 was a three-day company round-robin, Phase 3 the Battlegroup deliberate attack and Phase 4 the recovery of the Battlegroup back to Pirbright.

The Battlegroup deployed on Monday 10 April, a beautiful spring day, and eventually made it to the Plain. We only lost two Saxon en route; the most serious was 0D (Int Cell), which shattered its prop shaft, scattering red-hot chunks of metal across the A303, the Saxon behind and a civilian car that was passing at the time. Fortunately, nobody was injured and the Wiltshire Constabulary were called to the scene. The friendly neighbourhood bobby was heard to remark that '...these are the strangest looking tanks I have ever seen. What do you use them for?' You might well ask constable, you might very well ask!

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday saw the companies conduct three separate battle exercises within the same scenario. At any one time, two of the companies were dug-in on the River Berril, while the third was in reserve and the IMA Squadron from the KRH provided counter-penetration options. They took it in turns to fight a defensive battle, conduct an advance to contact and execute a company deliberate attack. They were supported in the defence by elements of the Anti-Tank Platoon, the SF Platoon and Snipers. In the advance the Recce Platoon and IMA Squadron provided the Find function and the Mortar Platoon supported with indirect fire, and in the deliberate attack they again had support from either the Recce Platoon or IMA Squadron and elements of D Company. All went very well, although after three days in the same defensive position, I rather suspect that B Company got far too comfortable and had too much sleep; they were all suspiciously bright eyed come Thursday afternoon.

Thursday afternoon saw orders for a battlegroup deliberate attack on a company (-) position on Sidbury Hill. There followed

The Vikings



Lt Col Carver, seated, and the remainder of Battlegroup Headquarters listen to another important Gunner point being made by Maj Jez Parrot the BC of 28/143 Battery.

a road move across the Plain and a period of enforced rest before assembling for the move on foot to the FUP prior to first light. Come Friday morning it became apparent that as the lead company, B Company and once again on the Battlegroup main effort would again honour the 44th of Foot, this time in a desperate assault up the sheer face of Sidbury Hill in an act not dissimilar to the assault on Castle Hill at Monte Casino. Fortunately, our enemy were not as tenacious as the Germans, particularly as it was only the Mortar Platoon reinforced by the QM's department. Still, they put up a good fight and after C Company had taken the plateau and A Company had finished off the clearance most were processed through the RSM's PW handling cage.

Following the inevitable wash-down and admin checks, the Battlegroup made it back to Pirbright. The return journey was remarkable breakdown free; hopefully we've ironed out our vehicle problems before Tesex. Now back in Surrey, and after a successful week where all elements of the Viking Battlegroup have had the opportunity to practise their aspect of battle, we switch out focus now to Tesex where we will be taking on the might of 1st Battalion the Yorkshire Regiment (The Duke of Wellingtons). 'All the fours!' I hear you cry.

Headquarter Company

Maj Chelsea Hall writes:

Since the return of the Battalion from Operation Telic 6, late last year the Company has taken a well-deserved break, after shouldering the bulk of the post tour admin, returning from leave on 16 January refreshed and ready to take on yet another busy training year.

Apart from the change of OC the Company has undergone many other changes of personnel, most notably the departure of Maj Bunny Nye, the QM. Bunny is off to command the Queen's Division Company at ITC Catterick, a unique honour for an LE officer to gain such a prestige post and the whole Battalion wish him and Bev the very best, for their time in North Yorkshire, training new Vikings.

His place has been taken by Maj 'Steff' Stefanetti who has now got his feet firmly under the table. Other people on the move are Capt Chris Tate, who we welcome back on commissioning, he assumes the post of Unit Welfare Officer/Regimental Careers Management Officer. Capt Tim Jones has taken over as MTO with Capt Phil Blanchfield moving to QM(T). Maj 'Chelsea' Hall from 3 PWRR has become

a Viking and taken over from Maj Stefanetti as OC of HQ Company...phew! And that's just the LEs!

The Battalion has hit the ground running since returning from leave, combining a condensed training year (Tesex in May!) with a comprehensive ski camp. foremost throughout this has been Capt Phil Moxey the RSO.

Not only have he and his RSWO CSgt (soon to be WO2) Jimmy Rackham been instrumental in the training of the Battlegroup HQ staff, and the subsequent outstanding grade achieved on CAST, but also Capt Moxey organised and ran the ski camp for the whole Battalion with minimal assistance - he also managed to find time to fit in a wedding! He and Joanne were married on Saturday 8 April but Phil deployed on the CO's exercise on the 10th! (Some honeymoon!).

Needless to say the pace of life never slackens and all members of the company are working hard to ensure the support to the rest of the Battalion remains constant.

At the time of writing we are gearing up for Tesex in a few weeks and I think I can honestly say we are ready for the challenges it will bring, and the company feels confident it will perform well.

The Vikings

RCMO Office Update

Capt Tim Jones writes:

Recruiting for the Battalion has remained buoyant and our end of year figures have seen 146 enlistments, surpassing our targets. Primarily this is due to the superb and determined efforts of the recruiting teams consisting of the Army Youth Teams (AYT), commanded by WO2 Marsh and WO2 Routledge, the Regimental Recruiting Team (RRT), commanded by Sgt Clarke and the recruiting sergeants, namely Sgts Hassan, O'Hanlon, Tawse, Harris, Fordham, Boreham and Browning. Integral to the recruiting effort and a key element of the Recruiting Team has been the support provided by the rifle companies, notably in January and February saw the Corps of Drums playing at half-time at Peterborough Football Ground. Enlistments in the last 12 months saw 85 new Vikings arrive in Pirbright ready for operations. In all, the Battalion, and the Regiment still remains one of the best recruited in the infantry.

CSgt Garvie, the self appointed 'battalion shepherd' has remained busy concentrating on assisting the EI instructors with retaining our potential Vikings in training. His weekly visits to ITC Catterick, AFC Harrogate and ATR Bassingbourn appear to be paying dividends with a noticeable reduction in our discharges, it appears our potential Vikings look forward to seeing their mate 'Andy'. A key part of the office remains the tracking of all potential recruits; this continues to be the responsibility of Cpl Ward, our office manager, whose infectious humour keeps the office going.

Personal development in the form of ECDL and basic skills has continued at full tilt with courses run monthly. The ECDL course has seen over 150 Vikings receive their certificates, which has proved invaluable for those resettling. Bowman conversions, improving numeracy and



Cpl Otto receives his ECDL certificate.

literacy and preparing JNCOs for their CLM packages. It seems the prospect of spending two weeks in Farnborough College wearing civilians is something not to be passed by, I wonder why?

With Operation Telic being abound with IT thus allowing the Vikings to be in constant touch, it soon become apparent these facilities should be available on return. To meet this new found demand for

IT an internet suite has been established in the office adjoining the RCMO's, this has proved to be immensely popular with all ranks and with a busy period forecasted will continue to be so.

Finally, as I move on to the post of MTO I would like to wish Capt Chris Tate all the very best as the newly appointed RCMO of the Vikings.

Exercise Snow Viking 2006

Capt Phil Moxey, RSO, writes:

The almost annual Battalion Ski Camp was run this year in Les Arcs, France from 4-18 March. Its primary aim was to introduce as many novice Vikings to downhill skiing as possible and ultimately to award them their Basic Ski Proficiency (BSP).

The Camp was a great success; the first week saw an almost never-ending snowfall which produced outstanding skiing conditions. With so much snow, the off-piste skiing was challenging yet safe as any fall was gently cushioned by six feet of powder. This gave ample opportunities for the resident 'Powder Dogs' (aka Capt David Robinson, Sgt Thurston, CSgt Port and Capt Wilde) to practise their 'art'. The second week saw the weather improve leaving pristine skiing conditions and blazing sunshine. Red faces rapidly followed as soldiers, eager to 'bronze', decided to forego the sunscreen. Pte Armstrong and LCpl Warner in particular feeling the effects.

The inescapable pleasure of teaching soldiers how to ski is that once they know



Pte Turner, CIS Platoon, using the Vikings internet suite.

The Vikings



Pushing the limits - wiped out Vikings litter the slopes.



Another demanding lunch (L-R) LCpl Warner, Pte Curtis, unknown person with goggles on, Capt Thomas RAO, Pte Curtis and Pte Van de Meure.



Week one, B and C Companies.

how to go in a straight line their sole aim is to go as fast as possible with no real care as to how they intend to stop. The proven masters of this were Ptes Alford, White and Coram and LCpl Watts. Of equal pleasure is watching the 'fearless' crowd, in this category was LCpl Cloughton who spent more time in the air than on the snow and Capt Gregory who fearlessly planted his face into the snow with monotonous regularity.

Over the course of the two weeks over 30 soldiers were awarded their BSP and three have been awarded the advanced award. This provides a solid foundation towards qualifying the instructors of the future.

The Battalion Ski Camp remains a highlight of the training year and is an affordable way to get high numbers of soldiers involved in adventure training. Coupling the Commanding Officer's dedication to snowboarding and the increasing numbers of soldiers who have taken up the sport recently with continued support for skiing, we should see the development of a strong snowsports tradition within the Vikings.

Recent Awards

The Battalion has been delighted to see the award of Long Service and Good Conduct Medals to WO2 (RQMS) Robinson, WO2 (CSM) Ramm (C Company), Sgt Rumsey (CIS Platoon) and Cpl Freeman (Catering Platoon). The medals were presented during a visit to the Battalion by GOC 3(UK) Division, Maj Gen ARD Sherriff CBE on 21 March. The occasion brought together members of both the Officers' Mess and Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess to recognise this important occasion for the individuals concerned. The citations, which were read out aloud, reminded everyone present of the 15 years' distinguished service that each recipient had given to the Army. Whether it be operational tours, completing

The Vikings

GOC 3 (UK) Division having awarded the LS&GC medal to WO2 (RQMS) Robinson, WO2 CSM Ramm, Sgt Rumsey and Cpl Freeman and a GOC's Commendation to Cpl Guy (kneeling front right).

demanding courses, implementing Bowman and catering for soldiers deployed all over the world. The occasion was an appropriate way to mark the award of such medals. At the same occasion the GOC also presented a General Officer Commanding's Commendation to Cpl Guy (D Company) for the commendable help that he gave to a civilian man who had collapsed and was dying in Warminster town centre in

December 2005. An extract from Cpl Guy's citation read as follows: 'There is no doubt that the actions of Cpl Guy on the night of 6 December were critical in keeping the man alive until the ambulance turned up. His firm leadership and calm demeanour instilled confidence in onlookers and others who were trying to help. His actions received the praise of both the ambulance crew and the police who attended the scene.

'Furthermore the incident came to the attention of the local media and showed the Army in an extremely positive light in a town where the military has not always been universally popular with the local population.'

The award of such a commendation was an excellent example of a Junior NCO upholding the Army's values and standards whether it be on duty or not.

2nd Battalion The Poachers

Introduction by the Commanding Officer

The Battalion departed Northern Ireland after almost two years in Ballykelly and we left with mixed emotions, many pleased to be returning to the mainland after two relatively quiet years, some suspecting that they might miss the stability, relative tranquillity and wonderful scenery of Northern Ireland. Throughout the tour we progressively reduced patrols support to the police and, as the political temperature changed, were able to withdraw much of our military capability back to base. Northern Ireland is now far more at ease with itself and the prospects of a lasting, if slightly uneasy, peace are now very real. The formal termination of Operation Banner next year heralds a new era for the Province, and hopefully marks the end of our Regiment's 36-year military involvement on the streets of Northern Ireland.

The Battalion moved to Clive Barracks in Ternhill in December 2005 and after a Christmas, made all the more relaxing for not having to service any operational standby commitments, we launched into training for Operation Telic 8 in early January. The prospect of an operational tour in Iraq and the requirement to master new theatre-specific skills, including rudimentary Arabic, made a refreshing change from many previous operational tours.

Somehow finding time to pack in a tactics cadre and some sport, we soon found ourselves packing to deploy to the Middle East. The Battalion has been deployed in Iraq as part of 20 Armoured Brigade since mid-April - we provide the Security Sector Reform (SSR) Battlegroup with A and B Companies deployed forward in Basra Palace and the Shatt Al Arab Hotel respectively. The SSR focus is on developing the Iraqi Security Forces' capability, capacity and credibility so that they can protect the nascent post - Provincial Iraqi Control governance and economic structures. Battalion Headquarters is dual roled as both the Battlegroup HQ and as the Brigade SSR Cell, directing and co-ordinating SSR effort across the Brigade area of operations.

C Company are deployed as the Brigade Reserve and have been busy providing a bespoke search and arrest capability. The company is nominally billeted in Shaibah Logistics Base but is truly nomadic and spends a great deal of its time down in Basra City! D (Sp) Company is currently deployed as part of the rear operations battlegroup and accommodated alongside Echelon and C Company at Shaibah. They are employed on a cycle of varied operational tasks throughout the Brigade area.

As I sit and write this introduction, we have just heard of the tragic deaths of Pte Joseva Lewacei and Pte Adam Morris, killed by a terrorist bomb in Basra on the night of 13 May. Pte Lionel O'Connor was also seriously wounded in the same incident. The company had been involved in a series

of successful arrest operations and was patrolling in the north of the city when their patrol was attacked by terrorists with an improvised explosive device. We shall miss 'Lewi' and 'Boris' immensely, two great characters who epitomised the Poacher ethos. We now soldier on, in the hope that our efforts here bring Basra a little closer towards the peace that its decent citizens so clearly crave.

Life in the Palace

Maj Stuart Nicholson writes:

The journey from Ternhill to Basra Palace is best glossed over. Suffice it to say the RAF conspired to ensure that the company was jetlagged before leaving the UK. The cabin staff of the civilian charter flight were all that could be expected, with a safety brief that sounded a bit like it was being delivered by Lily Savage and 'Chicken Little' as an in-flight film for 250 infantry soldiers deploying on operations.

It was with some relief that the bulk of the company finally arrived in Basra Palace. D Battery, 3 RHA gave us an excellent handover, passing on the skills that they had learned and giving us much needed coaching with unfamiliar equipment, most notably Bowman and theatre ECM. More importantly they had graciously moved into transit accommodation so that we could take over our rooms straight away. You'll notice that is 'rooms', rather than tents. We are almost unique in theatre in that we live in hard accommodation. I will not dwell on the benefits of life in the Palace; the Vikings will already know and I'd rather not let on to the rest of the Poachers. Suffice it to say,

we have packed our swimming trunks and fishing rods.

Our role is proving hugely interesting and the troops realise that they have one of the better jobs. The bulk of the company provides force protection to liaison officers (LOs) visiting Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) locations. This sees them moving throughout Basra, gaining a uniquely broad view of the city and also venturing further afield to the border with Iran (GPS a must!). Also, to counter the joys of the Palace, one multiple at a time guards the Warren. The Warren is the home of the Provincial Joint Operations Centre, from where ISF and emergency services co-ordinate responses, plan operations and then gather intelligence. As such it is a critical site. Accommodation, however, is less than ideal with no running water, camp beds, nothing but two electric hobs to cook on and the constant companionship of mosquitoes and larger, hairier, bewhiskered interlopers.

The company group also furnishes some of the LOs that we are responsible for protecting. Maj Connolly leads with the Department of Border Enforcement, Lt Stabler leads with the Facility Protection Service and the OC deals with the Iraqi Brigade HQ. The company is also responsible for the small, unwashed team of LOs and signallers in the PJOC.

I am genuinely proud of my soldiers and the speed with which they are getting to grips with the demands of this theatre. They were given a good handover and have already enhanced what they learned. The realities of the theatre have led to a focus from every member of the company group that has seen them rapidly assimilated, developing



The author arrives at Basra Palace.

The Poachers

and applying new skills. Every man has raised his game and the company is more professional than I have ever seen it before. Experience from Afghanistan and Northern Ireland has helped, realistic and demanding training at company and battlegroup levels have developed skills, a good approach to OPTAG has borne fruit, but the reality is the strength of the company lies in its soldiers and commanders of all levels.

A (Lincolnshire) Company Basra Palace

Capt Andy Wolstenholme writes:

You wouldn't think that Iraq was only three hours ahead of the UK when you consider the epic 24-hour journey that it took to deliver us safely from Ternhill to Shiabah Logistics Base (SLB). The troops all thought that we had struck gold when we discovered that we were being flown to Bahrain in charter flights in the less than aptly named 'Excel Air'. The lack of forethought in the planning of the flight can be demonstrated by the film selected for the infantry company deploying on operations - *Chicken Little* and *Cheaper by the Dozen 2!* The methods of transportation used seemed to get smaller and less comfortable as we got closer to Basra - from Jumbo Jet, to Hercules, to Merlin helicopter, to coach; we were half expecting to be collected finally by pony and trap!

Our first port of call, SLB was comfortable enough in the vast 60-man tents. They were air conditioned with a choice of two settings, off or arctic - with the raging heat outside people generally opted for the latter setting. Some final training was undertaken by all at this location, including communications, environmental health, as well as patrol and driving skills. While the heat was a shock to the system, the training itself wasn't due to the excellent effort all A Company soldiers had put in through the preceding months



View from Sangar at Basra Palace.

and as such, the company deployed onward to Basra Palace confident in their training and role.

Arrival at the Palace was in keeping with the journey from England - hot, cramped

and very late, with some members of the company waiting on the helipad for a good few hours. However, on entering the Palace site the troops were pleased to find the accommodation better than expected



A (Lincolnshire) Company home for the next six months.

The Poachers



Capt Andy Wolstenholme on the roof.

and certainly better than some of the accommodation that troops are inhabiting in theatre. The Palace facilities include various locally run shops selling items from phone cards to ice cream, shorts to iPods and you can generally get what ever you want; a swimming pool; two gyms; satellite television; internet and welfare phones and most importantly, the sun terraces on all of the buildings.

The handover from D Battery, 3 Royal Horse Artillery went smoothly and allowed us to poach the experiences gained from six months of hard patrolling. We are now working autonomously and getting a good balance between work, training and relaxation. Troops are now looking forward to some exciting roles while here in Iraq and looking forward to showing the locals how things are done 'Poacher' style.

B Company Shaata-Al-Arab Hotel Basra City

Capt James Ding writes:

'Can I take your bags, Sir? Yours is the en-suite room...and the bar by the pool is open until 2am.'

If you heard these words then you have been dreaming on the helicopter flight from Basra Air Station. The realities of the Shaata-Al-Arab hotel are somewhat different. B Company has arrived and we are out on the streets in Basra starting our task of assisting in the training of the Iraqi police service.

It has been a busy few weeks, memories of leaving Ternhill with our free Leicester City shirts courtesy of the football club seems like a lifetime ago as does the flight to Qatar, the onward Hercules flight to Basra

Air Station and the Merlin helicopter flight to Shaiba Logistics base. Our four days' additional training saw us acclimatise to the 40C heat, learn to use the radios we would employ on patrol, conduct search training, zero our rifles and prepare for operations. On 19 April the majority of the company moved forward by helicopter to the Shaata-Al-Arab Hotel, a frenzy of activity started as we met up with our counterparts from C Battery, 3 Regiment Royal Horse Artillery. Drivers signed over vehicles, section commanders took command of the sangars which guard the camp, while all ranks started to put their 'boots on the

ground' as we went out on patrol. The last few nights the company has prepared kit and equipment; work interrupted only by the rocket attacks which force us to put on our body armour and helmets until the all clear has sounded.

The first few patrols have now taken place and we are establishing our routine. The OC, Maj Paul Leslie, has conducted several visits to Iraqi police stations all of which require the best part of a platoon to provide protection. On these patrols NCOs command four-man teams which provide escorts and bodyguards while meetings take place. LCpls Birkin, Thomas, Mills



Shaata-Al-Arab Hotel at night.

The Poachers



B Company preparing to deliver a civilian police advisor in a Warrior.



Sgt Deakin takes cover during a mortar attack.

and Thompson have all conducted these patrols. Simultaneously, Sgt Deakin and 5 Platoon are now established in the Iraqi police headquarters known as the 'Warren' where they protect and guard the British presence in the police headquarters. 6 Platoon are currently on guard providing protection around the camp while 4 Platoon are currently conducting the patrols which provide the escorts for our liaison officers. All of these tasks will rotate between the platoons every few weeks so each platoon will get a change of activity.

At every level we are trying to engage, assist and train the Iraqi police departments. So far meetings have taken place with the riot police, the serious crimes unit, the banks' police and others. The CSM and the company 2IC are already feeling like 'old hands' doing the mortar attack drills. Sgt Groom was the first man to have been caught in the Portaloos when the mortar alarm sounded following an attack. Supporting B Company, the CQMS, with LCpl Morgan and LCpl Pett, ensure that the vehicles and equipments we are receiving are in the best condition that they can be. Pte Parker on his first patrol as a vehicle driver in Iraq, having only passed his driving test two months ago, had the two commanding officers and the two company commanders as his first passengers. No pressure there and he didn't stall that often!

So that's B Company's news as today Sunday 23 April we raised the Battalion flag and took over responsibility for assisting in the reform of the Iraqi police service.

The Poachers



OC B Company looking tired.

It's been a busy few weeks. Is it what we trained and prepared for? Yes it is! How are we finding it? Living conditions are better than we expected, the food is good, plentiful and varied, the free laundry means clothes can be washed daily and the task will be both demanding and interesting. Overall, B Company is in good shape and we are ready to get on with job. I have no doubt that we will be busy over the next few weeks.

Patrol Arabic

2Lt Jonathan Lanham writes:

With the imminent departure to Iraq looming it was time for the Poachers to go back to school, as the Patrol Arabic course arrived in Ternhill. As an opportunity for commanders to grasp the basics of Arabic, the five-day course provided a rudimentary framework to help interact with local Iraqis once in Theatre. With only five days to teach a

completely new language the five teachers, led by the charismatic Koncha, certainly had their work cut out. Painful memories of French GCSEs were rekindled for many during the first few days as students mimicked tutors to try and master basics such as introducing each other and telling people where they were from.

As a background to the language lessons themselves, there was also opportunity for students to quiz their tutors about the people of Iraq and cultural sensitivities that should be heeded. With many of the tutors' families still in Basra this gave a much-needed context and impetus for students learning a complex language.

As there were only five days to the course the focus had a decidedly practical slant and once some of the basics had been mastered it was time to begin practising vocabulary that would be of use in road blocks, house searches and minor aggro situations. The emphasis on being understood rather than pronunciation did result in some comedy pigeon Arabic but all students did make progress. The long-suffering tutors certainly seemed happy with everyone, even though some students often felt their brains turning to blancmange, as it seemed an entire language was being shoe-horned into their heads.

The Patrol Arabic course was certainly a worthwhile course and was a success that soldiers can confidently build upon once in theatre.

The impossible mission of teaching an entirely new language in just five days was impractical but as a taster of what to expect and an insight into the culture of Iraq the Poachers five school days were certainly interesting.



Lt Johnny Lanham, Sgt Greenhill and Sgt Booth on the roof.

The Poachers

My View on the Operation Telic 8 Training Package

Pte Handyside writes:

I don't really have an opinion on deploying to Iraq as I don't really think it has sunk in yet. What was a six-month tour has now become a seven and a half month tour which has killed my morale, as I don't want to be there any longer than I have to be.

We started the Train the Trainer package reluctantly, walking down to the bubble gym thinking it was going to be two days of boring briefs, when actually it was a wake up call to the threat that faces British troops serving in theatre. The first brief we received had a harrowing video of a recent contact which set the tone for the next two days. The remainder of the briefs were very insightful, showing us the different improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that are currently used in Iraq.

Our time in Lydd was the first real opportunity we had to put the skills and drills we had learned from the OPTAG training team to the test. The first two days of the exercise consisted of a multi-situation range package which was fantastic fun. The next day was a public order scenario which was carnage to say the least as we were overrun from every angle possible. The final two days were spent in the village on an operations cycle including patrols, quick reaction force and guard, and we encountered multi weapon shoots, minor aggro, IEDs and

search and arrest operations.

The final part of the pre-tour training was the rural package which was pretty much the same as the urban, except we had a lot more ground to cover. And just as things got going, our whole role in Iraq changed the day before we were supposed to finish. Our new task was as escorts which required us to learn a whole host of new skills. Anyway, we 'improvised, adapted and overcame' to become fully trained in escort tasks. I now think we are all well trained and prepared for Iraq and just hope we have a peaceful tour.

The Basra Air Station Experience

Cpl Latter writes:

Conditions in Basra are better than 60 years ago when my granddad served here in World War Two, although I don't think the journey to get here has improved that much.

It has been nearly two weeks since we left Ternhill for the sunny delights of Basra and when all is said and done, once you get over the heat, dust and freakishly large insects, Basra Air Station is not that bad. At least that is my impression after four days living here.

The journey started for our flight in the late evening of 14 April, which is when we got on the coaches for the two-hour drive to South Cerney. So no less than 15 hours and two coach journeys after we left Ternhill we got on our plane for the flight to Iraq. The

rest of the journey went quite well with only the smallest of delays at Hannover where we stopped to change planes and pick up more passengers. We arrived at Basra air strip in the small hours of 16 April where we were received by yet more air movements staff for onwards transportation by helicopter to the theatre reception area at Shaibah Logistics Base. We finally arrived at our temporary home 34 hours, nine coaches, three planes and a fair few numb backsides after leaving Ternhill.

The next few days were spent at the disposal of the theatre 'reception staging onward integration' (RSOI) group, where we did a 'remind and revise' package before being moved to our final destinations. Nearly all of what we covered had been previously taught on one of the OPTAG packages but it did seem a touch more relevant in the 38-40C heat of Iraq than it did in the snow and rain of Kent.

Four days after arriving at SLB it was time for another daft o'clock move to our home for the next seven months. Just a short journey by coach to the SLB helicopter pad and after a short flight we arrived back at the Basra Air Station. On arrival we were met by members of HQ Company CQMS crew who had arrived a couple of days before us. We were then shown to our AA half star accommodation! The accommodation is vaguely reminiscent of Vitez School inasmuch as it is in the form of porta-cabins, each one accommodating two people. There is also toilet and shower cabins dotted around



Petrol bomb inoculation.

The Poachers

at regular intervals. Once we were shown to our rooms we were left to our own devices until lunchtime.

At lunchtime we were met by our department heads and after a bite to eat were shown around the camp and the Basra Air Station area. Basra Air Station is a huge installation, large enough to have its own 24/7 bus service. There are numerous units stationed here and even though the Poachers' contingent is small, standing at less than 40, we have lots of departments which range from the SSR HQ and Ops Room to the RAO and CQMS HQ Company. On the tour we were shown all the usual things including the cookhouse which is run by a civilian firm who employ mainly Bangladeshi people. This has two implications - the first being that at times the cookhouse has an almost colonial air and the second is that you can eat curry at nearly every meal.

Once we had been shown around Waterloo Lines it was on to the wider area of Basra Air Station. It is only in daylight and when walking around the place as opposed to driving that you get a feel for the true enormity of the place. First on the tour was the welfare village with the Naafi, local emporiums and fast food restaurants. These include Pizza Hut, Subway and an Indian restaurant.

So life in Basra is good and so far there is plenty to keep us occupied in those scarce moments of spare time. Hopefully the next few months will pass safely and quickly for us all and we will be home before you and we know it.

We Have Arrived

2Lt Charlie Standley writes:

It is a bone of historical and universal contention between the Army and the RAF that the latter cannot move the former anywhere without subjecting it to seemingly unnecessary checks, delays and last minute changes. So it was for the men of C Company, the last sub-unit of 2 Royal Anglian to deploy to Iraq, who are setting about their task of 20 Brigade Reserve.

Transport yourself, if you will, away from thoughts of your loved one in this dusty, arid theatre of operations, and back to a recent holiday; to Cyprus perhaps. Journey times from a UK airport on a commercial airline to such a destination, check-in and transfers included, rarely exceed six or seven hours. Well, southern Iraq is barely another 1000 miles from here, and the journey time courtesy of our friends in RLC movement control and the RAF? 28 hours!! In a piece of logic surely unique to the military, our flight time was delayed, but check-in time brought forward, meaning a very early morning for all. Further inevitable problems with baggage labelling plus the standard couple of hours in Qatar waiting for the Hercules connection to Basra meant it was a weary, aggravated, not to mention unwashed C Company that arrived in Shaibah Logistic Base (15 miles or so south-west of the city) ready for the challenges of Operation



Pte Doolan with police.

Telic 8.

But it is not simply a case of arrival in Theatre, a quick wash and change of clothes, grab your weapon and then straight into operations: our first four days were occupied with RSOI training. This is one of those Army acronyms everyone uses, few understand, and even fewer admit to not understanding, which comprises revision training, weapon zeroing and acclimatisation. Home for these few days was Bedouin Camp, the transit accommodation within Shaibah, consisting of a few dozen stately rows of tents, each of which is slightly bigger than a tennis court. However, C Company was allocated only two, the air conditioning in one of which was faulty, resulting in minimal privacy and some interesting odours. Thereafter it has been a case of allocating men to their permanent accommodation (thankfully more roomy) and signing out the multitudinous kit, of which weapons, ammunition and communications equipment are just the tip of the iceberg. The CQMS and platoon sergeants have visibly aged in a week, and that's before a shot has been fired!

We are taking over Brigade Reserve from Arnhem Company of the King's Own Royal Border Regiment (KORBR), and as part of the handover process a number of C Company have joined them on familiarisation patrols around Basra. The first of these did not auger well when, 10 minutes in, the patrol commander rapidly ordered his Snatches (armoured Land Rovers) to stop in order to conduct

a vulnerable point check (for roadside bombs). Unfortunately one KORBR driver was slower on the brakes than others, and shunted the vehicle in front, giving its driver, C Company's Pte Jones, minor whiplash, and himself some explaining to do on return to camp - magnanimously towed there by his victim, no less! Thankfully our subsequent patrols have, to date, passed without incident.

Some teething troubles are inevitable in the first few days in a new environment. Disease has been limited by a strict hand-washing regime to rival Jack Nicholson's character in *As Good As It Gets*, and diarrhoea and vomiting has been limited to an unlucky few, although one or two have gone down with more sinister ailments. One major surprise has been the weather, which was 40 degrees and sunny for the first few days, but has thundered and rained torrentially for the last couple, during which Company Second-in-Command Capt Bland returned to his tent from his usual arduous stint in the operations room only to lay his head on a newly-formed water bed!

The Company is now looking forward to picking up the tempo of operations on its own, which could vary in nature from arrest and search operations, to patrols in the desert or up the Shatt Al Arab waterway; and in location from Shaibah Logistics Base, seething central Basra, or to Maysan in the north. All are full of nervous excitement and anticipation to do the job we have trained so hard for.

The Poachers

Operation Telic 8 Training – A Platoon Commander's Perspective

Lt George Osbourne writes:

8 Platoon pushed themselves one last time to the limits: pushing forward onto the high cliff ahead in order to defend the hard won positions in the mountainous wadi behind them. It had been an exhausting time for C Company, moving through village after village chasing illusive insurgents while always attempting to win the hearts and minds of the strangely Scottish sounding Afghani locals.

The past 24 hours had been especially hard, taking part in the Battalion final push to destroy the main insurgent encampment; an appropriate climax to a good two months of hot weather training. As the platoon observed their arcs their platoon commander's thoughts turned during the pause to the upcoming Afghanistan deployment. The two months of arduous training had done their work; the platoon seemed well on its way to becoming trained for the mountains of Afghanistan. Soon the ever welcomes words 'Stop...stop...stop' sounded around the valley and marked the change from training to the whirlwind push to get everyone back to sunny Ballykelly.

Fast-forward a couple of months and everything had changed. A new camp to settle into and a new task in 2006. The relevance of our cultural exposure to the Arab world and experience of working in the desert now seemed to take on an even greater relevance. Training requirements suddenly changed as the focus now switched to another spot within the Muslim world, southern Iraq. The work that had gone before set us in good stead for the forthcoming tour, with many of the older soldiers happy to be



Team medic dealing with a civilian casualty.

seeing a different part of the world having seen Afghanistan before.

After Christmas the training for Operation Telic 8 really kicked into gear. C Company made the most of the first two weeks by getting some confirmatory training in, spending the first week shaking out in camp and then moving *en masse* to the Cumbrian hills of Warcop. The Warcop week proved beneficial in getting the platoons firing on all four cylinders again after leave.

There is nothing like an eight-mile march and shoot competition to blow the cobwebs away. The sharpshooters of 7 Platoon eventually prevailed over the undisputed speed march champions in 8 Platoon, though the contention over the scoring of the event still remains. The Company Sergeant Major enjoyed one aspect in particular, the chance to 'DS' a section attack range for a day. As

could be expected Sergeant Major Lewis did not shirk from the task putting his Brecon instructor's cap back on and putting the sections through their paces in his 'calm' and 'gentle' way.

With the company at full speed into training the Operational Training and Advisory Group (OPTAG) staff made their first appearance for the two-day all ranks briefing package followed by the three-day speed-teaching Train The Trainer package.

Overall the few days provided a good background to the men on their deployment though much had been heard before at previous OPTAG packages. The next key event in the build-up to the desert was to actually find out what it was that Commander 20 Brigade wanted the Battalion to do, and subsequently what the Commanding Officer



Snatch crews responding to an IED.

The Poachers

had allocated to C (Northamptonshire) Company.

After some false starts it appeared that the Battalion had been given the Brigade Main Effort, that of security sector reform (SSR): essentially developing the Iraqi forces to a level to which they might take control themselves. Instantly, all of the companies began to hope for the prime roles within Basra itself; a chance to get out among the people of Basra and do what we are trained for. The initial allocation of roles emerged, C Company was to be allocated as Brigade Reserve. I, among others, could be accused of being initially disappointed...it seemed that we were off to 'Sh-Ibiza' to enjoy the sun and the subways but perhaps not get out that much. That's how it seemed at least until the OC returned from his recce to Iraq a somewhat more animated man than when he left.

After the news cascaded down to the men that in fact we had potentially one of the best roles within the Brigade conducting regular 'kinetic' operations at the Brigade Commander's request, the atmosphere within the company changed markedly. Rather than having little to do it seemed that we would be doing some of the most delicate and important tasks, from arrest operations to anti-smuggling operations; time for training to shift focus slightly and go into overdrive.

The main thrust of our subsequent training since has been aimed at becoming slick and professional at the search and arrest operation. Each of the different sub-units within the company now has the skills and situational awareness to take part in a company (plus) arrest operation. Without boring the general readership of *Castle* with the details of SOI 390 (don't ask!); the moving parts of securing buildings with multi-layer cordons, inserting strike teams into a building and searching that building all while maintaining the highest level of evidence awareness is now ingrained into every member of the company. The particular demands of the Iraqi theatre place such importance onto the success of these operations that we must be on top of our game at all times. This imperative has lent a strong purpose to training over the past month and a half, all building towards the testing of our newfound skills on the OPTAG confirmatory package at Stanta training area in the wilds of Norfolk.

Before we could embark upon the final test phase of our training our other skills of patrolling, cultural awareness and our basic soldiering skills needed to be developed on the final Battalion concentration exercise phase at Lydd in Kent. The week in Kent was highly useful in a number of ways, from the live contact drills honing the skills of newly formed teams, to the practising of the use of interpreters on patrol around the much used Rype Village (sorry, Karbala now!). The key importance of the time in Lydd and subsequently in Stanta was that it was the first time that my multiple, along with every other multiple in the company, had had its

full strength together. All of the augmentees had arrived, there were no more driving courses to be done and finally the multiples could be moulded together properly as they would need to be in Iraq itself.

The Stanta phase of the exercise with the OPTAG staff present proved the final opportunity needed to finish off a number of aspects of training. Over the week the company was billeted in a large palatial camp to reflect Shaibah Logistics Base but from there was ripped out of its comfort zone on a number of company level operations, focusing mainly on arrest operations but also taking in route pickets and public order tasks, all possibilities in Iraq itself. The demands of sleep deprivation and constant planning took their toll on my entire platoon from myself down but still the training done stood us in good stead. In the end one of the best search and arrest operations that we conducted was done as a last minute 'fast-ball' from the Brigade acting on rapidly developing intelligence. These scenarios were important to develop SOPs and to prove to all that we were in fact good enough and had trained hard enough for the task at hand. By the end of the week all of the multiple commanders had that 'warm fuzzy feeling' that their soldiers knew what to do and would act upon their knowledge. This is, perhaps, an important point to get to when deploying to Iraq.

Overall the past four months since our return from Jordan has been hectic to say the least; an arms plot move, a re-tasking of operation theatres, a year's worth of training squeezed into two months. All of these challenges have been faced and ultimately beaten with hard work. My platoon and the wider company now looks forward with some relish to a bit of well-earned leave prior to the real thing in Iraq.

The All-Arms Search Course

Pte M Kenney, 9 Platoon, writes:

The journey to Chatham took us around four-and-a-half hours. C Company had sent eight of us there onto the All-Arms Search Course, which was two weeks long. It was split into two, one-week phases: the first was theory and demonstrations and the second was test week. We were joined by teams from A, B and D Companies, two teams of Welsh Guards and a Canadian team.

A lot of the lectures expanded on what we already knew such as vehicle search, person search, and rummage, although the lessons on the kit we were using were completely new to us. We learned how to conduct route searches and VP checks using Grudges and Driftways – a Grudge being a metal detector and a Driftway a cable detector. We also learned how to conduct large-scale area searches quickly and effectively, as well as performing person and vehicle searches thoroughly.

I had never before done some of the lessons such as disruptive and non-disruptive house searches. A non-disruptive search is where you leave everything how you found it while a disruptive search – usually on a derelict building – you basically smash everything up with a weight drop!

We all passed the course, but Cpl Wakefield was a swot and got an instructor recommendation!

I think we will be able to use these skills we learned in Iraq, so it should mean we get our tasks done quickly and effectively so no one – including the cordon troops – is out on the ground longer than he has to be. In conclusion I believe the C Company All-Arms Search Team will be an asset for our Battalion in Iraq.



A find of US dollars.

Exercise Casino Kestrel – D(FSp) Company Live Firing on Salisbury Plain

Maj Nigel Johnson writes:

Amid the whirlwind of Arabic lessons, medical training and small arms ranges, D (FSp) Company quietly slipped out of the back gate of Ternhill unnoticed and took themselves away to Salisbury Plain for a week to live-fire their support weapons on Exercise Casino Kestrel. The aim of the exercise was to hone those skills developed on the numbers cadres in Ballykelly and the subsequent six-week live firing deployment to Jordan at the end of 2005.

It was also the first time that D Company had come together after the sniper pairs, machine guns, mortar sections and Javelin detachments had been detached to provide the Battalion's rifle companies with greater firepower for Iraq training. As ever with the British Army's training regime, this pre-Iraq exercise found the support platoons preparing to operate in temperatures of the high-40s by exercising in the minus-10s on a wind-swept Salisbury Plain!

Exercise Casino Kestrel was designed to build upon the high-intensity conventional support weapon firing that had taken place in Jordan. Instead of massed gun lines and integrated defensive positions, this exercise sought to practise junior commanders in the control and employment of dispersed weapon sections, firing at short notice and in support of multiples involved in 'incidents' on the ground. While the need to fire any of the Battalion's support weapons in Iraq would appear to be a huge escalation in profile for coalition forces, it was decided that it would be better to be ready for anything, rather than consign the support weapons capability to the stores for six months. Where the realities of the current situation in Iraq did step in was with the anti-tank platoon who, having recently converted to Javelin, focused not on firing at T-72s but instead on the provision of an integrated surveillance matrix across large areas. The Javelin Command Launcher Unit (CLU) is a superb Istar asset, providing a non-air cooled thermal capability seconds after being switched on - the absence of a need for air bottles makes the sustainment of the weapon system a hugely simplified task.

Casino Kestrel was simple in concept - three days were spent on a dry/blank scenario, which allowed the multiples to practise and refine their low-level force protection TTPs. The exercise scenario then portrayed a worsening situation, that allowed the use of GPMG (SF) and 81mm mortars as 'proportionate' force in a self-defence environment. For the mortars, the focus was on illumination shoots (sometimes coupled with HE and smoke tasks), while the recce and snipers undertook a great deal of low-level field firing. The exercise quickly demonstrated the proficiency of our JNCOs, whose skills had perhaps hitherto



Pte Summers with Javelin CLU.

been hidden by operating within a large platoon structure. However, once given the freedom and latitude provided by a dispersed operational framework, they rose to the challenge.

Afternote: D (FSp) Company left Salisbury Plain and moved straight to Lydd and Hythe and then Thetford for the rest of the Battalion's OPTAG training. It was with 48 hours of training time left that we learned our mission and role in Iraq was to change - D Company have now been grouped to 1st Battalion the Grenadier Guards as part of the rear operations battle group.

D (FSp) Company - Training for Operation Telic 8

Capt Simon Poulter writes:

On returning from Christmas leave, D (FSp) Company started its training by getting all its Individual training directives cracked in the first two weeks. This included the standard fare of fitness tests and weapon handling

tests but also a night navigation exercise to get the soldiers confidence up and to do PT with weight on their backs! However, once the tests were completed, the company was able to start its training for the Operation Telic 8 deployment in earnest.

The direction from the OC was that upon receipt of the OPTAG Train The Trainer (T3) package, platoon commanders would be responsible for training their own platoons and the training would be consolidated within separate company weeks. Due to the specialised nature of D (FSp) Company this training had to be balanced alongside retaining the knowledge of the company's various disciplines. Indeed the Recce Platoon had been given dispensation to conduct its own training in relation to the specifics of the theatre. However, it soon became apparent that the platoon would benefit from being involved in the company training as much as possible.

The first consolidated company training was a battle lesson week during late January at Swynnerton Training Area. The emphasis during this period was purely upon teaching



D Company detain a key insurgent.

The Poachers



Another arrest at STANTA.

and re-introducing those older heads to the procedures to be employed in theatre. The knowledge for the running of these various stands came from the T3 package run by OPTAG. However, due to the Battalion's recent residential tour to Northern Ireland, a lot of what was taught was mainly revision. The week concentrated on low-level skills such as VCP procedures and mobile/foot contact drills. Obviously despite the residual knowledge within the company the added factor of the Iraqi Police Service (IPS) had to be considered. This was a useful week that allowed the multiple commanders to work out their own SOPs.

After a period of in-camp training at multiple level the company conducted a battle exercise (BE) week at Nescliff Training Area in mid-February, in order to test the multiple SOPs. Here the company was exercised in slightly higher level tasks that involved a number of multiples, for example search and arrest operations. In addition, the multiples were exercised in various types of contact situations, as well as being revised on Vulnerable Area/Point (VA/VP) drills.

Once again after this period of company training the multiples were free to conduct their own training, building on the lessons that were learned on the BE week. One area that was concentrated on during the BE week and subsequently with an in-camp exercise was the delivery of a liaison officer (LO). The company was exercised by the OC (who played a high-ranking Iraqi police officer!) in delivering a liaison officer using the company offices as an IPS HQ. The multiples had two liaison officers to deliver (the author being one) and a variety of scenarios were played out that forced the exercising troops to lower and raise their posture accordingly, learning some valuable lessons.

Other training that was on-going

throughout all this period included team medic cadres, training for some on the new Javelin command launch operator which gives the operator a dramatically enhanced thermal capability and the commanders undertook Bowman training. In addition, all the multiple commanders attended a Patrol Arabic Course that allowed for an insight into the complications of the Iraqi dialect; some picked it up quicker than others!

The final phase of the company training was the deployment down to Salisbury Plain for Exercise Cassino Kestrel. A detailed account of the exercise is contained elsewhere within this magazine, but suffice it to say it was a valuable week allowing the platoons to conduct live firing that pertained to their specialisation. Indeed the Sniper Platoon was able to conduct long range shoots and it then joined with the Recce Platoon in live firing contact drills later in the week.

Finally, the company deployed to Lydd to undergo the Battalion run training that involved the usual stay in Kandalan (Rype) Village and visit to the 'Tin City' 22-conversion range that everyone is fond of! This package then rolled straight into the OPTAG FTX at Stanta that culminated in a Battle Group operation to arrest a known terrorist and then search his property, which then caused a public order incident to occur.

Overall the training has been fast and furious but enjoyable. New skills have been learned such as the delivery and subsequent protection of a liaison officer in a potentially hostile environment, down to how to conduct a joint VCP with members of the IPS. Despite the late role-change for D (FSp) Company to that of primarily escort duties, the training still remains valid as it has allowed multiples to work together in testing situations and has proved that their SOPs work.

D Company - Arrival in Iraq

Maj Nigel Johnson writes:

This article is being written after D (FSp) Company have been in southern Iraq for a week, and finds the company safely in theatre, complete (less a few expectant fathers who we look forward to seeing soon), trained and on task.

After a flight from the UK that made getting to the moon look simple (and a lot quicker), the boys arrived in 'Camp Bedouin' in Shaibah to begin a four-day in-Theatre training period. Camp Bedouin was less than luxurious and, given the 3,000 troops in there at the time, was somewhere the troops probably found frustrating (certainly the queues for breakfast were). That said, the training was good, and the time between lessons allowed us to start acclimatising to the already hot weather. As soon as the training finished, the company moved across the runway to another camp which will form our 'home' for the next few months (or until the next change!). And this is now where the story gets slightly complicated. D (FSp) Company 2 Royal Anglian are living with 1 KORBR, working for 1 Scots, and waiting for 1 Grenadier Guards to arrive in the next few weeks.

The camp we live in is known as 'Camp 2' to its inhabitants and is, to say the least, a pleasant surprise (especially after Jordan). All the tents are air-conditioned and well equipped with proper beds. There are functioning showers inside a special 'Portacabin'. The cookhouse (currently manned jointly by 2 Royal Anglian and 1 KORBR chefs) provides superb food. The welfare village (home to the telephones and internet facilities) is a short walk away.

Workwise, we are spending three weeks running the internment facility in Shaibah with 1 Scots. This is a sensitive and discreet task, and a demanding one in terms of the hours the soldiers are on duty. 1 Scots have been very good to us, but we are acutely aware that they leave soon to be replaced by the 1st Battalion the Grenadier Guards, for whom we will then work for a few months. Their arrival will also see us change task.

And so, as the heat continues to climb, and the realisation by various soldiers' dawns that they have forgotten to bring any spare socks, I shall close. With best wishes from everyone in D (FSp) Company in Iraq.

A Divisional View - A Fusilier working with 2 Royal Anglian

Maj Stuart Nicholson RRF writes:

Like all Fusilier officers I had seen my future Regimental Duty being exclusively with the Fusiliers; there was no reason to see it otherwise. While on ICSC, however, I was informed that the initial SO2 post that I was to take post-course had been disestablished and I was offered the command of a rifle company in 2 Royal Anglian (offered in the

The Poachers



The author in Royal Anglian dress.

MCM Div manner - perhaps not a choice in reality!). Since this was not an eventuality that I had ever considered I was thrown. Questions of loyalty arose, questions of what it meant to be a Fusilier and what I really wanted from the Army. However, following consultation with Fusiliers both at ICSC and MCM Div, and bearing in mind the increasingly worrying availability of rifle company command, I committed. Since joining the Poachers I have never regretted this decision.

So what were the realities of joining the Poachers? My integration was remarkably easy. The infantry is not a large organisation and I already knew a good number of fellow Mess members and had worked at Warminster with the RSM. I joined the Battalion in Ballykelly and the realities of the resident battalion operations cycle meant that the companies were rarely all together. Rather than being a hindrance to my integration this in fact helped; I met the Battalion in bite-sized chunks, one company at a time.

Shortly after my arrival I was joined by a new CSM and the Battalion deployed to Jordan for six weeks on Exercise Saffron Sands. This was of huge benefit; I was in a position to get my hands on my company in a new environment, with them as a captive audience. It also allowed my CSM and myself to form our working and personal relationship and to mould the company. I spent a long time living in close proximity with the rest of the Battalion. When I returned from Jordan I felt totally integrated. An interesting point to make is that in 11 years' service I have only served in a Fusiliers Battalion for four years and not

at all since 1999. My experience of joining this Battalion is perhaps not greatly different to that of joining a Fusiliers Battalion after so long.

The question of dress raises its head when working with a different Regiment. As I understand it Queen's Division policy is that officers adopt the working dress of the unit they are attached to completely. This is certainly how I have approached the issue. While I still wear Fusiliers Mess dress, service dress, barrack dress and blues when appropriate, on a daily basis I dress as any other Poacher. I wear the Poachers beret, cap badge and flashes. Unless someone knew me they would not know I was a Fusilier. I think this is right, I feel it would be an act of arrogance to stand in front of my Company, expecting them to follow me if I did not deign to dress as they did. Also, as such postings around the Queen's Division become more common-place, if we all wore traces of our old Regiment we would dilute the identity of our new ones. This would be an act of selfishness. For my two years with the Poachers I am a Poacher.

The reality is that beyond our cap badge our experience of Regimental Duty is a product of those we work with. In this area I am particularly lucky. From a very strong Sergeants' Mess I have exceptionally capable SNCOs; the CSM and CQMS shape the experience of company command more than any other members of the company and in this I am blessed. I also have capable and reliable junior officers (as an aside, is it just me, or are this generation of junior officers a more mature, focused bunch than we ever were?). I feel hugely lucky to command the company that I have. There is no guarantee

I would have had such a collection of individuals if I had gone back to a Fusiliers battalion - this is not a reflection on the Fusiliers, rather a comment on luck

In many ways the Poachers are very different to the Fusiliers. The Fusiliers have made a conscious decision to adopt a pan-regimental identity, with no differing traditions and with movement between Battalions common. While the Fusiliers have several distinct recruiting areas, no battalion or company has ties to any one of these. I have to say that I like the Royal Anglian system. It may even prove a model for future amalgamations.

My experience will become more common in the Queen's Division; indeed one other company commander with the Poachers is from the PWRR. I genuinely think this is for the best. It presents individuals with greater opportunity and also is better for the battalions. Paradoxically, the Queen's Division must move forward like this if we are to preserve our regiments for as long as possible. This system does, however, raise some uncomfortable questions about the future of the regimental system. Should my loyalties be so transferable and if they are why do we now need regiments? What keeps a regiment's identity when individuals move around more freely? These questions and others like them are beyond the remit of this piece, but I would make a few general observations.

Firstly, it has become clear to me that the true spirit of *The Regiment* resides in the Sergeants' Mess. This may be uncomfortable reading for officers, but look at percentages of career spent at regimental duty. While movement between regiments is generally a good thing, I feel it must be more closely monitored and controlled for SNCOs if regiments are not to be diluted. Secondly, if you do move, you must seize the bull by the horns. Not to do so, to labour your old regimental ties or to resist full integration will do no-one any good. You will not enjoy yourself and the regimental identities will suffer. If the Poachers play 2RRF at sport, I will cheer for the Poachers. Anything less would be arrogant and disloyal to the soldiers I have the privilege to command.

In conclusion I have been given a huge opportunity and have absolutely no regrets. I enjoy my job and enjoy being a Poacher. I can now belt out *The Lincolnshire Poacher* with all the gusto previously reserved for *The Blaydon Races*. My loyalties lie with my immediate command and my troops; their cap badge is of little importance to me. By the time this article is published I will be in Basra with my Company. To command them on operations is an immense privilege. The tour will forge ties that will override any regimental loyalty. When I leave the Poachers I will once more proudly don the beret and hackle, but I will always be immensely proud of A (Lincolnshire) Company, the 2nd Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment, the Poachers. There is no reason why these feelings should be mutually exclusive.

The Poachers

The Poachers' Rear Party

Capt James Inch writes:

On 21 March, with the rest of the Battalion trained, equipped and ready to go on pre-tour leave, the rear party formed up to begin the unglamorous task of guarding the camp and keeping the home fires burning. Made up of those who are too young to deploy, the unfit, ill or injured, those about to leave the Army and a handful of those who can and will deploy, the nominal roll ran to almost company strength. However, as became immediately clear, the number who could actually be called upon to conduct duties was markedly less.

One of the key functions of the rear party is the continued welfare support to the wives and families of the deployed soldiers, and this is necessarily ramped up to provide support throughout the period of the deployment. Capt Phil Thompson and team had kicked into action several months before the deployment date to start publicising the support that would be available. A superb glossy handbook was produced outlining everything from methods of communication with Iraq, through to financial arrangements and servicing the car. The community centre was completely re-vamped and equipped with a number of internet terminals for e-mail, e-blueys and e-fax. A similar effort was being made across 20 Brigade, but with most of their focus in Germany, the Poachers were largely left to do things their own way.

As soon as the deployment started, the weekly families' briefings kicked in, to try to ensure the continued flow of news from the Battalion. 'Company walls' were set up, to allow the kids to scribble pictures and messages for dad, before these were rolled up and sent out to theatre. The aim is that similar 'company walls' will be sent back from Iraq with messages from the soldiers.

The outings, trips and activities started in earnest almost immediately, proving to be very successful. One of the first, to an underwater world, required a second coach

to be booked at the last minute due to its popularity. With shopping trips, Sunday lunches, self-defence classes and youth activities, it is hoped that there is sufficient to keep everyone busy.

The other key element of the rear party's business is co-ordinating the administration and travel of those returning from, or deploying to theatre. With individuals returning for courses, postings, medical treatment or compassionate leave, as well as large numbers for R and R, and recruits and those returning from postings heading the other way, this is more than enough to keep the clerks and the MT drivers busy. The Welfare Office then picks up the burden of tracking the recovery or continuing welfare needs of those who have returned for medical or welfare reasons.

For the majority of the rear party though, day-to-day life consists of the guards, general duties, barracks repair and fleet maintenance required to allow those other critical functions to take place. While efforts have been made to provide a varied programme of training and sport when off duty, life can become very routine. However, the routine of rear party becomes acceptable when put into the context of the importance it plays in the overall Battalion effort.

Poachers' Rugby

Lt Ben Hawes writes:

Poachers RUFC 57 Bourne RUFC 5

The Poachers' RUFC had not played in any competitive games since the summer of 2005, and with Operation Telic 8 fast looming on the horizon a game was organised to give the team at least one run out before deploying to Iraq.

Using my contacts with Bourne RUFC I arranged a Saturday fixture with the Lincolnshire side. The team was granted a couple of day's training by the Commanding Officer and entered into it with great enthusiasm, ably instructed by LCpl Styles.

The team departed camp with 19 players on the Saturday morning, despite the men

giving up precious pre-tour leave to play. After a two-and-a-half-hour drive the team arrived in Lincolnshire and quickly tried to run the journey out of their legs. It was clear on arrival that Bourne had taken the challenge extremely seriously and was fielding a squad of some 25 players.

What became immediately clear from kick-off was that the Bourne pack was a lot bigger than the Poachers, and within five minutes Bourne was lining up their first penalty kick on goal. Fortunately for myself (I had committed the foul) the kick went wide. The Poachers counter-attacked from the 22 drop-out with Pte Lewaicei running in an excellent try.

Within 20 minutes the Poachers' superior fitness was beginning to show, and hard work from the forwards was beginning to cause Bourne real problems at the break down. Strong running from the pack, particularly by Cpl Saunders, Pte Crozier, and Pte Bellamy was causing gaps to appear. From scrum half, Pte Tokai was linking well with the backline, with the centres Lewaicei (man of the match) and Aldridge giving their opposite numbers a torrid time in attack and defence.

As the match developed the Poachers still toiled against a much heavier scrum, the lineout however was working well. Cpl Young and Lt Tilbury collected all their own ball and much of the opposition's. Ptes Park and Quailica lifted extremely well and maintained the majority of the ball carrying duties.

With full time approaching the backs continued to run riot with tries being shared equally throughout the backs. Pte Bukavesi's arrival in the second half offered some strong running on the left wing while Pte Denninson continued to gain good ground on the right.

With full-time the teams retired to the clubhouse, where the Poachers were excellently hosted, and, despite huge protests from Pte Bellamy, Pte Lewaicei was awarded Man of the Match. The Poachers look forward to hosting Bourne RUFC on the return from Operation Telic 8.



Ternhill, the home of the rear party.

The Poachers

Press Day



Above: LCpl Randall (Recce) being interviewed.



Right: Pte King (D Company) - interview for Beacon FM.

Below: Pte Vincent and interview.



The Poachers

Commanding Officer's Bugler Competition



Inspection by the CO and Drum Major Towe.



Inspection by the CO and RSM.

The Poachers



Adjutant's bugler.



RSM's bugler.



CO's bugler.



Capt Dingle Inspects the Drums Platoon.



Inspection by the CO and RSM.

The Poachers

All Ranks' Party



Pte Jones masters the Bucking Bronco.



Pte Willoughby.

Opening of the Castle and Key Club



Duke watching pool.



Pte Thompson and Cpl Selby in Castle and Key.

3rd Battalion

Introduction by the Commanding Officer

Our headline news has, of course, been the formation of the new 3rd Battalion from the East of England Regiment. There had been lengthy and detailed consultation during the previous year so there were no surprises and the new 3rd Battalion was formed on 1 April without undue fuss. A separate report on the Formation Parade appears later.

Among all the genuine delight at rejoining the Royal Anglian Regimental family it is worthwhile considering what the East of England Regiment achieved in its six years on the line. If the modern Territorial Army is about generating deployable military capability, and it is, then the East of England Regiment, with its three composite companies and individual reservists totalling 300 personnel deployed on recent operations, has a record to be extremely proud of. It was bittersweet because the Battalion lost D (WFR (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire)) Company to the West Midlands Regiment, which will become the 4th Battalion of the Mercian Regiment next year. As good, honest, no-nonsense infantry the Royal Anglian TA and WFR TA companies had much in common and their combination in one TA Battalion was a notable success. Regimental historians will also know that WFR and Royal Anglian soldiers have considered themselves cousins since the Battle of Sobraon. The WFR Company was an important part of a good team. Our loss is 4 Mercian's gain.

The new 3rd Battalion has come out of the most recent restructuring rather well with five strong companies. With both the Vikings and the Poachers out of the Regimental area for the foreseeable future, the 3rd Battalion's representative role is increasingly important. The lay-down of the 3rd Battalion is broadly unchanged with two companies neatly in each of the Regular Battalion's areas. The Vikings' area is covered by A (Norfolk and Suffolk) Company at Norwich and Lowestoft and E (Essex and Hertfordshire) Company at Chelmsford and Hertford. The Poachers' area is covered by B (Lincolnshire) Company at Lincoln and Grimsby and C (Leicestershire and Northamptonshire) Company in Leicester and Northampton. An increased Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters (Suffolk and Cambridgeshire) Company remains in Bury St Edmunds with the Regimental Band and Corps of Drums in Peterborough.

The new TA Battalions are established to provide the contingent component (the extra trained personnel) required for the Regular Battalions for large scale operations. This increases the size of our support weapon platoons and begins the development of still closer training relationships between the TA and Regular Battalions, which is widely welcomed. In addition the battalion's infantry equipment will be bought up to date with the issue of Javelin to the Anti-Tank Platoon and the new LMG and grenade launcher to rifle platoons. In all - very



good news.

Since the last *Castle* the Battalion has undergone a complete training cycle over a four-month period, which is a good example of the way the Battalion aspires to train. Starting with the intellectual piece, the chain of command conducted their training and Mapex driven by the training major armed with a sharp set of SOPs. The following month battlegroup and company command posts were worked up at Urvat, the computerised urban trainer on Salisbury Plain. The companies then had the opportunity to conduct their own individual and platoon-level urban exercises. The culmination was the Battlegroup FTX on Salisbury Plain. Happily, the other A&Rms that made up the battlegroup had, in the main, managed to do the majority of the workup training so although it was a relatively small battlegroup at just shy of 300 that closed on the objective, it was a worked up battlegroup. It was also an appropriate last exercise for the Battalion as the East of England Regiment - a learning experience for the chain of command and a good battle for the soldiers.

On the operational front, a draft of 18

volunteers have been mobilised as individual reservists and are training with the Poachers for their forthcoming Iraq tour. They report that they are enjoying their welcome and integration. Clearly the two deployment options favoured by the TA soldiers are as their own formed sub-unit ideally with a Royal Anglian Battalion or as individual reservists with a Royal Anglian Battalion.

In between our battalion collective training, the companies continue to switch their main effort to recruiting in order to fill our recruit cadres. The companies are achieving considerable success against the national trend. All have achieved 100 per cent soldier manning and the first has exceeded 150 per cent. We need to maintain 100 per cent plus figures to fill our gaps, partly in trained soldiers but particularly in JNCOs. During last year the Battalion's Phase 1 Recruit Cadres passed out 121 soldiers, which is a great tribute to both the recruiters and the Training Team.

The Battalion is delighted to be a full member of the Royal Anglian Regimental family. We are looking forward to training in our new structure at Otterburn, for a fortnight at the end of June.

3rd Battalion

Commanding Officer's Bugler Competition

Last year the Commanding Officer's Bugler Competition had to be cancelled because so many of the Corps of Drums volunteered to deploy with 3 Company East of England Regiment to Iraq on Operation Telic 6.

The Corps of Drums is a relatively isolated sub-unit, based as it is in Peterborough but it is collocated with the Regimental Band so has the support of the Band PSI for administration and the Bandmaster for musical training.

With this support Drum Maj Clark determined to hold a full Commanding Officer's Bugler Competition to assist in the regeneration of the Corps. It is a serious commitment for a TA Infantry soldier to complete all the individual and collective infantry training but like their Regular counterparts, the TA Corp of Drums are also dual trained. The addition of a Commanding Officer's Bugler Competition to this already overflowing programme is a real challenge.

Each member of the Corps of Drums was assessed following individual inspections of their turnout, their drill and playing a variety of calls. There was evidence aplenty of huge amounts of preparation. In a close competition the final results were: Commanding Officer's Bugler: Dmr Jones; Adjutant's Bugler: LCpl Cheetham; RSM's Bugler: LCpl Howe.

After the competition itself the whole Corps of Drums performed for the audience of family, friends and supporters before a good lunch and proper refreshments.



From left: Dmr Jones, CO, LCpl Howe and LCpl Cheetham.



The judges.

3rd Battalion**Exercise Rock Solid**

On 4 March a contingent of 10 soldiers from across the Battalion, led by 2Lt Swift of C Company departed for the Caribbean island of Jamaica to participate in Exercise Rock Solid with the Bermuda Regiment.

The good news on arrival was that the team was to be attached to A Company, which is commanded by Capt George Jones, formerly the Company 2IC of C Company EER. Any thoughts of this being a 'flip flop and shorts jolly' were quickly dispelled as the following morning all exercising troops deployed into the field to begin low level platoon training and acclimatisation.

In temperatures exceeding 32C the exercise would test the fitness, administration and durability of all participants. The terrain is mainly secondary and cultivated jungle areas which makes movement and navigation bearable, that is until the company had to cross the Cuma Cuma Pass! Set in the Blue Mountains it involves a climb of 960m through thick vegetation with no tracks in high humidity and was to take the company eight hours to complete - highly recommended for those with rapid weight loss aspirations!

Soldiers quickly learned that personal administration was the key to operating effectively in such humid climates, therefore the normal luxuries packed in a bergen should be left behind and only the essentials should be carried. The exercise training objectives of command/control, leadership, basic skills, fitness and personal administration were all put to the test. While some suffered from heat injuries, on the whole all coped well with the conditions.

Some well-deserved adventure took the form of rafting down the Rio Grande river on an improvised raft, improvised in as much as employing a local to construct the raft for \$10. In teams of three groups set off to navigate the river to the finish point at Rafters Rest at the mouth of the river.

The exercise as a whole was a success allowing soldiers to train with and share experiences with the Bermuda Regiment and the Jamaican Defence Force in unfamiliar surroundings.



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3rd Battalion



Battalion

Skill at Arms Meeting

Over the weekend beginning 31 March to 2 April 2006, the Battalion concentrated for the annual Skill at Arms Meeting at Beckingham Ranges. On Saturday, teams from A, B, C, E and HQ Companies competed in three main shoots. These comprised the APWT, a Fibua-type shoot (Fighting in Built-Up Areas), and an amalgamation of the Henry Whitehead and the Para Cups in which each team had to complete a timed two-mile approach march before engaging Figure 12 targets at distances from 400m down to 100m.

The weather was variable with a mixture of sunshine and rain, and a wind strong enough at times to challenge the most experienced firer's ability to aim off. Everyone attending had the opportunity to shoot at least once and many participated in two events.

Saturday evening was pleasantly rounded off with an Officers' Mess dinner night at Sobraon Barracks in Lincoln. All but a small handful of the battalion officers attended, including former members from D (WFR) Company, who were dined out. Additionally the Commanding Officer took the opportunity of the occasion to announce no fewer than seven promotions, all of which were celebrated in style with a healthy amount of champagne.

The weekend concluded on Sunday morning with more shooting in the form of a falling plate competition. In addition to the various company teams competing, there was also a CO's team, and senior NCOs', JNCOs', and privates' teams in contention to win. The privates' team was narrowly beaten in the final by a team from A Company, while B Company were declared overall winners of the weekend and Champion Company. Thus ended the training year 2005/2006, and the transition from the EER to 3 Royal Anglian.

3rd Battalion



B Company - Champion Company.



3rd Battalion

Exercise Eastern Avenger 2 My Last Weekend in Command of E Company

Maj Simon Watson writes:

I had managed to organise my day to make an early start from home to drive down to Salisbury Plain for the weekend. Of course, by the time I actually did finish, it was very late. The weather was due to be cold, very cold and as I parked the car at Copehill Down Village ready to be ferried to the concentration area I saw my thermometer had fallen to -4C. 'Ah well,' I thought, 'at least I have my bouncing bomb sleeping bag' to keep me warm. As soon as I arrived at the farm complex it took no time at all to get my head down. Unfortunately as the temperature fell my wakefulness grew. My sleeping bag alone was not keeping me warm. I put on my 'softie' jacket only to find that I became cold once again a little later. I ended up inside my sleeping system with the bivvi bag zip shut tightly along with the sleeping bag hood, I was in effect hermetically sealed in. Freezing to death was worse than dying from breathing and re-breathing the CO2 in my breath, or so I thought. However, as my breathing rate increased I thought of the former as being better and opened the seals. Being cold I did not sleep after that.

As usual once I was up and 'breakfasted' the poor night's sleep was soon forgotten, or would have been if the Adjutant had not arrived and kept on about warm beds and fluffy pillows. On we went with orders and battle preparation as per normal. The night had been as cold as -6C, or so someone had said, and everyone had suffered, which goes to show that acclimatisation is a must before operations commence.

The troops arrived around midday and re-orbatting of the various company personnel commenced. Frantic movements started with warning orders from the 'Q' staff to get personnel fed in time for the visit of Gen Kerr. I then gave my orders for the exercise which encompassed an infiltration at section level to an assembly area followed by a deliberate attack on Copehill Down. My company was to aid the engineers in the breach of the minefield and then set up the start line. We were then to be in reserve prepared to echelon through to take



the northern segment of the Battalion's area of the village. Simple enough, but not something that we had practised as a Battalion for over two years. The infiltration and the actual fighting, I thought, would be straightforward with maximum responsibility given to commanders at all levels to do the right thing in accordance with my intent and mission command. However, the forward passage of lines through the 'break-in' company would be difficult both in terms of co-ordination as well as space and communications.

The night infiltration went well, the Engineers, along with their 'tour guides' from my company arrived at the minefield and commenced the breach unearthing a large number of mines both anti-personnel and anti-tank. They managed to make a vehicle breach and a personnel breach well in time for H-Hour and my lead platoon moved across in order to set up the start line. It was then a case of 'hurry up and wait' with the other parts of the company

and battalion coming in to the assembly area at different times.

We had moved in light order, soldiers only carrying sleep mats and warm clothing and as soon as we stopped the wind chill started to bite. The platoon on the start line was most exposed as the temperature went down to -6C with wind chill. Everyone wished that they had come on the weekend wearing their thermals as first their legs and arms froze and then all their other bits! As a heavy frost collected on my helmet and day sack even I started to wonder why I do this sort of thing at my great age!

The attack then began with the assault pioneers giving a show of how loud their 'bangs' could be. The noise was so loud that I wondered about my car alarm and whether I would have any battery power at the end of the exercise! 2 Company crossed the start line and started to break in. 2 Company's casualties commenced their rearward journeys immediately and continued on right up until the point where they handed



3rd Battalion



over to 3 Company and 1 Company (me) to go right and left flanking. They had worked their way through stiff resistance from a small but highly motivated enemy force. The three dimensional space along with the need for mass amounts of smoke meant that progress was slow. Added to this was the effect of obstacles that meant that crossing them inevitably brought yet more casualties. Ammunition was being pumped forward as fast as possible but as usual there were not enough men for this task and the removal of large numbers of casualties was causing a strain.

The actual forward passage of lines went fairly well if painfully slowly. There were not enough guides due to the number of casualties but we found ourselves in an organised huddle awaiting the CO's order to move forward. When it came Lt Alex Horner, as leader of the assaulting platoon, shouted 'All the Fours' (the Essex Company cry) and charged off with his troops in tow, through clouds of smoke and a voluminous amount of covering fire. He quickly gained access to the first building and started our roll through the remainder. I then sent forward the Leicester Platoon to take the next building denying Lt Horner's request to continue with a rolling replenishment. The next two buildings were taken but some well-placed barbed wire caused a crop of casualties as we forgot that we had the engineers with us to blow it.

The last building was split into three platoon areas due to its size and required my third platoon, the EMUOTC one, to break in and only take the top floor. Once in it was apparent that it was a total maze and the company became completely swallowed therein. Our casualty rate had not been too high until this point and most, though not all, had been marked and were moving backwards at a healthy speed!

One building had been left due to it being a barn and we could clearly see through it and cover it with fire. I presumed that this was good enough and so called the CO to say 'area clear' only to be told to sort out

all the buildings in my area. I should have realised that this was a learning point as the moment the fire team, duly despatched from the Essex Company Platoon, entered the building there was an almighty bang. Booby trapped, another building and we still had not learned the lesson from the second and third buildings. Another PXR point! The engineers were summoned and duly got to work. During this time we heard of the counter-attack that the enemy had launched against the Battalion rear area where 2 Company was. It gathered momentum before being stopped by anybody who could be despatched to 'get in the way'. We were still giving covering fire

into 3 Company's area which was fighting the bulk of the enemy strength and were wrongly oriented for the counter-attack if it were not stopped soon.

All of a sudden it was over and we started to reorganise ourselves and send yet more reports. After which time we had Endex and had a 'group photograph', the last one of the East of England Regiment, and very fitting that the Regiment went down fighting in such a way as it had originally been the intention of the first CO, to be a Fibua battalion. It was with a small tear in my eye when I drove away from Copehill Down as it was the passing of an era but one I will remember ended on such a great high.



3rd Battalion



Formation Parade 1 April 2006

Nobody would pretend that forming a Royal Anglian TA Battalion from five willing Royal Anglian TA companies was going to be all that difficult but doing so with the right VIPs, a formal parade, new insignia, due ceremony, press and paraphernalia became interesting because as the proposed formation date of 1 April 2006 approached, the formal order was subject to delays. The announcement was received with some relief on 23 March. Happily, a mixture of sensible planning and good luck found the Battalion had also been able to coincide gathering for its annual Skill at Arms Meeting with formation day.

With the theme of honouring past service and focusing on the future, the new RSM, WO1 Caesar succeeded in producing a parade with minimal rehearsal and maximum effect, which did not steal time from the shooting programme.

After the Battalion paraded in companies beneath East of England Regiment flags, the Colours were marched on. Some sharp spectators noticed that the Colours were actually Royal Anglian Colours from the VIth Battalion, colours which had also been



3rd Battalion

carried by the East of England Regiment because they had not been presented with their own.

The Colonel of the Regiment joined the parade and the oldest JNCO present lowered the East of England Regiment Flag before the youngest soldier raised the 3rd Battalion Flag. As the notes of the bugle calls drifted away, we were in no doubt that we had been right to afford due ceremony to mark the occasion.

The Honorary Colonel of the East of England Regiment and the Deputy Honorary Colonels of the companies joined the Colonel of the Regiment and presented each man on parade with the new 3rd Battalion flashes. In the absence of either a Queen's Division flash or a Royal Anglian Regimental flash the 3rd Battalion has adopted a flash of the same style and size as those worn by the Vikings and Poachers.

It is essentially the colours of the Royal Anglian stable belt. We are grateful to RHQ for funding the initial issue for presentation on parade.

In his address to the Battalion, the Colonel of the Regiment both welcomed and welcomed back the Royal Anglian TA soldiers, companies and the Battalion to the Royal Anglian regimental family.





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Cpl Roberts, D Company.



Members of C (Essex) Company.





2nd Battalion.



2nd Battalion Bugle Competition...the The Corps of Drums.



Iraq Training - Team responding to contact.



Sgt Reeder and his Multiple.



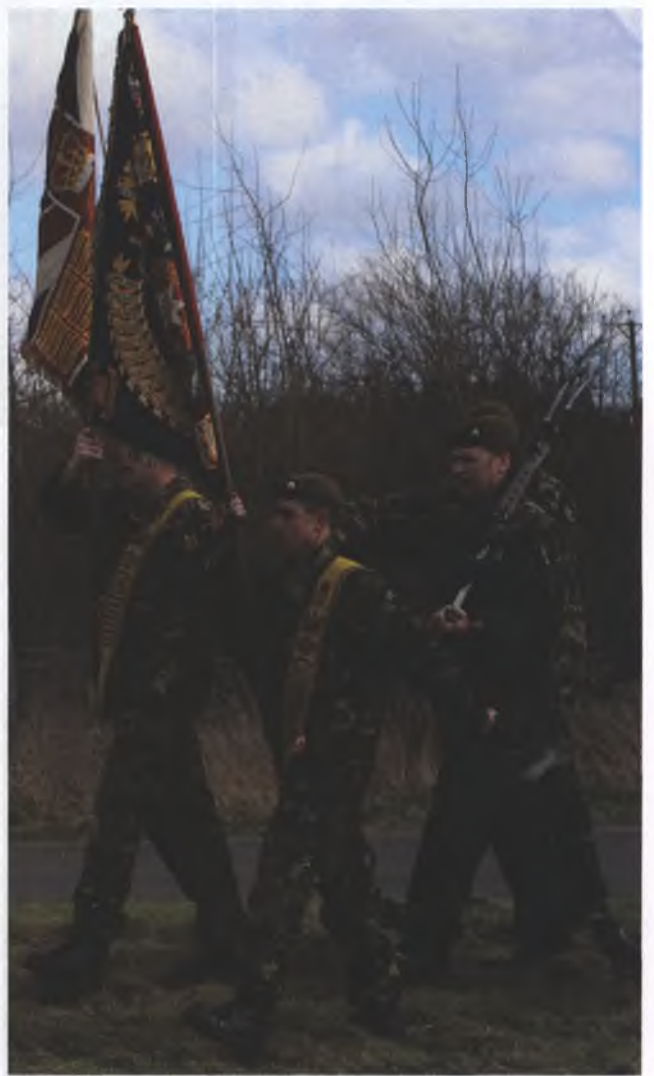
Press Day, Pte Smith's Detachment.



3rd Bn COs Bugle Competition.



3rd Battalion Eastern Avenger 2.



3rd Battalion Formation Parade.



3rd Battalion skill at arms meeting



3rd Battalion skill at arms meeting



3rd Bn COs Bugle Competition.

3rd Battalion Formation Parade.



3rd Battalion Exercise Eastern Avenger 2.



Exercise Atlantic Challenge 2



Sgt Harrod, D Company.

CASTLE
Exercise Snow Viking 2006





Spot the sniper.



A Company.



C Company - Exercise Northern Warrior.



7 Platoon on patrol.

Special Features

Gandamack Revisited

3 June 2003

(The Last Stand Of HM 44th Regiment
- Gandamack, Afghanistan

13 January 1842)

Maj Simon Etherington writes:

Abstract

Her Majesty's (HM) 44th Foot (later the Essex Regiment, and subsequently 3rd Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment) formed part of the Kabul Garrison from March 1841 to January 1842. Following insurrection, they were forced to retreat eastwards to Jalalabad. Harried all the way by Afghan tribesmen, the remaining 30 men of HM 44th made their last stand on a hill to the west of the small village of Gandamack¹ on 13 January 1842. This scene was subsequently immortalised in the painting by William Barnes Wollen². In June 2003, a party of five men from A Company 2 Royal Anglian reached Gandamack to pay their respects. This is a historical overview of the retreat, and an account of the June 2003 expedition.



Fig 1 - orientation map.

Introduction

Historical Overview

The Governor General of India (Lord Auckland) had deposed Dost Muhammed, the Emir, in the belief that he was under Russian influence, and, on 1 October 1838, a British army crossed the Indus, drove the deposed monarch from Kabul and installed his rival Shah Suja instead. For the next two years there followed a period of relative calm, and the garrison was able to enjoy a lifestyle similar to that enjoyed by the British Army in India. The garrison troops numbered approximately 4,500 and consisted of HM 44th Foot, 5th, 27th, 35th, 37th 42nd, 54th, 58th and 61st Bengal Native Infantry (NI) Regiments³, 5th Regiment Bengal Cavalry and elements from the Bengal Horse Artillery.

In October 1841, the 44th comprised 25 officers and 684 other ranks. It is noteworthy that of the officers, only three survived the subsequent fighting⁴. The Regiment was deployed mainly on the Sia Sang Hills to the east of Kabul (which guarded the road to India), however, on the opening of hostilities in early November, a detachment of 100 men (under the command of Lt Souter) were deployed to the Bala Hissar – 'the ruinous citadel of Kabul'⁵.

Between November 1841 and January 1842, the Afghans engaged in guerrilla warfare, mounting increasingly bolder attacks against the political staff and garrison troops. On 2 November, the Shah's political advisor, Sir Alexander Burnes, was murdered, followed by MacNaughten on 23 December. Over this period, indecision and inaction prevented the GOC (Gen Elphinstone) from consolidating his defences. Despite the murders thus far, and that on 6 December the bridge over the Kabul river connecting the cantonments and



Fig 2 - the Bala Hissar in 1879 (above) and in 2003 (below).



the Bala Hissar had been burned; he still believed a deal could be struck with the Afghans.

Accordingly, Elphinstone accepted the promise of Akhbar Khan (son of Dost Muhammed) of safe passage for his troops from Kabul to the frontier. So it was that at 0900hrs on 6 January 1842, the advance guard left the cantonments. In addition to the garrison troops, camp followers consisting of political/civil staff, wives, women and children joined the exodus. This added nearly 12,000 souls to the garrison strength of around 4,400.

The account of the retreat is harrowing, but as it is not the object of this treatise, must be read elsewhere. Suffice to say that after six days of retreat, on 12 January, six mounted officers (none from the 44th) left the column in a desperate attempt to reach Jalalabad.

Only one made it, Surgeon Brydon, who was subsequently immortalised in Lady Elizabeth Butler's portrait depicting him approaching the gates of Jalalabad in a state of near exhaustion. The remnants of the 44th (some 45 men) conducted a night march and



Fig 3 - the narrowest part of the Jagdallak Pass.

Special Features

Fig 4 - fighting in the passes.



Fig 5 - Dr Brydon arriving at Jalalabad.



crossed the Surkhab River. By daylight of 13 January, they were in the vicinity of Gandamak.

The Last Stand of HM 44th Foot

LSgt Fair described the scene:

*'The enemy commenced to loot and this caused the firing to commence. They immediately ran off the hill, so we kept the position there until about noon, frequently compelling the enemy to retire with great loss. Of course our numbers (30), which at first were very few, decreased in proportion and at last we found ourselves with only about 12 effective men. The enemy now commenced to grow bolder. Although I am quite sure there were upwards of 800 or 900 men, we thought to make one desperate charge downhill might prove effective in keeping them off, when we would again start for Jellalabad. Accordingly, the charge was made and that proved our disaster. The enemy gave way in our front, but completely surrounded us in our flanks and rear. Then our ruin commenced'*⁶.

Only Lt TA Souter, LSgt Fair, six soldiers of the 44th, three artillerymen, and Maj Griffiths (37th NI) survived the encounter. Souter owed the preservation of his life to an act of duty and Regimental loyalty. At Jagdallak (12 January), Souter had torn the Regimental Colour from its staff and wrapped it around his body for safe-keeping. Lt Cumberland did the same with the Queen's Colour, but, as he could not button his coat, handed it to CSgt Carey⁷ of the Grenadier Company.



Fig 6 - Last Stand of the 44th at Gandamak.

During the Battle at Gandamak, Souter's sheepskin posteeen flew open revealing the Colour. Seeing the finery of the material, the Afghans believed Souter to be an officer of some import, and took him for ransom. He was handed over to the headman of Gandamak village, and in due course one of the assailants returned the Colour. (Souter was subsequently re-united with other prisoners⁸, and returned to the UK with the Colour).

Reorganisation of the Regiment and its return to Afghanistan

Reorganisation

HM 44th Foot became the Essex Regiment under the Cardwell Reforms, and latterly 3rd Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment in 1964. Under Options for Change in 1992, the 3rd Battalion was amalgamated with the 1st and 2nd Battalions.

The Regiment returns

During the first half of 2002, the 1st Battalion was stationed in Kabul as part of the ISAF contingent, then under the command of (now) Lt Gen JC McColl CBE DSO (late Royal Anglian). The CO of the 1st Battalion (now), Brig Phil Jones, was commissioned into 3 Royal Anglian. It was appropriate, therefore, that he should name the camp which the Battalion established as Camp Souter. It retains that name today, and was, until recently, the base for the British Kabul Patrols Company (KPC).

During their tour, both Gen McColl and the Battalion, (C (Essex) Company in particular), tried to reach Gandamak. Unfortunately, a lack of detailed information on the exact site⁹; the geographical constraints of the ISAF boundary, coupled with the prevailing security situation, precluded an expedition to the battlefield. That said, they were able to follow the route of the retreat from Kabul to the Khoord-Kabul Pass (reached on 8 January 1842), and a monument was erected in memoriam. Regrettably, it is understood that the monument was smashed down within a week of its erection.

How ironic, then, that soldiers of the 2nd Battalion should also find themselves serving in Afghanistan as part of the ISAF Garrison between March and June 2003. As the first infantry troops back in Kabul since the 1st Battalion's tour, A (Lincolnshire) Company was responsible for establishing the KPC format and *modus operandi*, while also providing a secure base from which other BRITFOR interests could be pursued. The company was fortunate inasmuch as it was employed as an independent company within the Kabul Multi National Brigade (KMNB), rather than being subordinated to one of the constituent battlegroups. Any disquiet toward this arrangement was immediately quashed by the German Brigade Commander who had been the ISAF Chief of Staff during Gen McColl's tenure, and had been singularly impressed by the performance of the 1st Battalion.

By chance or by design?

I, too, had been commissioned into the 3rd Battalion. I had, therefore, spent many occasions over the years looking into Wollen's evocative depiction of Gandamak as it hung in the Mess, trying to envisage the scene and feelings of those who were there. Having arrived in Kabul, it seemed poignant to try and mount an expedition to honour the fallen at Gandamak. However, the factors which precluded the 1st Battalion from reaching the battlefield were still limiting factors for us...or were they?

One of our duties as the KPC was to provide a guard for the British element of the ammunition compound at the US base at Bagram. During one of my visits to the soldiers on duty there, I was invited to visit the US Headquarters¹⁰. During the 'guided tour', I was shown the topographic cell. Seeing the complexity of the technology, I asked whether they could produce any imagery of Gandamak. Having dismissed two settlements which were to the west and northwest of Kabul, I settled on the village which was some 60 miles southeast of Kabul, and some 30 miles to the west of Jalalabad. This fitted the record, and I was very kindly provided with air photographs and mapping of various scales. While this 'placed' Gandamak, it did not provide a six-figure grid reference of the hill in question - in

Special Features

what is a very hilly landscape!

A subsequent visit led to a meeting with Col Ian Sinclair, who was one of the embedded British officers within the US HQ. This, in turn, led to a meeting with their Special Forces Commander¹¹, who requested a briefing on the history of the battle and other pertinent detail. I concluded the brief by stating that it was an ambition to try and reach the site. It was, therefore, with nothing short of amazement when I received a message from Col Sinclair that the Americans were prepared to authorise and oversee the trip! They would provide local guides, protection (including air assets on call), and an escort party. All we had to do was to get to Jalalabad!

While a major step forward, it was impossible (for reasons of the ISAF Area of Operation (AO), time, space, asset availability and logistics) to justify and mount an expedition. Of course, if one could fly to and from Jalalabad, it might be possible to conduct the whole trip in a 26-hour period. This would be more acceptable. As luck (or design) might have it, the in-country C-130 looked as if it might have some taskings to carry out in that area at the end of May 2003.

Almost miraculously, the transport conundrum was solved at a stroke by the promise of some 4x4 vehicles belonging to one of the other agencies resident in Camp Souter. Comd KMNB understood exactly what I was trying to achieve, and agreed for me to take a party of five men, all of whom were volunteers, and ex 3rd Battalion. He also got clearance from Comd ISAF for us to proceed. After being briefed on the undertaking, and having consulted Col Sinclair regarding the US lead, COMBRITFOR granted me the short exeat from Kabul we needed.

Travelogue

Planning

Military planning for the trip was straightforward. All we required were sufficient combat supplies, vehicle spares and communication consumables to sustain ourselves for a 48-hour period. Having chosen the volunteers, we needed a small amount of time to practise some 'actions-on' drills¹². My main concern, however, was how to pinpoint the actual location given the short time period we would have on the objective.

Bearing in mind this trip had not even been a conscious thought on deployment, I was ill-equipped to carry out detailed research. The only real tool at my disposal was the internet. Therefore while researching a number of sources provided useful accounts of the battle, it provided very little detail of the location. Clearly, what was needed was the testimony of someone who had been there. The Rev Arthur Male visited the site during the second Afghan War in 1878, in the company of a photographer, John Burke. An extract from his account is reproduced:

'But there was more than this to see, and so we turned to our old guide, one of whose accomplishments, very important to us, was that he could understand a little Hindustani. 'Larui ki jagah kahan hai, buddha?' 'Where is the place of fight, old man?' said we. And the old man said not a word, but pointing with his finger forward, silently led us on. Away to our right, perhaps two miles off, we could see a conical hill rising out of the plain, round-topped and solitary. The hill ranges were around it, but distant. It stood alone, a monument itself? We did not say much as we neared it. Both my companion and myself were thinking of the old tragedy and its consummation on that hilltop. We thought of the devoted band who had struggled down the passes from Kabul, fighting every inch of the way: men, women, camp-followers, and soldiers dropping in their tracks under murderous fire or savage attack; or perchance lying down at night, weary of life, to rise no more. We thought of them, a diminished band, indeed, 16,000 souls reduced to about 500; 4,500 soldiers to a bare 100 reaching the river four miles ahead and finding the ford and bridge barred by an overwhelming host of savage foes. But they cut their way through, and came on thus far. And here they paused awhile, and then climbed the hill yonder to die.

'We could see it all again after a lapse of 37 years. The little band toiling with painful effort up the hillside, and forming up on the top shoulder to shoulder at bay. The fierce tribesmen gathering round, closing in more and more, the band of heroes lessening moment by

moment; and then the great wave of the human sea around surging over them and burying them away out of sight unshaken in discipline, undaunted in spirit, faithful unto death!

'I slowly ascended; my horse, which belonged to a hill breed, climbing like a cat among the big rocks that covered the side. Soon I reached the summit, and prepared to look upon the very spot where our gallant fellows had made their death-stand. There it must be, I thought, towards the centre. And I made my way towards it. The summit of the hill was of fairly large extent; but as I came nearer the middle, I saw that there the surface seemed strangely white. What could it be? I hurried forward; and to my horror there I saw gathered together in a great heap the skeleton bones of that heroic band. There, where the men had fallen, their remains had been lying for 37 long years, bleached by the sun, and swept by every tempest which had broken on that hilltop. It was a ghastly sight. But it was not the ghastliness so much as the sadness of it that struck me most of all. Alien feet had trodden around that hill summit; the wild shepherds who tended their mountain sheep and goats, Kujiani and Ghilzai tribesmen, all had looked upon that open sepulchre; but never before had foot of brother Englishman been there, nor had friendly eyes lighted on the unburied remains. Here were truly the 'relics of a lost army.'

'Probably when Pollock's avenging force, after relieving the 'Illustrious Garrison' at Jellalabad, had marched on up the passes towards Kabul, they had found the bodies here and had buried them out of sight by covering them with a great stone cairn. This, no doubt, had been subsequently rudely cast down by the Afghans belonging to the tribes around, and the bodies left shamefully exposed; the Mussulman creed allowing them to desecrate the place of sepulchre, but not the dead bodies themselves. This was the general opinion. Burke brought up his camera, and from the top of a neighbouring height took a picture of the 'Hill of Bones,' as it afterward came to be called. It was a gloomy, weird picture enough! All around were the mountain spurs reaching down to the barren plain, the furthestmost peaks still capped with snow. Yonder away the dark entrance to the Jugdulluk Pass. And here in the middle the one solitary round-topped hill, a monument and grave at once.



Fig 7 Burke's Photograph¹³

'Two human forms could be discerned, myself and the old Kujiani, who had now been induced to come up too; we two looking down sadly on the gathered bones of the brave men, as they lay resting on God's earth, and looking up into the face of God's heaven.

*'When we returned to camp we unfolded the tale of what we had found, and arrangements were made soon after for the reverent burial of the bones. A detachment was sent out, and over the great grave they raised a tall obelisk, which no doubt still marks the spot.'*¹⁴

The British Library website provided Burke's photographs. Significant to me was the reference to an 'obelisk'. I had certainly not seen an obelisk during my time in theatre, and, asking the C-130 pilots to see whether they could spot any on their travels around the country, they responded in due course that they had not. Perhaps this is unsurprising given the very European nature of this kind of construction.

Armed with the maps and imagery (the former marked with the route of the retreat), Burke's photograph, the Rev Male's account,

Special Features

and confidence that an infantryman's eye for ground should help identify likely hills which the remnants of the Kabul garrison would have occupied, we awaited the combination of C-130 tasking and our American allies availability to coincide.

The journey

On 2 June the opportunity we sought materialised. During that afternoon, a party of nine men departed for Kabul airport mounted in three 4x4 vehicles. After briefing and loading onto the C-130, we departed for Bagram, where we were to pick up some three members of the US SF contingent, and a visiting professor from the US Naval Academy at Monterey. Regrettably, Col Sinclair was unable to accompany us owing to his handover with (ironically enough, Col Phil Jones). Following a quick turnaround, we departed for the short flight to Jalalabad.

At the time, Jalalabad was considered a 'hot LZ', and we landed at about 1600hrs to find the airstrip secured by two platoons of Afghan soldiers. We were met by a US captain and a small detachment of US personnel mounted in two Hum-Vees, who, along with the Afghans escorted us to their base in the outskirts of Jalalabad. The base appeared to have been, originally, two former colonial residences which had had the dividing perimeter removed to form one large compound and accommodation for the occupants. In addition to the SF personnel, there were representatives from the DEA, civil affairs, Psy Ops, and other US government agencies. All were tremendously welcoming to their British guests, and helped us settle in to our temporary accommodation.



Fig 8 - part of the US escort.

At about 1900hrs, we attended the O Group for the mission to Gandamak. At it, we learned that a recon party had removed some land mines the previous day from the route upon which we were due to travel. While this concentrated our minds, it was fairly routine for them, given the levels of hostile activity in that area of operations¹⁵. At the conclusion of orders, I was asked to give a short presentation on the battle, and our intentions upon reaching the site. It was quite surprising that a group of seasoned soldiers should take a keen interest in what was not only a historical event, but one in which there was no US involvement. Before turning in, we familiarised ourselves with their communications equipment, 'actions-on' and did a final check of our own weapons, equipment and vehicles.

We left the base at about 0600hrs the following day. What I thought was going to be a relatively small escort ended up being (including our three vehicles) a 13-vehicle convoy! Although slightly alarmed by the convoy's obvious signature, the presence of a platoon of Afghans, armoured Hum-Vees, specialist communications, and both fixed wing and rotary assets on call was reassuring.

As we drove through Jalalabad, as in Kabul, the local populous appeared well disposed to us, with the usual waving. It was notable, however, that on leaving the city limits, the reception changed from acceptance, through deliberately ignoring our passage, to verbal comments and gestures which signalled their disapproval.

Heading west from Jalalabad, the countryside is open and barren,



Fig 9 - part of our Afghan escort.



Fig 10 - the author and his Interpreter, Kosh, speaking with the village headman.

with isolated settlements along the route. Shortly beyond Fatehabad, the ground rises to the foothills of what will become the mountain ranges between Gandamak and Kabul.

This route was once the main access from Kabul to Jalalabad, but has been replaced by Highway 1 to the north. As a result, our route was unmetalled, rutted, and slow going in some parts. As we progressed, our US escorts pointed out previous ambush locations, and also where the land mines had been removed from. While nothing like the terrain through which the 44th had to fight, it did at least give one the impression of close country, and the difficulties of fighting in this type of terrain, particularly if your opponent commanded the high ground. We completed the 30-mile journey in approximately three hours. Upon arrival in Gandamak, we set about finding the village headman to try and gain further information about the location of the hill in question.

After paying respects and presenting him with some gifts, I enquired as to the location of the hill. Perhaps unsurprisingly in a culture where history is handed from one generation to the next verbally, rather than in writing, he was mixing events from the First Afghan War with those of the Second. Nevertheless, we were able to see the remnants of the fort at Gandamak (which was the last outpost

Special Features

en route to Kabul before entering the mountain passes), and were given a wave of the hand pointing to some hills a couple of miles distant from the village.

I must admit, I had hoped for a little more detail! Nevertheless, his information, coupled with that which I already had at my disposal, binoculars, and a quick ground appreciation; led us to what is, to the best of my knowledge, the site of the Last Stand of the 44th.

From the road, it is difficult to appreciate the scale of the hill. It certainly matched Rev Male's description of 'a conical hill rising out of the plain, round-topped and solitary'. Conscious of the possible mine threat, it took between 30 and 45 minutes to reach the summit, and became something of a scramble over the last 50 yards. To get a feel for the elevation, Fig 12 was taken from the summit, looking north-west towards the Surkhab River, from whence the survivors would have come. At the bottom right of the picture, our vehicles can be seen on the track.

The top of the hill was relatively flat, and measured some 40 yards west to east, by 15-20 yards north to south, which would have permitted all round defence, a facet not provided by any of the surrounding lower and more gently undulating hillocks. Importantly, on the eastern end of the summit was a cairn. In the centre of the hill was a slight depression in the ground, which we took to be the site



Fig 12 - looking north from the summit.



Fig 11 - the Hill of Bones.



Fig 14 - standing Last Post.



Fig 13 - on the summit with the cairn in the background.

Special Features

of the grave, although there was no sign of human remains.

Present at the summit were the descendants of the 44th, some of our American colleagues¹⁶, some of the Afghan soldiers, my interpreter, and the American professor. After some individual reflection, I read the account from the Essex Regimental history as to what had taken place here, our drummer blew the *Last Post*, and we placed an Essex Regiment¹⁷ wreath at the base of the cairn in memory of those who had given their lives here. For the text on the wreath, an extract from Campbell's poem seemed apposite:

*'Few, few shall part where many meet,
The snow shall be their winding sheet,
And every turf beneath their feet
Shall be a soldier's Sepulchre.'*

Even during a quiet moment of reflection, it is impossible to begin to comprehend the thoughts and feelings of those who fought and died here. First of all the weather – we were here in June; they had endured a week of the bitter Afghan winter before reaching this spot. An overwhelming sense of hopelessness must have engulfed them on reaching the summit of this hill. I surmise this for the following reasons. Firstly, those present would have been able to see the fort at Gandamak (no more than two miles away), which might have offered some form of protection¹⁸. Secondly, they knew that from Gandamak onwards they would be in open country – country suited to the British Infantry, rather than the close country of the mountain passes so well used by the Afghan tribesmen.

Consider then, if you will, Figs 17 and 18. Fig 17 is taken from the western end of the summit, looking to the northwest, over the ground from whence they had come. Fig 18 is taken from the eastern end of the summit, and is looking roughly eastwards over the open country towards Jalalabad. The sense of 'so near and yet so far' must have been palpable. Perhaps this is what led to the doomed charge to get off the hill.

Given our limited timeframe to conduct this mission, we left the scene in relative silence and contemplation. Our journey back to



Fig 16 - The wreath.

Jalalabad was uneventful, albeit there was an unspoken thought within the group regarding the possibility of ambush and/or mines on the return trip, as we had no option but to use the same route.

Fortunately, no such eventuality occurred, and we reached Jalalabad airstrip in good time for the C-130. Shortly after takeoff, we were alerted by the pilot that our flight path would take us overhead Gandamak, allowing one last view of that evocative site. The flight also proved uneventful, other than one of my SNCOs commenting on the bizarre experience of being sat, seat-belted, and stationary in a Toyota 4x4 within a C-130, which was flying fast and low! We arrived back at Camp Souter some 26 hours after we had left.



Fig 15 - Sgt King and Cpl Francis with the wreath.

Special Features



Fig 17 - looking northwest from the summit.



Fig 18 - looking east towards Jalalabad.

Epilogue

What became of the 44th?

The remnants of HM 44th sailed for England in February 1843. Reconstituted on landing, the Regiment was at Chichester in July, and Gosport in August. On 11 December, new Colours were presented at Haslar by Lady Pakenham. The old Colour saved by Lt Souter was trooped, and placed in nearby Alverstoke Church for safe keeping.

The Afghan Colour was removed in 1926 to the Essex (later Royal Anglian) Regimental Chapel, where the remains thereof can still be viewed today.

Observations

I think one can draw a number of parallels from the experiences



Fig 19 - waiting for the C-130 at Jalalabad airfield.

of the First Afghan War in general, and of the 44th in particular which have relevance today, particularly given the increasing British involvement in Afghanistan during 2006. These are not earth shattering revelations, neither are they comprehensive, but they are perhaps worth stating as we ignored them and their ilk twice in British history, as did the Russians!

- One is reminded of the courage, determination, will and robustness of the British infantryman to keep going; even in conditions of extreme privation and apparent hopelessness.
- The character and personal leadership of commanders is instrumental in determining not only the success of an operation, but the morale of the troops under command.
- Lines of communication must be secure.
- Invasion is the easy part. Subsequent governance and military presence must be by consent of the Afghans.
- The political intent must, if the time comes, subordinate itself (albeit temporarily) to military judgement, and when necessary, military action. To that end, the political and military leaders must be quite clear what each will, can, will not and cannot do.
- You can hire an Afghan, but you can't buy one.

Closing remarks

The retreat from Kabul, and therefore Gandamak, was a defeat not a victory. It was a military defeat on a scale hitherto unknown in Victorian England. To that end, I do not seek to overstate its importance. Rather, I hope that readers should view this article as the record of a brief act of Regimental remembrance. I hope that in the coming years it will be possible to have a more detailed visit, when the simple use of a metal detector and/or a minor excavation may reveal some artefacts. Ultimately, it may be possible to place some kind of more permanent memorial in addition to the cairn.

Neither would I wish readers to think that we are the only ones to have visited that hill - we are not! There are many people who will have visited that spot. For example, prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, there was a European school in Kabul which took its pupils to the site. Regrettably, I could not contact any of these individuals prior to our journey! All I would say is that, to the best of my knowledge, we are the first British soldiers with a direct regimental connection to HM 44th Foot, who have returned to Gandamak since 13 January 1842. That, and the fact that our trip was conducted during hostilities, made it a memorable event for us.

Acknowledgements

Without the generous provision of assistance, both in terms of personnel and assets, it would have been impossible to undertake this trip. In particular, I would like to record my appreciation of our American and German Allies. Some of those who gave of their time and expertise cannot be named. They know who they are - thank you.

Specific mention must be made of:

- Gen Vines and Col Seleski for granting us permission to be in their AO, and making their assets available to us.

Special Features



Fig 20 - plaque from Aberstoke Church.



Fig 21 Remnant of the Afghan Colour...and below, memorial plaque, the Essex Regiment Chapel, Essex.



Fig 23 - Akhbar Khan's 'good conduct chit' signed by Souter, among others.

- Maj Andrew Santa-Pinter, Team Commander of the Civil Military Operations Centre (CMOC) at Jalalabad.
- Our Escorts (ODA 312): Capt Trevor Robichaux, MSgt Lenwood Thomas, SSgt Alex Howard, SSgt Chad Foster, SSgt Derek Breland, SSgt Mike Fairfax, SSgt Gary Glaspy, Sgt Fred Parsons.
- Commander ISAF and Commander KMNB for granting us permission to undertake the trip.
- Col MWL Theobald (late RGR and COMBRITFOR) for allowing us to undertake the trip.
- Col Ian Sinclair (late RA) – for applying the necessary 'feng shui' in the US HQ in Bagram.
- The RAF, without whom, this trip would have been impossible.

Finally, I would like to thank the British Library for their kind permission to reproduce Burke's photographs which have been used in this article.

Footnotes

- ¹ The spelling of place names varies immensely, depending on the age and origin of the source document, viz – Kabul, Cabool, Gandamak, Gundamuck, Gundamack, etc.
- ² WB Wollen. Born Leipzig 1837, died London 1936. Last Stand of HM 44th painted in 1898.
- ³ Exact strength of each of the native regiments unknown.
- ⁴ Col Shelton (prisoner), Lt Evans (left in charge of the sick at Kabul) and Lt Souter (present at, and survived, the last stand at Gandamack).
- ⁵ Essex Regiment History, P89, p4.
- ⁶ Ibid, p99, para 1.
- ⁷ CSgt Carey was killed during the night march of 12/13 January, and in the darkness the Colour was lost.
- ⁸ See Fig 23. Akhbar Khan asked for a 'Good conduct chit' from the prisoners. Souter, among others, signed it.
- ⁹ There are three 'Gandamacks' to be found in Afghanistan.
- ¹⁰ Commanded by Lt Gen John Vines
- ¹¹ Col Joe Seleski.
- ¹² Drills with which we were familiar, but needed rehearsal as we had not all worked together in this configuration before.
- ¹³ I believe there to be another photograph of the summit/site of the Last Stand. This photo has been taken from lower down on the hill.
- ¹⁴ Islamic history sourcebook: Rev. Arthur Male: *The Hill of Bones, Afghanistan 1878*
- ¹⁵ The Tora Bora caves are not too far to the south of Gandamack.
- ¹⁶ The remainder providing security at the base of the hill.
- ¹⁷ Which the Essex Regiment Association had kindly sent out when it appeared that the trip might be possible.
- ¹⁸ They would have marched to Kabul, via Gandamack, in 1841.

Infantry Golf Championships

Capt MJ Abbs writes:

Due to operational commitments only three members of the Regiment participated in the 2006 Infantry Golf Championships this year. Most recently, the championships were played on links courses as a precursor to the Inter Corps Championships that are held at top links courses around the country. It also serves as the opportunity for the selectors, to select the infantry team to play in the Inter-Corps Competition in May.

This year Capts Abbs and Tate and Sgt Gelder represented the Regiment, and did so very well. On performance, all three players merited selection but only two were selected. Performance at the Championships, past Corps representations and wildcard selections are all considered in the selection process.

The venue this year, was the Dorset Golf and Country Club, previously known as East Dorset GC, situated within three miles of Bovington Camp. Handily, accommodation was available within the camp to keep ever increasing costs to a minimum. It is a heathland course with plenty of water hazards to catch out the misplaced shots.

Having Capt Chris Tate posted back to the Vikings only days before the event, from RTMC, was a bonus as he became eligible to make up the third player of the Royal Anglian team along with myself and Sgt Carl Gelder. Play was completed over two days and after some steady play by all we were lying fifth as a team after day one. Day two we came out of the blocks and pushed hard, knowing that the chasing pack would be doing likewise. At the finish we secured third place in the gross competition behind 2 R IRISH A and B teams, for the second year running, and losing out by one shot. In the nett competition some unbelievable scoring by two members of 1 RRS on day one (48 and 44 points respectively) meant that effectively the nett competition was over after the first day. We managed to secure third position in this category too. Scores are shown below.

Team Event

Gross		Nett	
2 R IRISH A	485pts	1 RRS	427pts
2 R IRISH B	493pts	1 DWR	442pts
Royal Anglian	494pts	Royal Anglian	446pts

Individual Event

1st	Maj Milne	1RRS	151pts
5=	Sgt Gelder		162pts
8	Capt Abbs		165pts
9=	Capt Tate		167pts

Finally, it is worthy of note that with the demise of the Royal Irish Regiment next year, a Regiment which has won the competition eight times in the last 11 years, that they will no longer be eligible to play. This year Royal Irish soldiers had 60 of the 91 players in the field! It is clear that the infantry as a whole needs to inspire and promote golf within its units, in order that meaningful competition continues. We are all aware that operations and other commitments hinder attendance but given that infantry golf is over two days once a year, it is up to us all to enable those that wish to attend to do so. We as a Regiment have a very good chance of winning next year, and I would therefore wish to use this opportunity to encourage all players from both battalions to step forward and enter the competition.

The Askari Appeal

Colonel AF Mackain-Bremner OBE writes:

As many will already know, to mark the 100th anniversary of the raising of the King's African Rifles in 1902, it was decided to organise an appeal for the welfare of old soldiers who served in East and Central Africa as part of the Corps of the KAR prior to Independence, and in certain cases for their widows. The reception of the Askari Appeal has been remarkable worldwide, and the response from Regiments, particularly our own, and many individuals has been an eye-opener. We have now raised over £250,000.

The money is administered by the Royal Commonwealth Ex-



Greeting Old Comrades - ex CSM Mondale.

Servicemen's League whose Grand President is HRH Prince Philip and an outstanding Chairman of the twice yearly council meetings. I represent the Kenya Armed Forces Association on that council and am also a member of the KAR and EAF Association Committee, so our links are very close. There are also representatives of Malawi, Zambia, Uganda and Tanzania on the council, thus covering all the old KAR units in those ex-colonial territories.

In October 2005, I and my wife, representing the RCEL, visited Kenya where I had served with the KAR 1957-60. Our purpose was to pay out grants to around 200 veterans in Kisumu, Kakamega,



Presentation of grants, 77 years to 89 years!

Special Features



Singing the KAR marching song *Tufurige Safari*.

Kitui, Machakos and Nyeri. These all have existing KAFCA centres and were chosen because various local initiatives such as maize mills, a honey producing project and shelter cottages have been installed and supported by RCEL. Grants are made every six months and applications are considered by a vigorous team consisting of representatives of the local British Legion (Kenya) and KAFCA, being chaired by the British Defence Advisor at our High Commission in Nairobi. Once approved around £50 is paid through the offices of the local district officers. I have often been asked how we can ensure that the money allocated reaches the veterans and I hope it can be seen just how tight is the routine.

It was a very moving and humbling experience to meet those splendid old men, some of whom had served in Ethiopia, Madagascar and Burma in the 39/45 war. Over 17,000 served in the 'Rhino Division' - 11th (EA) Division fighting with distinction in the Kabaw Valley in Burma. Later too, they fought in Malaya and during the Mau Mau campaign. Many of them lie in the beautifully tended Commonwealth War Grave Cemeteries in such places as Nairobi and Nyeri. It may seem that £50 is a small reward for all this, but it does represent half of a pension for the few who receive it. There is indeed real poverty and hardship.

At the end of each presentation, I led them in singing that splendid KAR marching song *Tufurige Safari* (*Get Ready for the March*). I wondered if we were going to blow the ceiling in, such was the response. My Swahili, not so good as it was in the 50s, was sufficient for us all to joke, remember and to express enormous friendship. When it was all over at the end of the week, I felt both elated and drained. Despite undoubted poverty they were all cheerful, many being infirm and hardly able to walk, some as old as 95, but they had insisted on being 'on parade'.

In the following week a most extraordinary thing happened. We were staying with friends up country near Isiolo. I was told of an old veteran of the Tanganyikan Campaign in 1914/18 against the Germans led by Leitow Von Vorbeck. I drove out into the bush and found M'lhira Mukuria who had fought in 30th Battalion KAR and was aged 113! I met some of his family including a granddaughter, one of 15. Behind his hut was an old cow. He called me *effendi toto* (sir young boy) and said it was the milk of that cow that had got him where he was. 'Would you like some to take home to keep you going?' As we parted, he held my hand and gave me a hug '*Sema Jambokwa Mama Queenie*' (Give my greetings to the Queen). What do you do after that?

Without doubt this was the experience of a lifetime. I am still acutely aware of those affectionate, smiling old faces. The appeal for them is still open and we hope now to reach up to £300,000. If any reader would like to help, even if you have done so before, any

sum would be most welcome, payable to RCEL (Askari Appeal) and sent to me please. Col Fergus Mackain-Bremner OBE, Appeal Director, The Askari Appeal, Summerlea, The Street, East Knoyle, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP3 6AJ. (Tel: 01747 830410).

Storming the Schwaben Redoubt - 14 October 1916

Steven Bowns writes:

The Western front in the First World War, especially the Somme battles, have long suffered from a bad press. Ask the man in the street what he knows of the Somme and he will probably speak of thousands of overburdened soldiers going 'over the top' to be slaughtered by machine guns on the first day (1 July 1916). A more knowledgeable person might also tell of the grinding muddy attrition battles that ran on into November, with neither side gaining much ground at huge cost in casualties.

However, in the midst of this awful attrition, the occasional glimmer of military achievement does shine out if you look for it. One such was the storming of the Schwaben redoubt by the 1/1st Cambridgeshire Regiment on 14 October 1916. This redoubt was a series of trenches, dugouts and strongpoints that had formed the centrepiece of the German defence in the Somme Sector since 1915. It had been taken briefly by the 36th Ulster Division on the first day but was quickly recaptured by German counter-attack. Between July and October it was attacked no fewer than six times, all of which failed. The real problem was how to hold a position against the dreaded German counter-attacks.

Lt Col Riddell, Commanding 1/1st Cambridgeshire's did everything right. He argued for and won the case for massive artillery and air support, the whole Corps artillery was in support. His plan learned from the mistakes of the other failed assaults, and utilised a thorough reconnaissance.

The 'Fen Tigers' jumped off at 1445hrs and followed the creeping barrage very closely. Consequently they got into the Schwaben trenches with few if any losses. A savage close quarter infantry battle then took place, lasting for the next four hours. This was classic, grizzly hand to hand fighting, with bayonet and grenade against tough and aggressive German opposition. Gradually, despite several setbacks, the Cambridgeshires won the upper hand. Each dugout was cleared in turn, and they bombed along the trenches until the whole redoubt was in their hands. Both sides ran out of grenades, the CO was wounded. Then came the decisive trick, instead of reorganising and consolidating in the old German trenches, the Cambridgeshires moved forward 100 yards and, under cover of darkness, dug a new defensive line by joining up shell holes, scraping and digging as best



they could. They even managed to emplace barbed wire in front of this new line. When the first counter-attack came in at 0400hrs the next day, the German barrage landed behind them on the original trenches, the Cambridgeshires were thus able to stop this counter-attack dead in its tracks with rifle and machine gun fire. The same applied to the next two counter-attacks. The Schwaben Redoubt was taken and held at last!

Gen Haig recorded in his diary that the attack was 'one of the finest feats of arms in the history of the British Army'. More than 39 gallantry awards were made to 1/1st Cambridgeshire Regiment for taking the Schwaben, probably a record for a single battalion in a single day's action but they also suffered 218 casualties, including 32 killed in action.

To commemorate the 90th anniversary of the storming of the Schwaben Redoubt, the Cambridgeshire and Royal Anglian Regimental Associations are holding a service at Ely Cathedral starting at 1315 hrs on Saturday 14 October 2006. This will be followed at 1415hrs by a detailed presentation on the action, with pictures, video and a chance to discuss with the researchers, in the Hayward Theatre (opposite the Cathedral). All members of the Regiment are most welcome to attend. If you think you have relatives who took part in the Schwaben assault, we would love to hear from you now so please contact in the first instance Martin Boswell at the Imperial War Museum Duxford on email mboswell@iwm.org.uk

From Basra Rural South to Bermuda

Maj Andy Price writes:

The phone conversation normally goes something like this; 'Hello, my name is Maj Andy Price. I'm a Royal Anglian serving on secondment as staff officer to The Bermuda Regiment'.

Long pause.

'You lucky (expletive deleted). How on earth did you get that job?'

I won't bore you with the details but needless to say the transition from Basra Rural South to Bermuda could not have been more dramatic. Sitting in the back of the Snatch bumping down the route

from Shaibah Logistics Base to my RAF freedom flight was poignant. I knew I would miss the strong friendships, camaraderie and daily challenges of being Battalion 2IC of the Vikings on operations, but couldn't help wonder if the social and sporting life might be a little more varied in Bermuda. And so it proved. I was met by the friendly face of WO2 Kerton (the Training Wing Warrant Officer) who took no time at all explaining that swimming, cycling and running were all year round activities on Bermuda so there would be no excuse for not training for Ironman Florida in November 2006. Along with



The author (left) and WO2 Kerton.

Special Features

LCpl Trott we duly formed the Bermuda Regiment Ironman Florida Triathlon Team - we might find time to start training soon!

Having replaced the harsh dirty sand of Iraq with the smooth pink sand of Bermuda I all too quickly found myself immersed in the Bermuda Regiment's very busy schedule. Three weeks after arrival and a mountain of family administration behind me WO2 Kerton and I were in Jamaica on an annual camp recce. October was Washington, DC for the British Army Staff Conference (BASCON) and back to Bermuda for the Regiment's 40th anniversary Tattoo.

Early November saw a fitness for role weekend exercise designed to test the Regiment in its internal security role in support of the Bermuda police service. This weekend also marked the start of many 40th anniversary activities leading up to the Christmas break. January saw the annual two-week recruit camp supported by Cpls Dodd and Byrne-Evans. I'm told they enjoyed themselves and they were certainly still smiling at the end of the traditional five-mile road race on the penultimate day of the camp. I travelled the very next day back to Jamaica for the Exercise Tradewinds final planning conference.

February marked the start of the potential officer cadre with a full selection weekend in Warwick Camp, home of the Regiment. WO2 Kerton and I once again deploy to Jamaica at the end of February as the G3 advance party for the annual camp. A Bermuda Regiment tradition, the Jamaica annual camp benefited this year by the attachment of a contingent from the East of England Regiment. Two weeks of conventional training in the harsh jungle heat and humidity was offset by two days R and R in the resort locations of Montego Bay and Negrill. Shortly after returning from Jamaica WO2 Kerton was off to Meaford, Canada to recce the annual PJNCO cadre final exercise. With a change of command parade in the national stadium planned for 27 May there seems to be no let-up in the pace of life in sight. From one end of the spectrum to the other; Basra Rural South to Bermuda - it's been quite a journey!

The Veterans Agency

Who is a Veteran?

The word 'veteran' often conjures up a particular image - that of our older generation who served so magnificently in World War Two. However, anyone who served in HM Forces, regardless of when, how long for and whether in conflict or peacetime is by definition a veteran. If you were in the Navy, Army or Air Force, even if only for one day, you are a veteran and as such can access a vast network of support and guidance.

How Can the Veterans Agency Help You?

The Veterans Agency is the focal point within the Ministry of Defence for providing free information and advice on issues of concern to all veterans and their families. Whatever your enquiry, whether it be accessing service records, finding out entitlement to a war pension, health concerns or any other issue, the agency is here to help. If we can't help on the spot, we are positioned at the heart of a wide network of support dedicated to helping ex-Servicemen and women and their families. By working in close partnership with ex-Service organisations, War Pensions Committees and other voluntary groups and statutory bodies we can point you in the right direction for sound practical assistance. To access the wealth of support on offer simply call the Veterans Agency Helpline on Freephone 0800 169 2277.

Veterans Agency also administers the War Pension and Armed Forces Compensation Schemes and manages a welfare service through a network of 25 regional offices.

War Pensions

You may be entitled to a pension or compensation payment. Call the Helpline now if you think you have a medical condition caused or made worse by your service in HM Armed Forces.

The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme

Since 6 April 2005, the new Armed Forces Compensation Scheme provides a simple and quick means of compensating Service (and ex-Service) personnel for illness or injury sustained as a result of their Service life.



A Home Visit

Wherever you live in the UK, one of our dedicated welfare managers can visit you in your home on request. They can provide face-to-face help on issues such as statutory benefits, health, training, employment and housing.

Find us on the Internet

For further information on Veterans Agency, visit our website www.veteransagency.mod.uk.

PS Have you got your veterans badge yet?

The HM Armed Forces veterans Badge was launched by the MOD in May 2004 as a visible recognition of a veteran. It has proved to be extremely popular and we have issued over 100,000 to date. Eligibility has recently been extended and the badge is currently available to those who served in HM Forces up to December 1955.

Other groups entitled to a badge are: Cyprus Regiment; Merchant Navy seamen; Home Guard; Polish forces under UK Command; war widows and widowers in receipt of a war pension.

To apply for a badge call the Veterans Agency Helpline on 0800 169 2277 (UK only) or 0800 169 3458 (Minicom users) - or complete the application form on-line at www.veteransagency.mod.uk. Click the Veterans Lapel Badge button on the Homepage. Complete the form, sign and date it, then either fax or post it to Veterans Badge Team, Veterans Agency, Room 6108, Norcross, Thornton-Cleveleys

Tough Guy 2006 - Year of the Viking Invasion

Capt Duncan Turner writes:

Every once in a while one feels like doing something irrational and not entirely sane. Reasons for such an action can be many; they are simply too numerous to name.

It was a short while ago that the OC Queen's 3 Platoon training team at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick decided to do just such an action. With some convincing words from the platoon commander, the training team and a few misguided (lied to) Queen's Division Permanent Staff were all talked into entering Tough Guy 2006.

Held bi-annually in Wolverhampton this eight-mile endurance race is run over 150 acres of land run by a horse sanctuary and farm dedicated to keeping youths off the streets and out of trouble.

Thus in the early hours of Sunday 29 January, the Queen's Division Team (now officially listed on the line up as 22 Special Arse Service) made up of three Poachers, one Viking, two Budgie Killers and two Tigers made their way down to Wolverhampton, nervously anticipating what lay ahead. But one person was not nervous... the author at this time was keeping quiet however, for he had competed in the race in 2000, and knew full well that what lay ahead was total misery. While I had of course told my fellow team-mates that it was 'a bit cheeky' and 'just a quick cross country run lads', I had decided to miss out a few details and manipulate the truth in areas that might

Special Features

put them off. Overall I think I did them a favour, if I had told them what they were going to put themselves through, they would only have had a restless journey down there.

Upon arrival there was time to scoff a quick egg and bacon sarnie, get changed into the Queen's Division T-Shirts that had been acquired through one of CSgt King's more shadier contacts, and sign the race disclaimers stating that if you die on the course then it was not the organiser's fault - all normal stuff for a run of the mill 'cross country run'.

The start line was chaos as people wrestled for a good spot to get away quickly and avoid the choke points. The weather was looking good, a clear day but a bit chilly. On the noise of the cannon, 5,000 people went charging down a hill in pursuit of the right to call themselves a certified 'Tough Guy'. What followed over the next few hours has been a bit hazy, but with general chit-chat and some reminiscing I have pieced together what happened.

The first three or so miles of the course is just known as the country miles, and provided one went to a sound red brick school such as Ipswich where cross country running is neither option nor hobby but a mandatory thrashing, then you were able to get yourself into a strong position. These three miles, however, were simply put there to warm the muscles and lull the runner into a false sense of security that he or she was in for a bit of jolly. The first little teaser the team came across was 'The Slalom'; 14 hill reps of biblical proportions zig-zagging their way along a hillside. Once this was out of the way the water obstacles came, and for the next five miles they did not stop, but only became deeper and colder.

Once the country miles were out of the way the race takes you into the largest and most challenging obstacle course you will have ever seen or gone through. All of the 19 obstacles were so perfect in their design that they caused maximum discomfort and strain to the runner. Some of the more memorable ones included 'The Tiger' - a huge 20-metre A-frame scramble net that could only be approached through a field of hanging strips of live electric fence wire. 'The Swamp' - 100m of knee-deep manufactured mud that sucked both the trainers and the morale from any runner. 'The Fiery Holes' were one for thought as you hurled yourself through burning piles of hay to the joy and cheers of the crowd who were there to observe these very strange people doing strange things to themselves.

The 'VC Tunnels' were a talked about obstacle, as fellow runners pulled and pushed one another from the narrow concrete uphill tunnels filled with people screaming in pain with cramp in their legs so severe that it would kill a normal civvi. As the team progressed through in their ones and twos, through the 'Paradise Climb', the 'Dragon Pools', 'Tyre Torture', 'The Anaconda' and 'Colditz' they had no idea of the three obstacles ahead of them that would make this a day to sort the men from the Tough Guys.

The 'Underwater Tunnel' on a normal day would not seem too much of a strain, I mean we are all in the infantry, we have all been wet and cold before. But nothing came close to submerging your entire body into a freezing river (the inch thick ice was still floating in it) under a series of logs that barred the way of the runner. To do this once would have been cheeky, but you had to do it four times to get clear of the obstacle; deep breath, head under and feel your way under the logs to then rise above the surface and convince your brain to persuade your body to do it again, and again, and again. Many runners skirted around this obstacle to the boos and heckles of the crowd while those brave souls who emerged from the river looking like they had lost a fight with a train did so to the cheering masses, well on their way to becoming a Tough Guy.

As if this was not enough, the immediate next obstacle, the 'Berlin Wall' involved a climb up a huge hay bail wall, using a rope that was of little use in numb hands. Once at the top, the runner was presented with a fearsome challenge. Before the competitor lay a series of pirate planks, reaching out over a small lake that was swallowing people jumping off their respective walkway. A look over the edge saw people emerging from the depths floundering in the deep water, the cold knocking the wind from the lungs. While various team members took this one tentatively, Cpl Craig Blower donned swimming goggles and performed a text book John Smiths bomb to the roar of the bloodthirsty spectators. Top Bombing.

The obstacles never seemed to finish and then, after seemingly

hundreds of water pits and climbing frames of all shapes and sizes, the finish was there. Cross the line to be wrapped in a foil blanket and a cup of hot chocolate thrust in the hand. As you filtered down the line to hand in your number (carefully sealed in plastic on the inside of the shorts) you were presented with your medal - a huge horse brass of a Viking in full battle regalia. But one was not concerned with such material gestures of praise, for you could emerge from the race cold, nay, near hypothermic, yet singed in a few places, covered in mud, rope burns on the hands, cuts and bruises in the knowledge that you had earned the right to be a Tough Guy for the day. How damn Hollywood is that?

Over 5,000 runners took part in January's event, yet only some 3,500 actually finished it. The Queen's Division Team started with eight runners and finished with eight runners. Overall the team came 23rd out of 132 competing teams, and 9th out of 43 teams in the Armed Forces category. (Listings correct at time of writing). The overall times were as follows:

Name	Regt	Time	Position
Capt DW Turner	2 Royal Anglian	1:46:34	216
Capt D Hicks	1 Royal Anglian	2:00:04	504=
Cpl J Green	1 PWRR	2:03:53	598
Cpl T Malin	2 RRF	2:06:39	664=
Cpl J Barr	1 PWRR	2:12:18	848
Sgt D Cassidy	2 RRF	2:31:09	1348
Cpl C Blower	2 Royal Anglian	2:31:23	1356
CSgt N King	2 Royal Anglian	2:42:10	1605

The Tough Guy races have been going for some years now and have evolved into cult status attracting up to 5,000 runners at a time from all over the world. The race organisers claim that it is the hardest endurance race of its type in the UK. While we neither support nor question that statement, the Queen's Division Team were all sure of one thing by the end - that it is an extremely cold and very emotional event.

The team would like to thank the Headquarters of the Queen's Division, the 1st Battalion ITC Catterick PRI, and the Queen's Division Company ITC Catterick for help in funding the entrance fees of the team into this event.

All the photographs of all the runners and the event itself can be found on the Tough Guy website - www.toughguy.co.uk. The website also details the forthcoming events and provides entry forms online. There is another Tough Guy event in July, but to be honest there is only one main test in this game, and that is the January Tough Guy.

Regimental Relics at the Tower of London

Col Dick Harrold writes:

Most readers will associate the Tower of London with the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, but it is starting to become a Royal Anglian outpost as well. Two years ago I moved here as Deputy Governor. I did so on leaving the Army: my last job had involved wearing a suit in the MOD so I was amused to find that my first job in civvie street put me back into uniform. On ceremonial occasions I don a frock coat, as in the picture. With me is the other member of the Regiment working here, Allen Ivory. Allen spent six years with the Pompadours and left in 1975. He has worked here for 13 years and is part of the team of Wardens responsible for the security of the Crown Jewels and the safety of the public viewing them. He has acquired an encyclopaedic knowledge of the history and facts about the Crown Jewels and, if you can get him to give you a tour, stand by for an hour of fascinating stories, not just about the jewels but also the kings, queens and princes who have worn them.

This place is all about the stories you and I vaguely remember from school days: it is really quite exciting actually to stand in the places where they happened. What I had not realised until I got here was just how varied have been the roles of the Tower. As well as being a Royal Palace and Storehouse for the Crown Jewels, it has been a fortress to command and defend the City of London. It has housed the Royal Mint; it was the site of the first Royal Observatory; it was

Special Features

an armoury for the storage of weapons, ammunition and provisions and it housed the Official Records until they were moved to the Public Records Office. It was also the Royal Menagerie, or Zoo - the Royal collection of exotic animals and beasts were held here until 1835 when they were removed to Regent's Park. Last, but by no means least, this must rank as the most famous prison in the world. There is a lot to see and all the staff are very happy to answer questions. I suggest you don't come at Easter, we are packed, and if you come on another public holiday get here early, but it really is well worth the effort.

Not many people realise that the Tower gets no government funding. We are in fact part of a charity called Historic Royal Palaces, which also runs the palaces at Hampton Court, Kensington and Kew, and the Banqueting House in Whitehall. As a charity we survive on our visitor income so I'm afraid that I can't offer you all free entry, but if you are minded to visit then I would be delighted to see you and perhaps show you parts of the Tower that the other tourists don't see.

One gap in our staff is on the Yeoman Body (the 'Beefeaters'). There are five line infantry Yeoman Warders but none from the Regiment. The remainder are from the Guards or the Corps. To apply you have to have served 22 years, reached at least substantive colour sergeant and have an LS&GC medal. If you fit the bill, and would like to live and work in the most unusual village in London, then get in touch (you can write to me at the Tower of London, EC3N 4AB).



The author with Alan Ivory.

WE, THE LIMBLESS, LOOK TO YOU FOR HELP

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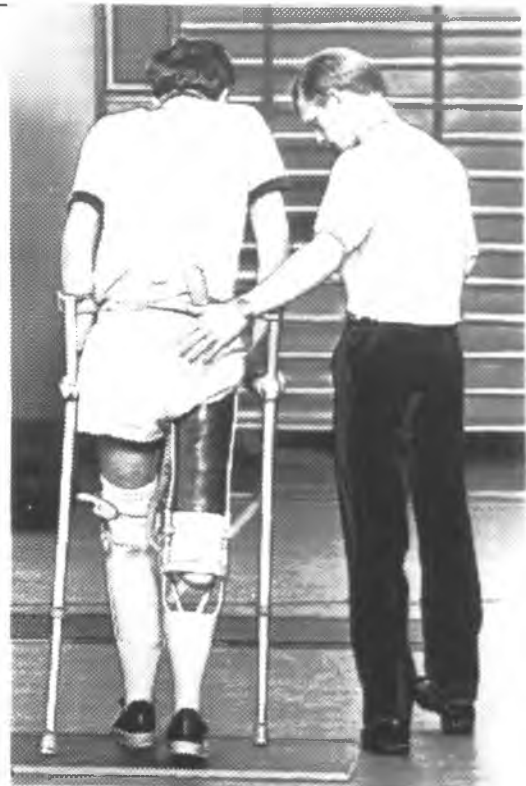
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THE FIRST STEP
by a recent, young double amputee

Regimental Association

The Royal Anglian Regiment Association

www.royalanglianassociation.co.uk
 (Webmaster: noelmuncey@btconnect.com)
 President: Brig RM Brunt CBE

The Royal Anglian Regiment Association has the following objectives:

- To maintain the history, tradition, *esprit de corps* and comradeship of all present and past members of the Regiment and antecedent Regiments.
- To assist former members of the Regiment who wish to remain in contact with former comrades.
- To advise and assist, where possible, members of the Regiment to obtain employment in civilian life.
- To support the Regiment in every possible way, in particular by promoting the Regiment within our counties.
- To refer for consideration by the Benevolence Committee of the Regimental Benevolent Charity, in times of need those past and present members of the Regiment and antecedent Regiments and their dependants, widows or orphans of those serving or who have served.

*All who are serving and who have served in the Regiment are automatically members of the Association.
 All those who have served in our antecedent Regiments are also members and widows and dependants of past members are eligible for membership as 'honorary members'.*

Pompadours on the Bank

WO2 Alan Dent writes:

The fourth 'Pompadours on the Bank' event took place on Beastie Lake (appropriately named, due to size of fish!) on Friday 14 October 2005.

Another great day was had by the 22 anglers that participated. I was fortunate enough to win the day, with Ray Jones coming second and the previously unbeaten Steve Bulbeck, a distant third! The league positions will now run into 2006 and they show Steve Bulbeck, Paul Hallybone and myself occupying the top three places.

It is hoped that both the 1st and 2nd Battalions spot this article and would wish to contact me with a view to perhaps having a threesome in the water! A time and place could easily be arranged when both Battalions are in UK from the end of 2006 through 2007. Please let me know if you are interested, I will do the organising, you just let me know when! I can be contacted any time on 01733 578727 (home) or 01733 201254 (work...yes I do work!)

The Royal Anglian Regiment Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess Past and Present Dinner – 6 May 2006

Lt Col A Powell writes:

Matching the success of last year's event was always going to be a challenge and at times, particularly during the planning stages, I questioned the whole viability of the Dinner Club. Fortunately these negative thoughts did not last for long and, spurred on by the ever-exuberant Trevor Gedge, the final details were applied to the plan and we were ready to go.

There were a couple of minor setbacks; the Colonel of the Regiment had to pull out at the last minute and one of the planning team got deployed to Afghanistan. Numbers were a little down on last year but there was still a good cross section of people representing most elements of the Regiment and at least half of those attending were new faces.



Back row: Steve Norman, Bob Isbell, Steve Mabbut, Steve Richmond, Nobby Clarke, Kevin Johnson, Dave Wright, Clive Baldwin, Ray Jones, Dusty Miller, Eddie Kretay, Gary Ward, Kevin Dent, Steve Dale. Front: Colin Cox, Paul Hallybone, Andy Daubney, Steve Bulbeck, Brig (Retd) C Groves, Ollie Dent, Steven Farmery, Malc Woods, Dave Farmery.

Regimental Association



Sadie Sadler, Jenna Elba-Porter and Paul Sykes.

On the day, I found myself in the corner of the Mess, beer in hand, placing bets on who would be the first to arrive. This year that honour went to Den Foran and Paul Clements who both arrived around 1330hrs, shortly followed by Sadie Sadler and Paul Sykes. Strangely, rather like last year, the remainder of the afternoon became a little blurred!

After the traditional group photograph, the formalities began at 2000hrs with a total of 50 members sitting down to dinner. The Regimental silver, kindly made available by the 3rd Battalion, created the right Sergeants' Mess atmosphere, which was substantially enhanced by the excellent music played by a quartet from the Royal Anglian TA band; ably led by SSgt Frazer. After dinner, in the absence of the Colonel of the Regiment, I took the liberty of addressing the gathering, using the notes provided by him and updated everyone on the current state of the Regiment. Understandably there was no official response but Stan Bullock took the opportunity to crack a couple of relatively clean jokes, which was appreciated by all.

Possibility the most noticeable thing about this year's event was the physical absence of KC Jones, although he was definitely there in spirit. Having secured a 'health and safety' job in Afghanistan - a mind-boggling concept if ever there was one - he departed for the Middle East a week before the dinner. There is little doubt that he was missed by all but it was rather spooky to see his name appear in the visitor's book alongside Archie Peligo and Bonnalack! Despite



Dick Davies and Trevor Demant.



Roy Osbourne, Mick Henson, John Hunns, Al Swaep and Geordie Pattison.

this obvious setback the party continued well into the early hours of Sunday morning. The bar finally closed around 0230hrs and I crawled off to bed about 30 minutes later leaving Paul Clements, who, in an effort to be the last to leave the bar, had fallen asleep



Regimental Association



Terry Smith and Chico Duncan.



Trevor Gedge and Ken Lacey.



David Parr and Tony Shrubsall.

in the corner.

There is little doubt that the evening was a great success and judging by the numerous letters and emails received since, thoroughly enjoyed by all. Despite earlier reservations I have decided to repeat the event again next year and have therefore booked the same venue for Saturday 12 May 2007 and look forward to seeing you all there. Can I remind you, however, that we can only inform you if we have your correct contact details so please sent them to Chairman, Past and Present Dinner Club, West Tofts Camp, Thetford, Norfolk IP26 5EP.

The Fifth Annual Vikings' Old Boys Rugby Match

The Vikings' Old Boys Rugby Team, a mixture of former Vikings, those serving at E postings, former attached Arms and, for the first time, members of the old Pompadour team combined on a wet

December morning to do battle with the current Battalion side. A record 18 members arrived at various times and at varying levels of fitness.

At the far side of the pitch fresh from the sunny climes of Iraq, the 'new' boys looked very fit and athletic and ready to push their team into a 3-2 lead in the series.

The game was a full-blooded affair with the Viking pack led by Ollie Ormiston in the ascendancy and the South Seas backline running moves from deep. The Old Boys fought tooth and nail but finally succumbed to the pressure and conceded four tries, of which two were converted. The last word was left to the Old Boys as they crashed over for a well-deserved try. Final score 24-5.

With the match over it was time for the Old Boys to receive some good old fashioned Royal Anglian hospitality in the Corporals' Mess in the form of a curry supper and copious amounts of beer. The stories of how good players were and the usual 'when I was...' stories continued into the small hours and a great time was had by all.

It only leaves me to remind you all that game six is scheduled for October/November and we once again will be hosted by the Vikings. If you wish to attend, to watch or play, you can find details of the next match by e-mailing the Old Boy's Secretary, Capt Ian Wilkins at e-mail wilkie332@hotmail.com.

Felixstowe Gathering (Poachers)

29 October 2005

David Knight writes:

This year's Gathering was once again well attended, 164 including wives and partners. There were many old faces and several new ones. We started off the evening with a one minute's silence in respect of Steve Platts, one of our committee members, who died in August of this year. Tony Lamont and Alec Drage, ably assisted by Shirley Platts, who had expressed a wish to continue to help with this year's Gathering (and also future ones), had laid on another wonderful evening. In appreciation of Shirley's help she was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

In my opening address I welcomed all Poachers and their ladies, pointing out that this was our 20th Gathering and, incidentally almost to the day, 35 years since we sailed to Belfast for the Regiment's first tour of duty there. How time flies! It was also a pleasure to welcome IP 'Shack' Shailes from the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

It was with regret that I had to name Poachers that we had lost over the last 12 months: Terry Muncey, Chris Nolly, Jim Greenaugh, Bill Thompson and Diane wife of Merle Asprey. It was good to see so many Comrades attend these funerals.

Apologies were received from Gen Sutherell, Maj John and Margaret De Bretton Gordon, Bill Cornish and Ray and Jean Ogle.

In my speech I stressed the importance of Branches, Gatherings and Reunions and encouraged Poachers to attend where and when they can. The Regimental Day at Duxford should not be missed, what a wonderful day! It gets bigger and better every year with something for old and young alike. Indeed, I met Comrades from the Essex Regiment that I had not seen since Hong Kong 1954-55!

I made a loyal toast to Her Majesty the Queen before introducing our guest of honour for the evening, Col Peter Worthy and his lovely wife Ann. In his address he brought us up to date with the whereabouts of our Regular Battalions and their comings and goings. He also reiterated the importance of attending local Branch meetings. He then proposed the toast to the Regiment. Ann was presented with bouquet of flowers and the evening got underway with old stories and even older jokes, an extremely good buffet and a plentiful supply of alcohol though it must surely be a sign of old age when as many people opted for an extra hour in bed as those who opted for an extra hours drinking!

A collection made during the evening for the 'wreath fund' raised £375. Hopefully we won't need another collection for several years.

The weather was very kind to us as usual. A great many Poachers are now making a long weekend of it, arriving on Friday and leaving on Monday. It really is an excellent weekend. Any new members wishing to attend please contact Tony Lamont. 67 Glemsford Close, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 2UQ. Tel: 01394 286875.

Regimental Association

Obituaries

Lt Col (Staff QM) R Baylis MBE



Lt Col (Staff QM) Ronald Baylis died on 13 May 2006 aged 78 at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, after a painful struggle with Lewy-Body disease. He left school as an evacuee at the age of 14 and as soon as he could enlisted into the Royal Warwickshire Regiment aged 17. After basic and potential NCO training he was posted as a lance corporal to Budbrook Barracks, Warwick, training recruits for the Midland Brigade. Very quickly he was promoted to corporal and before his 21st birthday - sergeant. Ron was posted in 1949 to RMA Sandhurst where he trained the officer

cadets in drill and weapon training. 1951 found him posted to join 1 R Lincolns in the Canal Zone, Egypt where he was sergeant in charge of the intelligence section. He stayed then with the 1st Battalion for postings in BAOR (Goslar and Berlin), the Far East (Malayan Emergency) and by now a WO2 was appointed RQMS. He acted as QM in the last few weeks in Malaya (as the QM had returned to UK) and for the three months or so the Battalion was in Aden. After staging in Colchester the Battalion then moved to Minden, Germany and Ron was promoted to RSM.

In 1960 the Battalion moved back to Watchet to amalgamate with the Northamptonshire Regiment to form 1st Battalion East Anglian Regiment. So Ron was the last RSM of 1 R Lincolns and the first of the new Battalion, and later 2nd Royal Anglian Regiment. He organised a very successful amalgamation parade. Only one year in UK before the Battalion returned to Germany, this time to Osnabrück where Ron again was responsible for a huge parade for the presentation of new Colours by HRH the Duchess of Gloucester. A unique parade, with all the old Colours on parade as well as the new.

In 1962 Ron was commissioned and became MTO and as such went with the Battalion to Cyprus in 1964 after staging in Felixstowe. He took over the transport from the departing Regiment refusing to sign it was in good order. By the time the annual inspection came round it was in cracking good order and obtained 98 per cent in the first report and each year thereafter 100 per cent. 1967 saw Ron (now a captain) return with the Battalion to Felixstowe and while there sharing an unaccompanied six-month tour as QM. After this 19 years with the Battalion in 1968 he was posted to Bassingbourn as QM and a member of the project team set up to take the airfield over from the RAF and turn it into a training depot for the Queen's Division, and then from there off to Lisburn, Northern Ireland for a stint on the staff as Q.Maint. His promotion to major came through and the last seven years of his service he was Staff QM at the RMCS Shrivenham, the last two years as lieutenant colonel, followed by estate and site services officer as a civilian still at Shrivenham - thus still close to his beloved Army!

He was mentioned in despatches for defusing an unexploded bomb on the railway lines in Malaya and awarded MBE in 1968.

He is survived by his wife Daphne, son David and daughter Karen and four grandchildren.

DJWB

LCpl C Collingwood

LCpl Chris Collingwood was tragically killed in a motorcycle accident on Monday 27 March. He was buried at Woodlands Crematorium, Scunthorpe on Friday 7 April.

Christopher Collingwood (born 6 April 1984) enlisted at Scunthorpe Recruiting Office on 21 September 2000, aged 16 and a half. He was trained at ATR Bassingbourn before arriving in the 2nd Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment (the Poachers) in August 2001 and joined 3 Platoon, A (Lincolnshire) Company.

He spent three years in A Company, during which time he deployed on operations several times, and participated in several exercises. Within six weeks of joining the Battalion, he was selected for the company Cambrian Patrol Team, and was particularly noted for his physical fitness and robustness, as well as being a very competent signaller. These characteristics were evident again during Exercise Panther's Cub in the jungles of Belize in February 2002. During this exercise, he came to the fore within his platoon, showing a great deal of confidence and ability for a soldier with his limited experience.

Later that year, he deployed with the Battalion on an emergency six-month tour of Northern Ireland, working mainly in Belfast, but then also in the more rural areas of Fermanagh. Towards the end of that period, he took part in Operation Fresco, training as a firefighter and providing strike cover in Northern Ireland. Very shortly after this, he deployed with A Company on Operation Fingal in Afghanistan. Here he acted as a rifleman within the Kabul Patrols Company, but also on occasions acted as a team commander - testimony to his abilities even as a private soldier.

Following his return from Kabul, Pte Collingwood successfully completed a JNCO Cadre and was promoted to lance corporal. He was then posted with the Battalion to Ballykelly, where he was initially a team commander in A (Lincolnshire) Company, and then with C (Northamptonshire) Company. He completed the two-year residential tour in Ballykelly, which also included seven weeks on Exercise Saffron Sands in Jordan. He was recently preparing for the Battalion's imminent deployment on Operation Telic 8.

LCpl Collingwood was a robust, strong, and hard-working soldier with a great deal of potential. His personal qualities were variously described as thoughtful, confident and popular, friendly and cheerful. He had a good sense of humour, and was very well-liked - a fact that was reflected in the huge turnout at his funeral.

His main interest was motorcycles, and particularly moto cross. He regularly took his motorbike to the dirt track outside Ballykelly during his free-time. Tragically, this also proved to be his demise. His death was marked with a military funeral, with the 1st Battalion providing a firing party, and C (Northamptonshire) Company providing the bearer party - all volunteers who returned from leave early to rehearse and carry out this duty. LCpl Collingwood was single, and lived with his mother in Scunthorpe.

Maj BR Cornish



Maj Brian Cornish, who died in November 2005 aged 61, had a successful career as a soldier, sportsman, and administrator in the City of London, and managed to pack fun into every minute of it. 'Life', he used to say, 'is not a dress rehearsal'.

The eldest of three children, he was born at Exeter on 16 November 1944, where his father owned Cornish & Co, the outfitters from whom Cornish junior learned sartorial elegance. Educated at Exeter School, he joined the Army at the Wessex Brigade Depot in January of the freezing winter of 1963. After two years at

RMA Sandhurst, where he was a Junior Under Officer, carried the

Regimental Association

Queen's Colour, qualified as an Edward Bear parachutist and was in the rifle shooting team, he was commissioned into the Royal Anglian Regiment in 1965, serving initially in the 4th (Leicestershire) Battalion in Malta and Libya. Brian entered into every undertaking with whole-heartedness and no half measures. In Malta he became a member of the Battalion's rowing team, crewing a clinker-built gig with fixed seats, six oars and a cox. The Malta Garrison Boat Race was rowed over one nautical mile in Valletta's Grand Harbour. No British Infantry team had won since 1924. In 1966 the crew won by defeating the three Maltese Army teams, and in 1967 it was even more formidable - with Brian in the boat at number five - comfortably breaking the record.

Following Malta and Libya, and after active service in Aden in 1967 as a rifle platoon commander protecting Khormaksar Airfield, Brian was specially selected for a posting to Depot the Home Counties Brigade at Canterbury in the lead-up to the formation of The Queen's Division. He then returned to the Tigers as Anti-Tank Platoon commander in Bahrain before transferring to the 2nd Battalion at Colchester in 1970.

As Adjutant of Junior Tradesmen's Regiment Rhyl from 1971-73 he honed his skills of attention to detail, sound planning, and personnel management. He spent seven years in Northern Ireland, beginning in 1973 as a staff officer at HQ 3 Inf Bde, in Lurgan's Knicker Factory! There he wrote the most helpful guidebook *How to survive in Ulster*, which covered not survival as a front-line soldier, but how to really live life in the Province: shooting in Fermanagh, hunt balls in Omagh, theatre-going in Lisburn, and a good hotels and restaurants guide. That book (with updates) became the bedside reading of staff officers over two decades. Next, he was an inspired selection as an instructor at RMA Sandhurst where from 1975-78, in addition to recruiting some excellent young officers into the Regiment, he learned to skipper yachts. This was followed by two years as a company commander with the 3rd Battalion in Holywood and Colchester, before six months as the assistant military attaché in New Delhi, and two years at the School of Infantry. His final period of active service was from 1982-84 at Ballykelly as an ideal TISO of 5 UDR, where he was in his element jolly along all ranks of that Battalion. His distinguished 24-year Army career ended after two years in the Army Training Directorate of the MOD.

Brian much admired but never sought to become a 'roughie, toughie soldier'. Not selected for the Staff College and yet probably the best known of his rank in his generation, he retired from the Army as a Major at the age of 42, with exquisite timing on 2 October 1987 which ensured that he was eligible for shooting at Thetford for the season! He entered 'Civvie Street' and embarked on a career in the City of London. There for some 17 years he held a succession of progressively senior appointments, working with considerable distinction and renowned loyalty as a senior administrator, first, with British and Commonwealth Holdings, the international financial services group, as their head of administration.

The company enjoyed the enthusiasm and precision he brought to his work. In preparation for a visit from HM Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, he surprised everyone by insisting on a full rehearsal, including the lunch! He was able to indulge his passion for English watercolours when given a substantial sum of money to adorn the new City offices. Later, when B & C went into administration, he volunteered to stay on and work with the administrators and to ensure that everyone found new employment.

In 1991, Brian took up a similar post at Jardines, the international trading company, and soon after was made director of personnel - an unusual choice perhaps in that he could be outrageously 'politically incorrect' but a role in which he thrived: writing strategic papers, working at board level and using his excellent people skills. With global restructuring he sought new employment at LIRMA (the London Insurance and Re-Insurance Market Association), which later became the IUA (International Underwriting Association), where he stayed for a few years before joining Ince & Co. Solicitors in 2000 as training and personnel manager. He very soon expanded the role to become their first general manager. In all those organisations he

was equally full of interest in and consideration for his civilian work colleagues. They probably never realised that they were civilians until he told them so, and then endearingly referred to them as 'the troops'.

It was during his time in the City that his intellectual powers burgeoned. He wrote a compelling, comprehensive review of the honours and awards system with the aim of maintaining certain traditions and simplifying understanding. He enjoyed political debate and was a staunch - and critical - supporter of the Conservative Party, for many years being a member of the Bow Group, sitting on the Transport Committee. Had he been a Minister, he said, he would have wanted to be responsible for Transport, believing it to be at the centre of communication, commerce, work and social life. At heart Brian was a country boy. He loved his home county of Devon, and was a keen beagler, horseman, sailor and tennis player. A passionate shooter of game birds, from the 1968 season until the very end of his life - and with his wife also in the line - he travelled the length and breadth of the UK in pursuit of feathered quarry, and those shooting parties were legendary for their fine sport, jocularly and gourmet menus. He had a great love of opera, was an active Friend of Covent Garden, a founding member of the Grange Opera, and regularly took parties to both opera and ballet. He generously gave of his time to the Army Benevolent Fund in London, and was an avid reader of biographies, military history, and obituaries, admiring the achievements and bravery of others. In 1985 he met Diana, who was a young headmistress of a girls' independent boarding school and later a head-hunter in higher education. Although Brian made the most of bachelorhood, their romance flourished. They married in 1997 when Brian was almost 54.

For the last four years of his life Brian Cornish battled courageously against a rare cancer. He was determined to live life to the full and to fill every minute with action and fun. His infectious sense of humour, his ability to reach out and brighten the lives of the people he met from all walks of life will remain with us. He was a true gentleman with a strong faith, and our hearts and prayers go out to Diana at her loss.

MKG

WO2 T Goodrum

Tom died after a long battle with cancer in September 2005, the funeral took place at Wood Dalling Church on 7 October.

Tom was born in Lyng Easter near Dereham in 1933, he joined the King's Dragoon Guards for a short time then followed a stint as a factory quality controller.

The turning point in his life came when he joined the Royal Norfolk Regiment and married Dolly, around the time of the amalgamation. Tom was then a member of the Anti-Tank Platoon (Mobats and 17 pounders). In Aden Tom was the only man on Jebel Huriyah with cans of beer, they resided in a cut down chugle full of petrol. People walked for miles to try to scrounge one, where he got beer and petrol nobody could say. On the British Guiana operation the Battalion had a great time and Tom's wheeling and dealings went a long way to keeping his company properly provisioned, but his pet alligator caused some mayhem.

He then moved to the MT and became MTWO2 where his acquiring skills were much appreciated above the Arctic circle. At this time Tom and 40 other Royal Anglians from babies to Drum Majors were christened *en bloc* so to speak an event that made the *Telegraph*.

Tom left the 1st Battalion when it was in Tidworth in the mid 1970s and returned to his beloved Norfolk. He made his living as a shopkeeper, fishmonger and general dealer, his interests were his animals and the local boxing club. By this time he and Dolly had parted, a quiet private life followed, with his mates in the Duke's Head at Corpusty and his lifelong friend Jean.

TD

Regimental Association

Maj Al James



Maj Tony James, who died in 2004 aged 67, was considered one of the finest soldiers of his generation to join the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment), in which he served for 14 years before joining and later being commissioned into the Royal Anglian Regiment. He was a dedicated man of many parts who fulfilled a wide variety of roles and appointments at home and abroad, with flair and distinction.

Born and brought up in Dover where he attended Dover Grammar School, Tony entered the Junior Infantry Battalion at Tuxford in

1953 and joined 1st Battalion the Buffs in 1955. In his early career he saw service in Wuppertal, Dover, Aden and Dortmund. He was promoted to Mortar Platoon Sergeant in Aden just three years after entering man's service, a very early sign of the high regard in which he was held. After a spell as Recce Platoon sergeant in what had been re-titled 1st Battalion the Queen's Own Buffs (the Royal Kent Regiment), he was posted to the RMA Sandhurst as a SNCO instructor in 1963, where as an officer cadet I first came across his influential character. Although Line Infantry SNCOs were selected mainly for their expertise in weapon training and tactics, he made himself very visible and audible among his Guardsmen peers on the Parade Ground. In 1966 he returned to regimental duty with the Buffs (by then 2nd Battalion the Queen's Regiment) in Hong Kong. Promoted to WO2 as CSM B Company 2 QUEENS he served in Lingfield and at Palace Barracks, Belfast.

His strong organisational and leadership talents then led him in 1969 to the Royal Anglian Regiment, where he was appointed RQMS of the 4th Battalion, serving in Gillingham and Bahrain and where as a subaltern I was impressed by his approachable 'Wilco' attitude. In January 1971 Tony was commissioned and appointed Admin Officer of the newly-created Tiger Company 4 Royal Anglian (to which 'The Tigers' had been reduced), serving with them in the dispersed demonstration company at Mons and Sandhurst. As company 2IC of Tiger Company 1 next served with him in Gibraltar in 1972 where his administrative expertise fulfilling the roles of QM, Paymaster, MTO and company 3IC, made a significant contribution to the success of that tour. When Tiger Company 4 Royal Anglian with Albuhera Company 4 QUEENS set up the Junior Infantrymen's Wing at Canterbury in 1972, Tony became Assistant Adjutant before being posted to 1 Royal Anglian in Cyprus in 1973 as 2IC C Company, where he effectively commanded his company for half of the following year in Cyprus and Tidworth while his company commander was doing staff promotion exams and running the shooting team.

He was an outstanding company intelligence officer during the Battalion's Northern Ireland tour at Lurgan in autumn 1974. In addition to organising what his then company commander described as 'some fantastic company smokers', he was a very effective administrator during the challenges of two AMF(L) Arctic training seasons. He also masterminded a KAPE Tour, which included using his contacts in Canterbury to print cheaply the advertising literature and then getting an AAC Gazelle to fly to Kent to collect it! On the tour itself he persuaded the Battalion's new padre to conduct a service one Sunday in a Norfolk village, using a scrounged Ferret Scout Car as the pulpit. His creativity and innovativeness were of an unusually high order, and he had a great sense of humour! I was fortunate therefore to have served closely with Tony in the ranks of colour sergeant, WO2, lieutenant and captain over eight years.

On posting to pastures new, his loss to the Vikings of 1 Royal Anglian was to many others' gain. From 1976-78 he was the Quartermaster of a Mechanised Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron in BAOR, followed by seven years in Northern Ireland: successively as Tech QM of 3 Royal Anglian in Palace Barracks, a staff appointment at HQ NI, and QM of 5 UDR at Ballykelly. He next spent 1984-86

as British Liaison Officer (acting lieutenant colonel) on Exercise Trumpet Dance at Fort Wainwright in Canada, before six months on the British Military Assistance and Training Team in newly-independent Zimbabwe in 1987. His final appointment was for four years as Garrison QM at Sennelager in BAOR after which he left the Regular Army in 1991. But his military service did not end there! He spent 12 months as an RO at Paderborn, before spending five distinguished years as QM of Warcop Training Area in Cumbria, finally calling it a day in 1997 after 44 years in the service of Queen and Country.

A devoted family man, Tony James retired happily to live in Appleby with Pat, his second wife whom he married in 1979, and their daughter Clare of whom he was extremely proud. In Appleby he became a popular figure, well known for his charitable work in the community and his willingness to help those less fortunate. His untimely death came as a shock to all. To Pat and Clare we extend

Cpl N Jephcote MM



I first met Neville in Malta in August 1967. We were both relatively young soldiers starting our careers in the Royal Anglian Regiment. It was the start of a new football season and those good and fortunate enough were assembled down on the Regimental pitch ready to start training. A lot of the players had been around the football scene for ages and you could easily tell this by the premiership quality training gear that was being worn! About 10 minutes later than everyone else, this little lad with gingerish hair came down the hill to join us. He

looked ridiculous! He was wearing Army issued shorts that were almost down to his ankles, a red PT vest, grey socks and the famous brown plimsols that were so painfully thin that you felt as if you were bare footed. There were more than a few smiles and typical squaddie comments at this point.

They say that looks are deceiving and this was no more apparent than was seen over the next hour or so! He proceeded to run rings round everyone! He'd dribble round two players, nutmeg the third, and then somehow, disappear up his own behind, before appearing again in the six-yard box to stick the ball in the net! On the way he'd also have a few little kicks and niggles with anyone that came near him. In fact, for a small lad, he could put himself about quite readily and always gave back as good as he got.

Over the next few years, Neville enjoyed a lot of success on and off the field, establishing himself in the Battalion and became what was commonly known as a 'gladiator.' He represented the Combined Services at football, but also excelled in the boxing ring and on the running track too.

However, his greatest success came when we were posted to the 3rd Battalion, which was then in Paderborn in December 1970. It has to be said at this point that Neville was a poor trainer! He hated training - all he wanted to do was play. We were sent on six-mile runs around Paderborn in -10C on numerous occasions and were given heavy weights or medicine balls to accompany us. We would all leave the gym together and run through the camp and disappear out onto the icy roads of Paderborn with our packages. Neville, however, would always detour slightly and go past his accommodation block where he would deposit the weight onto his bed through an open window and then start the long arduous journey behind us. It wasn't long before he came flying past us all, looking remarkably fit and fresh. On his way back through the camp, he would conveniently retrieve his package and return to the gym looking suitably shattered. He also enjoyed bouncing the ball off players' heads and driving shots into our wedding tackle at any unguarded moment and in those sort of temperatures... well, there are a few people out there who will know how much that hurts!

However, the next five years saw us win the coveted Infantry Cup

Regimental Association

both in Germany and the UK each season and he of course played a very big part in them all. As I have said before, he became a Battalion icon, the crowds loved him...they watched this little man tear defences apart with his running and dribbling skills and naturally, he scored goals of all kinds and from all distances. I remember him in one match going through the defence, around the goalkeeper and then run on towards an empty net! He then stopped and placed that ball on the goal line, bent down and headed it over the line as half their team converged on him studs showing! Foolish yes, crazy yes, but this was Neville. Jimmy Jenks, our charismatic boss's face was a picture of surprise, shock and relief! Amazingly, he did it again later in the season, this time in a cup match! However, this time he ended up inside the net, looking at the ball sitting on the line and then saw it hoofed half a mile away into the trees...Jimmy and a few others were not quite so impressed this time!

During all this time of course, he was still a soldier and a section commander of considerable respect. We were sent on our first tour of duty to Belfast in April 1972 and it was during this that Neville showed us another side of him that will be forever etched in our minds. Belfast during those years was a very dark, dangerous and volatile place to be, especially, if you were young soldiers on the ground carrying out peace keeping duties in order to create some stability in the city. There are a few more of you out there who were on the Falls Road during early June, 1972 when Neville earned himself recognition far beyond the opposition penalty areas.

Over three days and nights of high velocity activity in the Clonard area of the city, Neville and his section had shot and captured a gunman while under intense sniper fire, and he himself had reacted bravely under fire to extract a young girl from the midst of a gun battle. He also found the time to find a weapons arsenal and arrest a further terrorist suspect in possession of ammunition. If that wasn't enough for him, he injured his knee quite badly, chasing down a gunman in the city, a fact that didn't go down too well with our boss, Jimmy Jenks...he was more concerned that he wouldn't be fit for our next match! Neville, for his outstanding display of courage, leadership and initiative, was awarded the Military Medal.

If I could sum Neville up in one word, it would be...unpredictable! Over the nine years that he served with us, I saw a little man who was a quality footballer, loved by his comrades and supporters alike, he gave the team that something extra and something different. He enabled us to win a lot of matches and competitions. We all had doubts about results if he wasn't playing, quite simply, he made us very dangerous and hard to beat. I saw a laid back, almost horizontal, fun-loving individual who never failed to give us all a talking point the following day. I also saw a courageous and professional section commander who gained himself high esteem by his brave, unselfish and significant actions under fire.

Neville, you deserve the highest and sincerest praise and on behalf of all those that served with you in all aspects of your military life, you will not be forgotten. Our heartfelt sympathy goes to his wife Gina and family.

AJ Dent

Pte J Lewaicei



On 13 May 2006 Pte Joseva Lewaicei, 25, from the 2nd Battalion, died as a result of injuries sustained from a roadside bomb in Basra, Iraq. He was on a routine patrol when the incident occurred.

Pte Joseva 'Lewi' Lewaicei (pronounced 'Lewethi'), was born on 29 April 1981 in Lautoka, Fiji. Lewi grew up in Fiji but decided early on, like many of his friends, to join the British Army. He joined the 2nd Battalion in May 2002 at the age of 21. He then served as a rifleman in Afghanistan between June and October

2003 as part of the enduring ISAF commitment and for two years in Ballykelly, Northern Ireland on a roulement tour. He also served in Jordan and Iraq, particularly enjoying the amount of time he spent in helicopters on both occasions.

Other members of his platoon will remember him fondly as a reliable and professional soldier as well as being someone who could make them laugh. He was the first Fijian to join the Battalion, and was planning to take some of his friends to the South Pacific to show them his home, Paradise Island. He was proud of his job in the Army and his efficient style was an example to others.

He was good company; his colleagues describing him as the soul of the platoon. He was also protective of them all and somebody others would turn to for help. One dyslexic soldier described how Lewi would assist him with his written English by checking the spelling in letters to his girlfriend. He was a keen sportsman representing the Battalion both rugby and boxing.

He was the father of a seven-year-old daughter in Fiji. Universally popular he will be sorely missed by his friends and colleagues.

Pte AP Morris



On 13 May 2006 Pte Adam Morris, 19, from the 2nd Battalion, died as a result of injuries sustained in the same incident in which Pte Lewaicei was killed.

Pte Adam Peter Morris, nicknamed 'Borris', was born on 24 September 1986. He lived in Leicester with his mother Linder and attended the local college before joining the British Army at the age of 17. He was single.

Pte Morris completed his basic training at the Infantry Training Centre Catterick in 2004. He then

joined C Company 2 Royal Anglian in Northern Ireland, serving as a rifleman during a two-year roulement tour in Ballykelly.

Despite being a junior soldier he had already been identified as having great potential. His colleagues anticipated that he would make platoon sergeant at the very least. He was noted for his sheer professionalism and reliability, and on a recent tactics and leadership course he passed out as best student. While exercising in Jordan he took over the role of a non-commissioned officer where he rose to the challenge and acquitted himself with composure.

He was a sociable individual with a good sense of humour. He made time for others and would raise morale by telling jokes and playing the fool, belying his true intelligence and passion for the military. He was happy to be in Iraq and getting on with his job.

During a period of ceremonial duty at the funeral for HRH Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester in November 2004 he was particularly pleased when members of the Royal Family spoke to him personally, complimenting him on his turnout and appearance.

He will be remembered as a friend and a most accomplished soldier. His loss has touched and greatly saddened all those who had the honour to know him.

WO2 BC Taylor

WO2 Barney Taylor died on 20 January 2006 after a long illness. He enlisted into the Royal Norfolk Regiment in 1946 and served with the Regiment in Berlin, Korea and Cyprus - and then with 1st East Anglian and 1st Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment until his retirement in 1976.

He then settled in Norwich and became involved in Association matters. He was vice-chairman of the British Korean Veterans Association and a member of the Norwich Branch of the Royal Norfolk and Royal Anglian Regiment Association. Until shortly before his death he was vice-chairman of the Norwich Branch and an active and valuable member of the Association Dinner Committee - someone who was utterly reliable and dependable, and a valued comrade.

Regimental Association



The Royal Norfolk Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Norfolk)

Benevolence

There was a significant drop in the number of benevolent cases coming forward in 2005 - in fact the figure was only just over half of that of the previous year and about a third of the figure for six years ago. Sadly however there are still ex-members of the Royal Norfolk Regiment, or their widows who need help and the Benevolent Committee is grateful to the various agencies who provide support and bring cases to our attention. In 2005 over £27,700 was paid out to our members of which £4,850 came from Regimental funds.

We rely on the Royal British Legion and SSAFA to identify those in need and to carry out the necessary casework - and we are grateful for them for their support. We are also fortunate to receive excellent support from the Army Benevolent Fund.

Cyprus

In 2005 the focus was on the 60th anniversary of the end of the war and many of our members were actively involved in the various commemorations. This year thoughts are turning more towards Cyprus as it is 50 years since the 1st Battalion came back to the UK after a year in Cyprus, a year which had included notable successes against EOKA, long hours of tedious anti terrorist operations and tragedies - five members of the Battalion were lost in a forest fire and in all 11 died during the tour and are buried at Waynes Keep Cemetery in Nicosia.

The cemetery is in the UN controlled buffer zone between the north and south parts of the island and can be visited by contacting the UN at Ledra Palace checkpoint.



Mr Ray Segon, Norwich Branch Standard Bearer.



Mr Ray Segon with Mr and Mrs Arthur Street after the Almanza Service in Norwich Cathedral on 23 April 2006.

Regimental Association



Two new members - Peter Whitwell and David Gyles.

A Cyprus Reunion takes place each year at North Elmham. The idea arose after the funeral of Mr Tom Grimmer when a group who attended decided that it would be nice to meet to talk about the old times. A handful attended the first get-together at Mrs Ruth Grimmer's house, and now, 12 years later, well over 100 attend and the village hall is full for the event. Since those early days the whole Grimmer family have become involved, and people come from far and wide. This year ex-national servicemen from Northampton and Peterborough came for the first time.

Chapel

The Association Cathedral Services are well attended, but sadly at present the Regimental Chapel is being used as the Choir School and we are using the North Transept. Hopefully the next phase of the building project will be completed within two years so that we can move back.

For the Association Service on 1 October this year only there will be a Drumhead Service at the TA Centre Aylsham Road at 0930hrs. The service will be conducted by the Rev Canon William Sayer and the Rev Ken Reeve will preach the sermon.



Mr Stan Rasberry at the Field of Remembrance, November 2005.



The Royal Lincolnshire Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Lincolnshire)

Lt Col Simon Bacon writes:

The Association in the county remains strong with the Branches undertaking a variety of activities ranging from monthly meetings to major events. Two notable successes have been the *Minden Band Concert* in Lincoln in December and the *Poachers Reunion Weekend* in March at Spalding. Both events were not only extremely enjoyable, but also very successful.

Association activities in the county for this calendar year have been collated and will be passed to the Chairman of the Royal Anglian County Committee, Col Geoffrey Newmarch, so our activities are co-ordinated. Branch committees are currently nominating e-mail points of contact to enable the dissemination of information by the internet, in particular, the monthly Battalion Newsletters. Discussions are also under way on the subject of increasing the number of retired members of the Royal Anglian Regiment in the

Association. WO2 (NRPS) Alan Ralph has recently joined the committee of the Lincoln Branch and has kindly volunteered in assisting in the task of contacting former members of the Regiment who live in the county.

We have been delighted to see our former President, Maj Gen Dick Gerrard-Wright, out and about and continuing to play an active role in Association matters. We are also indebted to Lt Col Trevor Veitch, who played a pivotal role in taking care of the Regimental 'treasures' that were held at Sobraon Barracks. After carefully indexing the contents of RHQ Lincoln, he initiated new custodial arrangements. We are also very grateful to our former Area Secretary, Capt John Lee, for his continued involvement in Association matters, not least as Chairman of our executive committee.

Looking ahead we were delighted to hear of the arrival of John Turquand whose remit as area secretary for Leicestershire and

Regimental Association



Northamptonshire has recently been extended to cover the Regiment in Lincolnshire. We look forward to welcoming Maj Turquand at the Regimental Reunion at Lincoln over the weekend 15/16 July 2006.

Lincoln Branch

The Annual Band Concert by the Minden Band was held in the Lawns in December before an audience of over 400 members and supporters. The programme had a Christmas theme with plenty of items in which the audience could participate. After the concert the Branch entertained the musicians to a buffet supper at Sobraon Barracks.

The Branch meeting held in February being close to the 160th anniversary of the Battle of Sobraon, a bangers and mash supper was held. During the evening the Chairman read the account of the Battle as seen through the eyes of one of the Sikh enemy Hookum Singh a gunner on the right wing of the Sikh Army who were opposed to the 10th Foot.

After having two years of no deaths of members, it is with sadness that the branch has mourned the loss of six members this year.

Once again the branch has taken on the organising of our Regimental Weekend to be held in July.

Birmingham Branch

The Birmingham Branch of the Association has been involved in the relocation of a plaque that was put up at the end of World War Two in the then Blakesley Public House. In November 2005 the pub was pulled down. The plaque was saved, cleaned up and put up in the Yardly Ex-Serviceman's Club.

One of the leading lights in the project was Harry Jarvis' sister, Joan Jones. Harry Jarvis served in the 2nd Battalion the Lincolnshire Regiment and died on 2 March 1945 and was buried at Riechwald Forest.



Stamford Branch

Following a period of uncertainty when it looked as if we were to lose our meetings venue at the Stamford Hospital Club, it would seem as if the problem has been solved for the foreseeable future and we can continue using the excellent facility.

On 17 January the Branch was represented at the funeral of Jack Lindley MM, a veteran who joined the Regiment in 1925. The Chairman and his wife travelled to Aylesham in Norfolk for the service along with other Association representatives. Our Vice-Chairman, Capt John Richards wrote an obituary to Jack, which was read out in full by the vicar at the service.

Also during January, Edwin Crompton and Ken Bramley represented the branch at the funeral of another veteran, Fred Clark of Grantham.

Unfortunately there are two other deaths to report. On 14 February the Branch was well represented at the funeral of June, the wife of our Standard Bearer, Michael Griffiths, and on 2 May members were present at the funeral of Wendy Nalson, wife of David Nalson author of the recent history of the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment entitled *The Poacher*.

On a lighter note a Sobraon luncheon was held at the Ketton Sports Club on 14 February. Fifty-one members and guests attended this excellent function, which was once again well organised by Eileen Miller.

Apart from our monthly meetings which take place at the Hospital Club on the second Wednesday of the month commencing at 2000hrs the next event is a trip to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas on 28 June.

Keith Harris continues to produce our newsletter which has quite

Regimental Association

a wide distribution and Ron Walker administers to the 'sick and wounded' as our welfare officer in his usual conscientious way. Although with the support of our friends from other units, together with the ladies, our events are well attended and new faces will always be welcome, particularly from ex-members of the Royal Anglians.

Poachers' 2006 Reunion

The Poachers' 2006 Reunion was held in Springfields Event Centre in Spalding on 18 March. Some 200 members attended the 7th Annual Regimental Reunion.

The Chairman, Trevor Snell, welcomed members and their guests to the Reunion and apologised for absent friends who were unable to make it this year, including a letter from the Colonel of the Regiment Maj Gen JCB Sutherland who had been with the 2nd Battalion the previous week.

Lt Col SJ Bacon, the Association President, opened the proceedings with a talk about the future of the Regiment and the roles of the 1st and 2nd Battalions.

The ladies of the Regiment organised a grand raffle with over 30 prizes. Mrs Bacon drew the first ticket to start the raffle off.

The Chairman presented Dusty Miller with a bronze Sphinx for organising the display of army vehicles each year. He also presented a sphinx to Adam Willoughby, the son of the late Brian Willoughby, a founder member of the Poachers Reunion. Adam is now studying at Cambridge University.

The catering staff served a sausage and mash supper and the evening carried on with dancing to the music of the Big Band with the Glen Miller Sound.

On the Sunday morning we attended the memorial service for the Royal Anglian Regiment. Lt Col SJ Bacon laid the wreath in memory of our friends from the Regiment. The service was conducted by Canon Tim Barker and the band of the Royal British Legion was on



parade, with the Royal Anglian Standard from Lincoln and Standards from the Northamptonshire Regiment and the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment. Lt Col Bacon took the salute at the march past.

The Poacher Reunion for 2007 will be held on Saturday 24 March with a memorial service on the Sunday morning.



The Suffolk Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Suffolk)

Benevolence

As expected the number of benevolent cases continues to decline, and in 2005 the drop was greater than predicted. Over £22,600 was paid out to 27 deserving cases, and of this figure £5,392 came from Regimental funds.

There has been a two-thirds drop in the number of cases over the last six years and it is now clear that we have passed the peak in terms of demand. However, there are still ex-members who need help and we are grateful to the Royal British Legion and SSAFA in particular who bring them to our attention.

The Army Benevolent Fund is also very supportive, providing annual annuities to widows and sponsored holidays to people who would otherwise find it difficult to get away.

Museum

The museum at the Keep is now open more often and for longer. It is open on the first Wednesday of the month from 0930-1530hrs and on the first Sunday of the month from April to September and during the Minden Reunion. Attendance on the Wednesday opening has steadily increased and as the word goes round the Trustees hope that the same will happen on the Sunday openings.

Mr Tim Davies continues as the attendant and he is helped by Colin Smith and John Hunns when the museum is open to the public.

The exhibits have been reorganised and updated and new ones added over the last two years so if your last visit was a long time ago why not come back again to this very special Regimental Museum?

The ground floor medal display is currently being remodelled by Mr Taff Gillingham and a new display case is being made to accommodate the Brett collection (Lt Col Brett, CO 2nd Battalion, killed at Le Cateau).

Normandy

The last Hillman trip took place in 2005, and the stalwarts from those trips now plan to join the Royal Anglian Regiment's trips, where their experiences of both 1944 and subsequent trips to the area will be a great asset to the group, which includes serving soldiers from the Regular battalion.

The Low Countries

Our trips to the Low Countries have been few. However, the people of Overloon and Venray in particular have always been very welcoming and grateful to those who liberated them in 1944. The museum

Regimental Association



Photographs courtesy the Bury Free Press.

in Overloon would like to create a 3rd Division memorial and planning on this has now started under Brig Deller as the present day Divisional Headquarters is actually deploying to Iraq this summer so is not in a position to manage the project. If all proceeds according to plan there should be a dedication in autumn 2007 and, hopefully, there will be an organised trip to the area to coincide with this.

Minden Day

Maj Stan Bullock, assisted by Tim Davies and KC Jones, are working to ensure that the Minden Reunion of 30 July 2006 is a success. A number of bands/groups have already confirmed their availability so we should have a full programme for the arena. A party from Les Amis de Suffolk Regiment plan to come over from Normandy.

St Mary's Chapel

Members of the Suffolk Regiment Old Comrades Association have responded magnificently to the appeal for help with the cost of repairing the roof of St Mary's Church in Bury St Edmunds. Cheques to the value of £2,857 have been received to date. If you have not done so already and would like to help, cheques should be made payable to St Mary's Roof Appeal and sent to the Area Secretary at The Keep, Gibraltar Barracks, Bury St Edmunds.





**The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment Association
and
The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire)**

The annual parade at the Cenotaph in London in November was as usual a great success. More and more spectators and participants seem to attend the event each year. Unfortunately we were only given 60 tickets for the parade, which meant that not all Association members who wanted to could take part this year.

Although there is a lot of waiting about before the service, the day is undoubtedly a memorable one. On the march past down The Mall we passed the new memorial to commemorate the work of 'Women in World War Two'. It seemed a strange, unattractive monument. On the journey home after the parade our contingent stopped for lunch at the Muswell Hill Branch of the British Legion where we had an excellent lunch. A worthwhile and enjoyable day and our thanks go to Mick Allum and George Owen of the Watford and Hemel Hempstead Branch for organising it.

Our own Remembrance Reunion at the Keep in Kempston the following week was another very successful event. Hundreds of Association members and their wives came to the ceremony, which was followed by a march past and lunch. The Minden Band played a prominent part in the day's arrangements. How smart they looked on parade in their greatcoats (new?). During lunch they played to those

in both the Keep and the TA Drill Hall next door. The musical show in the Drill Hall warms up as the day progresses and is something not to be missed. Our thanks to the Minden Band for an excellent all round performance, and to Maj Gilchrist, his band of helpers and Bedford Branch for organising the day.

National Servicemen have had at least two reunions in our area since the last edition of this magazine. Members of Intake 5419 had a reunion in Hatfield in November, and there was another at The Keep in February, which was attended by about 80 people.

It is hardly surprising that National Servicemen are becoming increasingly prominent in our Association and its affairs as time passes. They were the bulk of our young soldiers when the Regiment amalgamated 48 years ago. They did well then and they are doing well now.

There have been other events and outings in addition to normal Branch activities. There was the unveiling of the Frank Young VC Plaque in Hitchin in October which went well. Also in October there was a race night at Walthamstow greyhound track and in November there was a trip to the Birmingham Tattoo.

We have a battlefield tour in May of our old 2nd Battalion's



The Minden Band.

Regimental Association



The Regimental Gallery at Wardown Park - from left: A Chindit from World War Two; a Victorian soldier; a soldier who fought with the Duke of Marlborough at the Battle of Blenheim 1704, and a 1950s National Serviceman.

withdrawal through France to Dunkirk in 1940. Maj Robin Medley, who was with the 2nd Battalion in those days, is leading the tour. His book, *Cap Badge*, available from HQ Warley, is a history of the 2nd and other battalions of the Regiment in World War Two.

We are planning a battlefield tour to Cassino in spring 2007.

Our new display in the Regimental Gallery at the Wardown Park Museum Luton is well worth a visit. Especially on Wednesday mornings when it is manned by Regimental staff. Entry and car parking are free and there is much to see there. The display covers the history of our old Regiment with particular emphasis on the 19th and 20th centuries. Currently we are investigating the possibility of briefing youngsters and ACF contingents in the Gallery on the history of the Regiment.

The Hertfordshire Regiment Association

Despite a small committee the Association is very much alive and, as you will see, the last few months has seen quite a lot of activity.

Since moving the Regimental Gathering to Duxford it is increasingly becoming more popular. This year there was certainly a larger attendance and better weather than last year. We also had a bigger turnout of our members and Roger Francis smartly paraded our Standard. We all thought it was a good day out.

Our autumn fish and chip supper was again a sell out and enjoyed by members. The St Andrew Street TA Centre Bar lends itself to this type of event. The bingo session, organised by Roger Francis and his wife, was a great success as was the raffle they organised with many prizes being offered.

In November nearly 100 members sat down to the annual lunch at Mayflower Place. It is always fully taken up and supported by members and friends of the Association. We were grateful for the company of Maj Simon Watson TD, Officer Commanding E (Essex and Herts) Company, East of England Regiment who spoke after the lunch and brought us up to date with the activities of our local

TA Unit. Our Chairman thanked Maj Watson and presented him with a Hertfordshire tie.

On Remembrance Day our members paraded at the Hertford Town war memorial where a wreath was laid by Mr Jack Nicholson. Another wreath was laid at the Hertfordshire Regiment Memorial in the local All Saints Church by Cyril Austin before the Remembrance Service. Roger Francis paraded the Standard. That morning the Association provided a wreath for the Hitchin Detachment Army Cadets to lay at the Hertfordshire Regiment Memorial at Hitchin TA Centre. The following Sunday members attended the Kempston parade when Mr Alex Griffin laid the Association wreath.

Recently part of the TA Centre at Hitchin was sold and the Hertfordshire Regiment Memorial had to be moved further into the compound. At the same time the Hitchin Historical Society and our Association arranged for a cul-de-sac on the housing plot to be named after Lt Frank Young VC, a member of the Hertfordshire Regiment who was killed in the First World War. The Hitchin Historical Society found the funding for a descriptive plaque to be placed at the entrance to the cul-de-sac in memory of Lt Young. The plaque was unveiled by Col John Sainsbury TD OBE, military historian, in front of members of the Young family, members of the Association, Beds and Herts Association, Royal British Legion, E Company, Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force and others. All retired to enjoy refreshments in the TA Centre.

It will be of interest to readers to be aware that the Hertford Museum is arranging for a Hertfordshire Regiment Exhibition during 2007. They are requesting Regimental data, artefacts or personal experiences (on tape). The museum will be pleased to hear from you on Hertford 01992 582686. We hope to include a copy of the *Narrative of the Preparation for the Royal Family Visit to Hatfield House to Review the Volunteers Corps and Militia on Friday 13 June 1800*. We are loaning the 50-plus page document with large print of the parade held at the St Andrew Street TA Centre

Regimental Association



From left: Roger Francis (Standard Bearer), CSgt Haward EER, Pte Wenham EER, Mrs Douglas (Hitchin Historical Society), Lt Col Chris Sharwood-Smith (Herts ACF), Col John Sainsby OBE TD and Terry Young (nephew of 2Lt Young).

At our recent annual general meeting the members of the Hertfordshire Regiment Association agreed to fully support the setting up of a Royal Anglian Regiment Association in Hertfordshire.

It is to the great sadness we have to report the death of an ardent supporter and committee member of the Association, Mr Dennis

Corbett, a former Standard Bearer. Den joined the Regiment in the mid 1930s and will be missed by all who knew him. Many members, friends and associates joined his family at his funeral at Harwood Crematorium Stevenage on 3 March 2006. Our thoughts are with his wife and the family.



The Cambridgeshire Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Association (Cambridgeshire)

Cambridgeshires Remembered

On Friday 11 November 2005, members, supporters and friends of the Cambridgeshire Regiment Association met at the new Civil Justice Centre in East Road, Cambridge to witness the unveiling of a commemorative plaque in the foyer, dedicated to the memory of those who served in the Regiment and particularly those fallen in the First and Second World Wars. The Cambridgeshire Regiment HQ stood on the site of the new centre between 1916 and 1961 when the Regiment was disbanded.

After a welcome by District Judge Robert Blomfield TD, a service of remembrance and dedication was led by Senior Padre Alan Jesson TD. The lesson was read by the Lord Lieutenant, Mr Hugh Duberley CBE, after which he was invited by the Chairman of the Association, Col Colin Elsdon DL, to unveil the plaque. The traditional act of remembrance took place and wreaths were laid in honour of the fallen.

The County Court have decided that there will be an annual service of commemoration each year to honour the Regiment and the first will be on Friday 10 November this year.

Schwaben Redoubt

The 90th anniversary of the capture of the Schwaben Redoubt in 1916 in which the Regiment played an important part will be celebrated on 14 October by a service at Ely. It is also planned to organise a visit to Schwaben during October.

In late September 1916 the 28th Division captured half of the Schwaben in which the Regiment took part and on 11 October 1916 the CO, Col Riddell was summoned to attend Brigade HQ to be informed that the Cambridgeshires would undertake the next attack on 13 October. Riddell's plan was to use a larger force than envisaged and, in addition to the Regiment, the Black Watch and Cheshires would make up the infantry strength.

The Cambridgeshires took their first objective, the German trenches on the north face of Schwaben, and the second wave swept down the reverse face of the hill to consolidate their victory. The Black Watch came under murderous machine gun and rifle fire as if all German weapons had been turned on them alone. Despite crippling losses the survivors fought on to gain their objective. The victory was complete. Its military value conspicuous in that the valley of

Regimental Association

Ancre lay 'naked and exposed'.

Congratulatory messages to the Regiment included one from Haig himself, who referred to it as 'one of the finest feats of arms in the history of the British Army'. The Regiment's losses were four officers killed and some 200 men killed or wounded.

Cambridge Branch

The Branch held its annual New Year's lunch on 22 January 2006 at the Cadet Centre, Waterbeach. The Association President, Mr Freddie Grounds and Mrs Grounds were in attendance together with the Association Chairman, Lt Col D Denson and Mrs Denson. The Branch Chairman, Col Derek Latchford, was congratulated on organising a super buffet followed by a very successful raffle.

Mr Freddie Grounds showed a copy of a new booklet which he had obtained from the Changi Museum, produced by an inmate on how to repair and make items like glasses and false teeth from virtually nothing. Copies can be obtained from Mr Grounds.

Obituary

We regret to announce the following death: Bertram (Bert) William Brown died on 20 December 2005 aged 88. Bert served throughout World War Two with HQ Company 2nd Battalion the Cambridgeshire Regiment and was taken prisoner of war at the fall of Singapore. He worked on the 'Death Railway' in Thailand. The funeral Service was held at Saint Andrew's Church, Soham with committal at the West Suffolk Crematorium. The Regimental Standard was carried by Wally Rooke and Soham Royal British Legion provided a Guard of Honour with their Standard also on parade.



Right: The commemorative plaque.

Below: The unveiling.



Regimental Association



The Royal Tigers' Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Leicestershire)

Royal Tigers' Weekend

The Royal Tigers' Weekend this year will be held over the period 24-25 June. The annual general meeting of the Royal Tigers' Association (RTA) will take place at Devonshire Place, 80 London Road, Leicester, at 6.30pm on Saturday 24 June. The annual report and accounts for 2005 will be available at the meeting. The AGM will be followed by the 81st annual dinner at 7.15 for 7.45pm.

The Regimental Service and Parade will be held at 11.30 am on Sunday 25 June in Leicester Cathedral. The service will be taken by the Dean of Leicester, the Very Rev Vivienne Faulk. During the service a memorial plaque will be dedicated to Col M St G Pallot. After the service, campaign medals for Iraq will be presented outside the cathedral to members of 3 Royal Anglian who served in Iraq last year by the Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire and Lt Gen JC McColl CBE DSO.

Attendance at the annual dinner on Saturday and the Reception and Lunch on Sunday will be by ticket only. Further details can be obtained from the Area Headquarters in Leicester.

Royal Leicestershire Regiment Museum

Planning for the new Regimental Museum in the 16th century Grade 2 listed building Newarke Houses, Leicester is progressing well. The fundraising appeal has continued to be successful and the Museum Trustees are extremely grateful to all the Association members, families and friends of the Regiment who have contributed. Many thanks also to all those who have arranged events and persuaded other people to donate to appeal.

After the huge success of the two Minden Band concerts in the De Montfort Hall, a third concert was held on 10 April 2006, which attracted some 1,500 people. It was an exciting evening of military music played by some wonderful musicians with the Corps of Drums of the 2nd Battalion the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment. The programme included an organ recital, a solo by Nicola Rutherford and a sing-along of some old favourites. Congratulations and many thanks to Col Richard Robinson, Brian Holmes and Ian Sanders who organised this memorable event.

It is pleasing to report that, although the concert's accounts are not yet finalised, proceeds took the fundraising appeal to its target

of £250,000. However, since that target was set some three years ago, there is now a need raise another £30,000. This increase arises from additional expenditure related to access for disabled and audio-visual displays.

We have also started an acquisition and development fund with a grant from Leicestershire County Council to buy historic items and to refurbish the displays once the museum is open. Recent purchases have included the Albert Medal won by Pte William Foster of the Leicestershire Regiment in 1931 for saving a comrade's life in India. Work should begin in June filling the display cabinets, a key part of the display will be a replica of Trench 47 at Ypres, Belgium, where many of the Regiment lost their lives.

We aim to have a 'soft' opening of the Museum in November or December 6. This will be unpublicised, but as from 1 October 6, the date will be available by telephoning Area HQ on 0116-2622749. A more formal opening, hopefully by a VIP, will be held in the spring of 2007.

Regimental Benevolence

During 2005, the Royal Leicestershire Regiment Charitable Fund disbursed £5,483 of regimental money and £3,528 from the ABF to members of the Regiment and their families. In addition £1,320 was distributed as ABF annuities to ex-soldiers or their widows.

Tiger Leads Successful Operation in South Georgia

Former member of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment, Jim Rowlinson, was project manager of the first British expedition to kayak around the remote island of Georgia in the South Atlantic in November 2005.

The four-man team accomplished the 420-mile feat named Operation South Georgia in 13 days and eight hours - record! Jim who is 68 years of age described the mission as the 'Kayakers Everest'; he has contacted the *Guinness Book of Records* to be entered for the fastest circumnavigation of South Georgia. When not undertaking such risky adventures, Jim has many other calls on his time, most notably as county chairman for the Leicestershire and Rutland Royal British Legion.

**Visit
the
Royal
Anglians
on
the
Web**



<http://www.army.mod.uk/royalanglian/index.htm>

Regimental Association



The Essex Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Essex)

The Association has a very busy period approaching with a series of major events. On 7 May a new Association Standard will be dedicated in the Regimental Chapel at Warley and the old one laid up. The Rev John Mann will take the service. It has been made by Newton Newton of Skegness, the same company that made the new Standard for the Colchester Branch of the Royal Anglian Association, and we are certain that it will be a Standard of which the Association can be immensely proud.

In June we have our annual visit to Bayeux, followed by our reunion at Warley on Sunday 25 June when a Pew End will be dedicated to Maj Gen Michael Holme CBE MC. We look forward to the visit of Maj Gen John Sutherell CB CBE, who will be taking the salute. In September there will be the dedication of a memorial at Monte Cassino where, in 1944, the Essex Regiment played a vital part in the battle for the *Castle*.

In November of 2005 the Association held our annual Remembrance Service at Chelmsford Cathedral followed by our Salamanca Lunch. We were very pleased to have as our guests Maj James York, OC C (Essex) Company 1st Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment accompanied by his wife, and WO2 D Granfield. This was just after their return from service in Iraq. The lunch was held at the Atlantic Hotel, but this year we will return to our usual venue, The County Hotel.

Both the Thurrock Branch and the 4th Battalion Comrades Association remain active, which can well be judged by their following reports.

Thurrock Branch

The last three months of 2005, like other years, always seems to keep us busy. Maybe it is age creeping on, but not to worry.

In October we held our annual branch luncheon. Guests included the Mayor and Mayoress of Thurrock, the Association President, Col G Morgan OBE DL and Mrs Morgan, Branch President Lt Gordon Wren, Mrs R Mackinlay, wife of our Thurrock MP, and Mrs Rosayne Jones from HQ Warley. It was an excellent event with delicious food and friendly company enjoyed by all (letters received confirmed this).

November was our Association lunch held at the Atlantic Hotel in Chelmsford, and our annual Remembrance Service in Chelmsford Cathedral, both on the same day. Transport was provided between the two events. It was a great idea with good attendance.

Several of the Branch attended the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster. One of our Old Comrades, now a pensioner at Chelsea, joined us there. James Reddell. Attending the Farmers' Club after the service for refreshments was a welcome break after standing so long - our thanks. Local remembrance services were also attended, Essex Poppy wreaths were placed on memorials at Grays and Orsett by the branch.

At our Regimental Chapel Warley where we have regular monthly services, our November service had a remembrance atmosphere, Royal Navy, Army (Essex Regiment) and Air Force Standards were paraded at the service.

An evening of carol singing by the choir from the Ford's office was held in December in our chapel. I will explain the evening; you approach the floodlit chapel; the bell ringer is playing carols on the bells; over 100 people inside are singing with the choir; then before going out into the cold, warm malt wine and mince pies are offered. Well, it was close to Christmas.

An article in the December 2005 *Castle* called 'Pompadours Return

to Berlin after 40 years' reminded me of this happening before. We of the 2nd Battalion the Essex Regiment, the 'Pompadours', were in Berlin in 1945-46. It was a very cold and miserable city and divided into four zones, British, American, Russian and French. Checkpoint Charlie was in the American zone. The Brandenburg Gate was the dividing line between British and Russian zones. We old 'Pompadours' returned there 45 years later in 1991. The Wall had been built and almost removed by that time. They were selling pieces of it from stalls close to the Brandenburg Gate.

4th Battalion Comrades Association

The latter part of 2005 saw our members' annual dinner held on Saturday 8 October at the TAC at Warley with 67 members and guests sitting down to an excellent four-course meal at tables adorned with the Regimental Silver (our thanks to Capt Paul Thurston, E Company East of England Regiment for arranging this). It was good to see many of the old familiar faces of those who served during World War Two sitting down, some who had made the effort to travel great



Ted Hazle with wife Cis at the Members' Dinner.



Col GCP Morgan speaks at the Dinner.

Regimental Association

distances to attend, including Jack Pitter from South Yorkshire and Lt Ken Canler from Norfolk, as well as some of those living more locally like Ted Hazle DCM, Larry Bennett, George Skinner and Harry Conn to name just a few. As well as our own President, Lt Col GH Brewer TD, we also welcomed Col GP Morgan OBE DL - President of the Essex Regiment Association, Maj Ian Driver the incoming OC of 124 Petroleum Squadron RLC, Capt Arthur Pearce and Capt Mark Giles - PSAOs of 124 Petroleum Squadron (Warley) and 60 Signal Squadron (Aylesbury) respectively. We were also well supported by officers and adult instructors from A Company Essex Army Cadet Force and members of the Royal Signals Association (East London Branch). There was plenty of time to circulate and chat at leisure after the meal and speeches were over, a good evening - enjoyed by all.

Members also attended the Remembrance Service held at Chelmsford Cathedral and Essex Regiment Association Salamanca Lunch afterwards on Tuesday 8 November and the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster on 10 November.

Our President, Lt Col GH Brewer TD, accompanied by the Chairman, Capt JH Youles, Standard Bearer Pat Mulhall, Larry Bennett and representatives of 3 Group NE London Army Cadet Force attended the Eucharist Service, incorporating an Act of Remembrance at the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin at Ilford on Remembrance Sunday. Poppy wreaths were laid on our memorial. Also present was Mrs Jean Richardson (née Wiley) whose father and two brothers had all served with the 4th Battalion at Ilford before and during World War Two. She had previously donated the capbadges worn during the tenure of their service to the Association, and these had been mounted on the gauntlets and sling of the Association Standard Bearer as a 'living' memorial to the Wiley family. After the service a presentation of a framed photograph of the mounted badges was made to Jean as a memento of the day by the President.

On 5 December 36 members and guests met in RHQ, the Royal



John Eggleton, Harry Conn and Chairman Capt JH Youles at the Christmas buffet.

to mount just a single reunion event in 2006 in the form of a dinner to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the first reunion to be held post World War Two. No doubt there will be other opportunities to meet at events organised by the Royal Anglian Regiment - Essex Association, especially on the proposed Pilgrimage to dedicate a memorial at Monte Cassino to all members of the Regiment who gave their lives in Italy during World War Two, and also by our affiliations and friendships with the Reserve Forces in the area during the course of the year.

Our Battalion history project work remains ongoing, the end product to include the Battalion in general, references to its wartime activities including individuals' personal input, casualty lists and related information, the association, all issues of the KFS, information relating to the Wark Clements documentary and now the Cassino visit. Work on this project has resulted in amassing considerable information from various sources and proving invaluable when answering what has become a considerable number of enquiries from individuals seeking information relating to relatives who served with the battalion, this now another area of the association's operation, and taking us into new ground which is being approached in a professional way.

Our newsletter (*Knife, Fork, Spoon*) and membership contact concept remain successful, the second being seen as a duty of care in respect of members unwell or no longer able to actively support. The Association, despite the ticking clock, remains strong and change where required, or necessary, will be implemented to ensure continuation for the foreseeable future.

Officers' Dinner Club 4/5th Battalion

The annual dinner of the Officers' Dinner Club, 4/5th Battalion the Essex Regiment (TA) was held in the Officers' Mess 13 Air Assault Support Regiment RLC, in Roman Way Barracks, Colchester on 8 April 2006.

Col RA Shervington TD DL presided. The principal guests were the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Lord Petre, Mrs J Tolhurst, Retiring High Sheriff of Essex and Mr P Tolhurst. Twenty-seven members of the Dinner Club, including serving officers from E Company, 3rd Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment, attended.

As this was our seventh year in which we had been given the privilege of dining in this Mess, the Mess was presented with an Essex (Eagle) plaque.

It is hoped that the friendship and co-operation achieved over



President, Lt Col GH Brewer with Mrs Jean Richardson on Remembrance Day.

Anglian Regiment at Warley for the Christmas reunion. An excellent buffet was provided by chef SSgt Stan Worthington of 124 Petroleum Squadron and the bar was open courtesy of the Regimental Secretary, Maj DI Gilchrist. The opportunity was taken to show the appreciation of the Association to SSgt Ian Rawlinson, SQMS of 124 Petroleum Squadron, RLC, for all the unstinting help he has given us in the mounting of the reunion events in the TA centre at Warley. The work that Ian has done for us behind the scenes and behind the bar is much appreciated and is indicative of the spirit in which our membership affiliation to 124(P) Squadron works. A very convivial afternoon was enjoyed by all, in august surroundings with several of the 'old and bold' in attendance, including Cis and Ted Hazle, Charlie Jackman, Larry and Sheila Bennett, Roy and Pat Engwell, Peter and Freda Giggins, Harry Conn as well as Colonel and Mrs Morgan and Lt Col and Mrs Brewer.

With the inevitable declining attendance at our reunion events and the ever increasing mounting costs it has been reluctantly decided

Regimental Association

the past years will continue when the Regiment is in its new Mess accommodation in Colchester.

The Royal Anglian Association (Colchester Branch)

Malcolm Firman (1st Battalion the Essex Regiment 54-56) a new member to the branch is cordially welcomed, and it was good to see him at the AGM. Several membership enquiries from various parts have been received, including one from Tim Hagon, now living in Germany in Wienhausen, who is thinking about starting a branch with other ex-Regimental folk living there. Strength in the branch remains good (including some who have rejoined - welcome back) and looks like rising in 2006.

The by now well established sequence of functions has continued through the winter and into the New Year, beginning with the Colchester Civic Service on Remembrance Day, where again our detachment marched proudly behind our Standard, borne as always by Gerald Dorritt. An excellent curry lunch followed afterwards at the TA Centre, laid on by Rod Allen and his team. In early December we held our Christmas function - again at the TA Centre, which was much enjoyed by all who attended, and on 9 April our 5th AGM was held - the date particularly chosen as being as close to our formation date of 5 April 2002 as practical. It was decided to hold the meeting on a Sunday and combine it with a curry lunch and this proved to be a great success, with members and families totalling around 100 in attendance. Plans agreed for the year included a mid-summer barbecue, attendance at the Colchester Military Festival in July and of course at the Regimental Day in September, Remembrance Day in November and finally the Christmas gathering on 16 December - and all for a subscription of £10 a year!



Anyone who would like to join the Branch should contact the Secretary, Brian Davenport at 36 Catherine Hunt Way, Colchester CO2 9HS, Tel: 01206-564919. Email davenport@colchester1737.freemove.co.uk

freemove.co.uk

Officers of the Branch: Chairman: Tony Downes; Treasurer: Colin Ladley; Assistant Secretary: Alan Swaep. Members: Martin Gilbert, Mick Henson, Geordie Pattison, Bob Potter and ex officio Rod Allen.



The Northamptonshire Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Northamptonshire)

Area Secretary

A warm welcome to Maj John Turquand as our new Area Secretary who was appointed to the post at the beginning of March this year. He has quickly settled in to the role and looks forward to meeting members of the Association over the Reunion Weekend. He has established himself by setting up the new Northampton Branch of the Association, the first meeting was held on 23 May 2006 at the TA Centre, Clare Street. Readers who would like to join the Northampton Branch should initially contact the Area Headquarters on 01604-635412.

Association Annual Reunion

The Annual Reunion will take place on Saturday 22 July and Sunday 23 July 2006. The Reunion Dinner will be held in Northampton Guildhall at 7pm, preceded by the AGM at 6pm. There will be an inspection parade outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre 1015am followed by the Service at 10.30am on Sunday 23 July. During the service there will be a rededication of the 48th/58th Colours which have been remounted in new cases with internal illumination. The service will be followed by a buffet lunch in the concert room of Northampton Working Men's Club very close to the church. Any Comrades who would like to attend the weekend should contact the area office on 10604 635412. The 2007 Reunion will take place on 28/29 July - Talavera Day.

Peterborough Branch

The Branch has had a very good few months with the reunion dinner in October which was well attended and reported to have been the best ever yet with good food and an outstanding performance from

the City of Peterborough Band. After the band had finished the tables were moved from the dance area for people to enjoy the rest of the evening dancing to a variety of music.

The Christmas Branch meeting was just as successful with a good turnout, and thanks to the ladies who provided the food. Other branch meetings have been well attended with funds being raised by raffles towards the widows' Christmas gifts. The branch is looking forward to another year with plenty of events for members to take part in.

Officers' Lunch Party

The Officers' Annual Lunch was held on 10 May 2006 in the Army and Navy Club, London, hosted by Gen Sir John Akehurst. Numbers were up again on previous years.

Beating Retreat

A most successful Beating Retreat was held at the Clare Street TA Centre on Saturday 13 May. Guests included the Vice Lord Lieutenant and the High Sheriff and mayors from local towns. It was good to see so many other friends of the Regiment and a particularly fine performance by the Band and Corps of Drums of the 3rd Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment.

The Northamptonshire Regiment Museum

Bob Pochin, our museum attendant, has been busy reorganising some of the displays in conjunction with the museum staff. We are pleased to report that a display which depicts the Northamptonshire Regiment Officers' Mess in early 1900s has now been completed. More projects are now in hand that will give more prominence to the Royal Anglian Regiment.

Regimental Association



Remembrance Day.

Benevolence

During 2005 the Association disbursed £3,758 of Regimental Benevolence Funds and a further £1,120 from the Army Benevolent Fund. In addition £1,980 was distributed to ex-soldiers and widows as ABF annuities. The Association is most grateful to the Royal Anglian Regiment for a grant of £2,500.

Finedon Branch

The Branch was well represented at the Poachers' Gathering at Felixstowe in October. The Branch paraded in Wellingborough on Remembrance Sunday with a splendid turnout. The Regimental Wreath was laid by in-pensioner Shack Shailes who was resplendent in his Royal Hospital scarlet uniform. The Deputy Mayor took Shack to the memorial in the mayor's car and photographs were taken after the parade. As is now the custom the Branch then retired to the Hind Hotel for lunch.

The Annual Regimental Dinner was again held at the Hind Hotel in December with a slightly different format. It was the highlight of the year and was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

The yearly tenpin bowling event was a family occasion with young and old taking part. This year there were two double winners and everyone had a brilliant time.

Deaths

Cornish: In Leicester on 26 January 2006, Maj WM Cornish, late 2nd Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment.

Draper: In Kettering on 15 February 2006, aged 92, Mr Samuel Draper, late 4th Battalion the Northamptonshire Regiment.

Morris: In Telford on 4 February 2006, aged 81, Mr Denis Alfred Morris, late 5th Battalion the Northamptonshire Regiment.

Tassell: In Houston, USA on 7 March 2006, aged 86, Mr Victor



Shack Shailes and Ray Ogle.

Douglas Tassell (Tass), late 2nd Battalion the Northamptonshire Regiment.

Forthcoming Events

22/23 July 2006: Annual Reunion, Northampton.

6/7 October 2006: 70th Battalion Reunion, Kettering.

21 October 2006: 5th Battalion Peterborough Branch Dinner, Yaxley RBL.

Association Branches

Norfolk

HQ The Royal Norfolk Regiment Association and The Norfolk Branch the Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Norfolk)
 Britannia House,
 TA Centre, 325 Aylsham Road,
 Norwich, Norfolk NR3 2AB
 Tel: (01603) 400290
President: Maj Gen JCB Sutherland CB
 CBE

Gorleston and Great Yarmouth Branch
 Mr S King,
 76 Edinburgh Avenue,
 Gorleston,
 Great Yarmouth NR31 7HA

Norwich Branch
 Lt Col PF Garman,
 7 Minion Close,
 Norwich NR7 0TX

Suffolk

HQ The Suffolk Regiment Old Comrades Association and the Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Branch)
 The Keep, Gibraltar Barracks,
 Bury St Edmunds,
 Suffolk IP33 3RN
 Tel: (01603) 400290
 (01284) 752394 (Wed only)
President: Brig WC Deller OBE

Bury St Edmunds and District Branch:
 Mr C Smith,
 15 Rectory Road,
 Whepstead,
 Suffolk IP29 4TE

Ipswich Branch:
 Mr D Gillingham,
 218 Colchester Road,
 Ipswich,
 Suffolk IP4 4QZ

Hemel Hempstead Branch
 Mr M Gilbert (Secretary)
 84 Westfield Road,
 Berkhamsted,
 Hertfordshire HP4 3PN

Beccles Branch
 Mr ME Reed,
 143 The Avenue,
 Lowestoft,
 Suffolk NR33 7LJ

Felixstowe Branch
 Mr N Buckingham,
 Marahaba,
 18 Fairfield Avenue,
 Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 9JN

Stowmarket Branch
 Mr D King,
 110 Bury Street,
 Stowmarket,
 Suffolk IP14 1HT

Leiston Branch
 Mr AJ Watson,
 57 St Margaret's Crescent,
 Leiston,
 Suffolk IP16 4HP

Lowestoft Branch
 Mrs R Coote,
 76 Tedder Road,
 Lowestoft,
 Suffolk NR32 4DD

Cambridgeshire

HQ The Cambridgeshire Regiment Association and the Cambridgeshire Branch The Royal Anglian Regiment Association c/o Cambridgeshire ACF, Denny End Road,
 Waterbeach, Cambridge
President: Mr FJ Grounds DL
Secretary: Maj MA Jarvis
 1 Witham Close,
 St Ives,
 Cambs PE27 3DY
 Tel (01480) 380234

Cambridge Branch
 Col D E Latchford,
 48 Lode Road,
 Bottisham,
 Cambridge CB5 9DJ
 Tel: (01223) 811454

Ely Branch:
 Mr HR Hitch,
 7 Olivers Way,
 March,
 Cambs PE15 9PU
 Tel: (01354) 653058

March and District Branch
 Ms T Copeman,
 157 Wisbech Road,
 March,
 Cambs PE15 8EY
 Tel: (01354) 52021

Wisbech Branch
 Mr RC Keating,
 41 High Street,
 Sutton,
 Cambs CB6 2RA
 Tel: (01353) 778128

Whittlesey and Peterborough Branch
 Mr B Whitwell,
 48 Coronation Avenue,
 Whittlesey,
 Cambs PE17 1XE

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire

HQ The Royal Anglian Regiment Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Association,
 Blenheim House,
 Eagle Way, Warley, Brentwood,
 Essex CM13 3BN
 Tel: Brentwood (01277) 213051
 President: S C Whitbread JP
 Chairman: Brig AFFH Robertson CBE

Hertford Branch
 Mr SR Mansfield,
 13 Calton Court,
 Hertford,
 SG14 2ET
 Tel: (01992) 554268

St Albans Branch
 Mr P Messenger,
 14 Mobile Home Site,
 Drakes Drive,
 St Albans, Herts AL1 5AE
 Tel: (01727) 858131

Bedford Branch
 Mr E Roberts,
 3 Manor Close,
 Kempston,
 Bedford MK42 7AA
 Tel: (01234) 854507

Hitchin Branch
 Mr R Wareham,
 12 Waltham Road,
 Hitchin,
 Herts SG4 9JW
 Tel: (01462) 622635

Hertfordshire Regiment Association
 Mr C Austin,
 97 West Street,
 Hertford,
 Herts SG13 8EZ
 Tel: (01992) 558757

Maj PJ Burgess,
 37 Portvale,
 Hertford,
 Herts SG14 3AF
 Tel: (01992) 586107

Watford and Hemel Hempstead Branch
 Mr EG Owen,
 37 Bibshall Crescent,
 Dunstable,
 Beds LU6 3NF
 Tel: (01582) 665734

Luton and Dunstable Branch
 Mr S Chapman,
 86 St Margarets Avenue,
 Luton,
 Beds LU3 1PQ
 Tel: (01582) 728976

Association Branches

Essex

HQ The Royal Anglian Regiment
Blenheim House, Eagle Way,
Warley, Brentwood,
Essex CM13 3BN
Tel: (01277) 213051
President: Col GCP Morgan OBE DL

4th Battalion Comrades Association

Capt J Youles,
50 Kursaal Way,
Southend on Sea,
Essex SS1 2UZ
Tel: (01702) 617983

7th Eagle and Gun Regimental Association

Mr V Foulsham,
62 Armstrong Avenue,
Woodford Green,
Essex IG8 9PT
Tel: (0208) 5314808

Colchester Branch

Lt Col BHM Davenport,
36 Catherine Hunt Way,
Colchester,
Essex CO2 9HS
Tel: (01206) 564919

Thurrock and District Branch

Mr P Giggins,
89 Salisbury Road,
Grays,
Essex RM17 6DG
Tel: (01375) 378427

Lincolnshire

HQ The Royal Lincolnshire and Royal Anglian Regiment Association
The Keep, Sobraon Barracks,
Lincoln LN1 3PY
Tel: (01522) 525444
President: Lt Col SJ Bacon

Lincoln Branch

Mr C Key,
10 Marne Gardens,
Lincoln LN1 3UQ
Tel: (01522) 530762

Grimsby Branch

Mr B Welbourn,
88 Columbia Road,
Grimsby,
Lincs DN32 8EB
Tel: (01472) 590090

Spalding Branch

Mr T Snell,
29 St Thomas's Road,
Spalding,
Lincs PE10 2XY
Tel: (01476) 563548

Midland Branch

Mr F Birkett,
123 Foley Road West,
Streetly
Sutton Coldfield B74 3NZ

Stamford Branch

Mr J Elms,
26 Barrington Gate,
Holbeach,
Lincs PE12 7LB
Tel: (01406) 422221

Scunthorpe Branch

Mr D Pearson,
97 Healey Road,
Scunthorpe,
N Lincolnshire DN16 1HU
Tel: (01724) 870170

Northamptonshire

HQ The Northamptonshire Regiment Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Northampton)
TA Centre, Clare Street,
Northampton NN1 3JQ
Tel: (01604) 635412
Chairman: Maj T Dormer TD

Finedon Branch

Mr RH Ogle,
44 Hayden Avenue,
Finedon,
Northants NN9 5ET
Tel: (01933) 681525
www.poachers.net

Peterborough Branch

Mr NFL Muncey,
2 Ladysmith Avenue,
Whittlesey,
Peterborough PE7 1XX
Tel: (01733) 205120

Leicestershire

HQ The Royal Tigers' Association and The Royal Anglian Regiment Association (Leicestershire)
TA Centre, Ulverscroft Road,
Leicester LE4 6BY
Tel: (0116) 2622749
President: Maj Gen AJG Pollard CB CBE DL

Wiltshire

Warminster Branch
Mr A J Black,
80 St John's Road,
Warminster,
Wiltshire BA12 9LY
Tel: (01985) 219944
Email: *black@vsoc.fslife.co.uk*

Affiliated ACF and CCF

Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force



Cadets outside the new training centre.

Bedfordshire Army Cadet Force

New Training Centre

Bedfordshire ACF's new £3 million Training Centre at Army Training Regiment Bassingbourn, shared with Hertfordshire ACF, will be officially opened on 17 June 2006. Presiding will be the Lord Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, SC Whitbread, and the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, Col EW Faure-Walker.

It seems an age since our Commandant, Lt Col Watson, placed a time capsule in one of the cavity walls of the centre in 2005. It contained various cadet items including a Royal Anglian beret and cap badge, reflecting Bedfordshire's main regimental affiliation. The whole county has watched its steady progress to completion via our county website, with photographs supplied by our CEO, ex-Pompadour Maj Graham Taylor.

This is a state of the art training facility, which provides sleeping accommodation, ablutions, full catering facilities and classrooms. Being located on the Army base, cadets will also be able to use their outdoor training facilities including ranges and sailing.

In March of this year, cadets along with the Mayor of Royston, Cllr Bill Prime, planted over 1,000 trees to enhance the site and act as wind-breaks.

On the official opening day there will be cadet photo displays from Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire ACFs. Stands will depict cadet activities, including shooting, adventure training, first aid, skill at arms and signals. Parents and other VIPs will be invited on the day.



Cadets with the Mayor of Royston.

Testing Time for Cadets

A team of local army cadets won a gruelling test of skills organised by the Cambridge University Officer Training Corps over the weekend of 4/5 March at the Territorial Army Centre in Coldham's Lane, Cambridge.

Thirty-eight young people, aged between 14 and 18, competed in Exercise Cadet Stretch which involved teams from the Combined Cadet Force from private schools at Culford, Perse and Kimbolton, taking on Cambridgeshire Army Cadets at individual and team tasks designed to test leadership, physical fitness and military skills. The activities included target shooting, first aid, an assault course and a night exercise.

Although Cambridgeshire army cadets secured the team victory, the best individual cadet was Cadet Warrant Officer Patrick Forbes (17) from Kimbolton School, whose military knowledge and shooting skills earned him the chance to fire a field artillery gun under the supervision of trained Army staff.

Prizes provided by the East Anglia Reserve Forces and Cadets Association were awarded to the winners by the Commanding Officer of the Cambridge University Officer Training Corps, Lt Col Daren Bowyer, who said: 'The standards of the British Army provide a solid foundation for all young people, whether they are considering a career with the armed services, or simply for application in their everyday lives. These cadets are a fine example of young achievement at its best.'

The most senior army cadet present, Sgt Maj Daniel Baker (18) said: 'This type of activity really teaches you how to be a leader in life and be part of a team. It provides fun, excitement and a chance to do your best.'



Exercise Cadet Stretch winners.

Operation Fenland Rhino

Thirty-five Army cadets and five adult instructors from all parts of Cambridgeshire are preparing for the challenge of a lifetime - a four-week expedition to Namibia, organised by Cambridgeshire Army Cadet Force in partnership with World Challenge Expeditions, taking place between 26 July and 17 August this year.

The 22 male and 13 female cadets aged between 14 and 18 have the task of raising £2,000 each to fund every aspect of the challenge apart from their personal equipment.

The cadets will learn how to cope with a new cultural environment while dealing with adversity and becoming more aware of personal strengths and weaknesses. They are planning and undertaking what truly is their expedition, taking ownership of financial responsibility, setting and meeting objectives, and learning to become confident decision makers.

The expedition, which is a first for Cambridgeshire ACF, is to be completed in four phases, under the command of the unit expedition

Affiliated ACF and CCF



The Namibia Team.

leader Capt Steve Swann. Assisting Steve will be ACF instructors - Under Officer Andrew MacKenzie and Sgt Instructor Sara Collins, working closely with Flt Lt Kirsty Burnham from the Air Training Corps, and Under Officer Sarah Taylor from Cambridge University Officer Training Corps.

The team have prepared for the considerable challenge of living and working in a totally different environment during a preliminary training expedition which took place at Buxton, Derbyshire between 13-16 February.

Namibia is a vast country on the southwest coast of Africa, where scorched deserts and the ice-cold seas of the Atlantic Ocean meet in dramatic style. The bush conditions inland equal the most sparse in the world. On arrival the cadets will be given time to adjust to the climate, culture, altitude and terrain and to practise working as a team. They will then carry out an expedition in the wilds of the Namibian bush; undertake a community based project renovating a local school; and, after all their hard work experience, a welcome period of rest and relaxation, taking part in a wide range of activities such as white water rafting and horse riding, prior to returning home.

The ultimate aim secured, we expect to welcome back 35 young people far better equipped to take their place in society having developed skills and attributes which will directly benefit them throughout their personal and professional lives.

Hertfordshire Army Cadet Force

TEC Presentation Evening

The Commandant held a presentation evening in December for three Royal Anglian badged cadets who had obtained their BTEC Diplomas in public services. The visitors were welcomed and, following a brief presentation about the ACF from the Commandant, families and friends were able to watch as the High Sheriff, Mr David McMullen, presented the awards. The proceedings were attended by several representatives of the media and reports were filed in local newspapers as well as the *Hertfordshire Life* magazine. Following the formal presentations the recipients, families and friends were able to circulate with High Sheriff and other dignitaries at a buffet. The recipients were RSM Perry from Hertford Detachment (1 Company), CSgt Booth from Hoddesdon Detachment (1 Company) and CSgt Outram from Stevenage South Detachment (2 Company).



Col McLeod (Comdt) with CSgt Booth, RSM Perry, CSgt Outram and the High Sheriff.

High Sheriff's Award

Number 1 Company's Sergeant Major, Cedric Carter, was called to account by the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire at County Hall in March. But it wasn't anything to do with unlawful behaviour!

Cedric was being rewarded by the High Sheriff for his voluntary work with the youth of Hertfordshire through the ACF. Cedric has been Detachment Commander at Hertford Detachment for many years, and also has a major role in organising the cadets who steward the Beating Retreat at Haileybury College annually. He was promoted to Company Sergeant Major at annual camp last year.

The Deputy Commandant and cadet executive officer were in attendance at the reception held at County Hall Hertford to see CSM Carter receive his award from the High Sheriff. Lt Col Sharwood-Smith said: 'It is nice to see the work of cadet force volunteers being appreciated by those outside the organisation, and Cedric has put a lot of time and effort into his cadet work so this is a fitting reward'.

Cross Country Competition

108 cadets from around the country converged on Hitchin for the annual cross country competition, on Sunday 19 February. The course proved to be as tough as usual, but everybody did their best and the end result was success for all three areas.

Affiliated ACF and CCF



Bassingbourn Nears Completion

As the Cadet Training Centre at Bassingbourn nears completion, cadets from No 2 Company, Hertfordshire ACF, along with members of Bedfordshire ACF, and the Air Training Corps joined together to help plant trees around the new buildings. The trees will help to give the Training Centre a pleasing look as well as helping the environment. The Woodland Trust were on hand to assist with the appropriate technical information as to how the trees should be planted and they had advised on a suitable number of appropriate varieties to plant.

Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland Army Cadet Force

Journal time has caught up with us and since the last report we have been busy with our usual schedule of frantic activity. We once again triumphed in the Eastern Region Cross Country, coming first in the Senior and Junior events to become Champions for the fifth time in succession.

A party of cadets and adults also have taken part in Exercise Ski Cadet at St Ulrich in the Austrian Tyrol for the first time, many achieving various passes in skiing qualifications (some already booked for next



Camp 2005.

Affiliated ACF and CCF

Swynnerton, June 2005.

year's trip) so obviously a huge success, despite the sore knees and bruises that most participants seemed to have collected.

All companies have completed at least one of their field training weekends and are well into the year's training programme. We have taken part in Eastern District Rugby and Swimming Competitions and many other activities. At the time of writing we have just completed a pre-canoe cadet weekend with 47 cadets trying their hand at canoeing to see if they like it enough to take up the challenge of a week's canoeing which takes place from 26 May to 2 June.

We are also involved in the various fundraising events around town during the next few months collecting for ABF, SSAFA, and many other charities so if you see any of the cadets around the town stop and have a chat - I am sure they would love someone to talk to.

Our next big event is annual camp which is being held at Penhale Camp on the Cornish Coast. This year we plan to take about 400 cadets on each week so once again a busy stretch ahead.



Competition weekend, November 2005.

Lincolnshire Army Cadet Force**The Lomax Shooting Competition 2006**

The shooting team travelled to Uppingham on 22 January for the annual Lomax Shield and falling plate competitions. The first round of the contest entailed the cadets individually shooting a five-round group, followed by a 10-round rapid-fire application, five rounds each at two targets within 60 seconds. The scoring throughout this round was intensely close between Lincolnshire and the current holders, Nottinghamshire, with Derbyshire running a very tight third place. Eventually, after seven cadets had fired this round of the competition Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire were neck and neck in first place and Derbyshire were slipping further back in to third. No pressure on the eighth team member? Cpl Brett Cartwright held his nerve well and scored full marks of 25 in the grouping section and a 47 out of a possible 50 in the rapid-fire application to set Lincolnshire up with a 15-point cushion going into the third and final round of the competition, a 5-5 round snap shoot.

After Cpl Matthew Corrin made a superb start with a maximum 25 points, of the next six cadets to shoot, each, except one scored an incredible 21 to slowly increase the gap between Nottinghamshire and us, with our last firer, Cpl Brett Cartwright again finishing



The Lomax Shield.

Affiliated ACF and CCF

with an amazing score of 23 from 25. Lincolnshire finally secured the overall first place in the competition and Brett Cartwright also achieved the honour of attaining the highest individual score of 95, a well-deserved prize.

But we were not finished yet, there followed the 'falling mint' competition which entailed the team splitting into two four-man teams and disposing of Polo mints suspended against a target board.

Sadly the Lincolnshire B team quickly lost out after being knocked out in the first heat.

However the impressive A team of Cpl Corrin, Cpl Cartwright, LCpl Lizzie Shepherd and Cdt Jason Greatorex flew through to the final, knocking out opponents with ease before facing Derbyshire A team in the final. Again there was no competition as we completed the shoot and left our opponents with four targets (polo mints) still to be destroyed.

Overall a good day for the Lincolnshire ACF shooting team, a clean sweep across the board. A fact, which was advertised as we left Uppingham, with all three trophies proudly displayed at the windows of our mini-bus.



The shooting team with their trophies.

Award for Cadet Force Officer

Lt Duncan Fielding of Grantham qualified for the award of the Army Cadet Force Medal on 26 July 2005 on completion of 12 years' service with Lincolnshire Army Cadet force. He enlisted as a sergeant instructor on 26 July 1993 after Regular Army Service in the Corps of Royal Engineers. In 1996 he was promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant Instructor and Sergeant Major Instructor in 1998 having completed his King George VI Memorial Leadership Course at Frimley Park. He was appointed Detachment Commander, Royal Logistic Corps Detachment at Grantham in 1997 and has remained in the post. He was granted a TA General List Section B Commission in October 2003 and his commission was confirmed in October 2005 when he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. Among his other duties Lt Fielding is the squadron sports officer and also assists with adult training on adult induction course weekends for the county.



Lt Fielding receiving his Commissioning Certificate.

For his dedication and devotion to service with Lincolnshire Army Cadet Force over the period of 12 years he was recommended for and granted the award. The award was presented to Lt Fielding by the County Cadet Commandant, Lt Col Trevor Richmond, who also presented him with the certificate on confirmation of his commission.

Cadet Cross County Awards

On a bleak and blustery day on 5 March Army Cadets from Lincolnshire Army Cadet Force travelled to Waterbeach in Cambridgeshire for the Eastern Region annual cross-county competition. The wind was strong and cold across the old airfield as they lined up for the start and waited for the off, not over muddy fields as in the past, the grass part of the course was nearly as firm as the surrounding roads.

The runners were eager to get round the rather flat course and get back to the start and the welcoming shelter and warmth of their waiting vehicles. As spectators, the adults of the county waited for the bright yellow vests of the Lincolnshire runners to appear in the distance and gave full voice of encouragement as the runners were goaded to provide that last little bit to get further up the field.

Try they did and we were rewarded with Junior Boys, C White - Northcotes third place, S Durrance-Grantham RLC seventh, the team in third place. Intermediate Boys, B Rowe - CLCC seventh, team third place. Senior Boys second place. Junior Girls Andrea Jackson of Boston second, team third place. Intermediate girls: Amy Sagers of Grantham RLC first, team fifth place.

Senior Boys team were Chris Otter, Mark Goodwin, Adam Ray, Paul Gladding of North Hykeham, Lee Bradley of Billingborough, Jake Newby of Sleaford and Martin Bowler of Stamford.

The Lincolnshire teams finished in a creditable third place out of the 10 counties competing.

From the achieved results Amy Sagers, Ben Rowe of Lincoln, Chris Otter and Mark Goodwin of North Hykeham were selected to represent Lincolnshire and Eastern Region in the Army Cadet Force National Championships to be held at Warcop, Cumberland on Saturday 18 March.

In these championships they were again victorious and helped the Region to win the National event in all four classes and were awarded their National Colours.

Norfolk Army Cadet Force

Britannia Company

Britannia Company, the Royal Anglian contingent of Norfolk ACF, has had a busy year.

On Sunday 26 February at Dereham, the company held its annual detachment shooting competition. Holt Detachment won, with Cpl Morris taking top score of the day. In the adult shoot, 2Lt Ivan Smith was first and the RSM, Mark Hamilton, was second.

The company commander, Maj John Doughty, was presented with the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for good service to the ACF. John joined Norfolk ACF in 1975 having previously served as a Regular soldier in the Royal Engineers. In his 30 years' service he has been badged a Royal Anglian throughout being a detachment commander at Holt; company training officer; county training officer; and now Britannia Company commander. He also attends Frimley Park regularly and acts as directing staff for the KG VI courses. Sadly for the company, John will move on later this year to take a position in headquarters. His successor has yet to be appointed.

Every Saturday in December 2005, Sandringham Army Cadets have given shoppers a helping hand by packing their bags in Boots, King's Lynn in return for a donation. The resulting £1,000 collected was donated to the Army Benevolent Fund and the Gurkha Welfare Trust. This was the third annual bag pack undertaken by the group and this one was organised by Cdt Russell Bradnam as part of his three star cadet and community project and his bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award.

On 12/23 April Norfolk ACF team took part in Combat Cadet 2006 at Thetford under the direction of the team captain, SI Shaun Williams. The team came in third overall. Sgt Goodrich, from Costessey Platoon, represented the company as part of the team

Affiliated ACF and CCF

performing to a high standard.

Ten cadets from the company are attending the adventure training camp at Capel Curig in Snowdonia this Whitsun when they will take part in mountain walking, mountain biking, kayaking, climbing and caving. The remainder of the company will join other cadets from Norfolk at their annual camp this summer at Warcop from 6 to 19 August. A busy package is planned involving adventure training, ranges, fieldcraft and a visit to a theme park.

Suffolk Army Cadet Force

In March 2006, a most successful Officers' Training Weekend included a dinner at the joint Norfolk/Suffolk Weekend Training Centre in Thetford. We were honoured with the presence of HM Lord Lieutenant for Suffolk, the Lord Tollemache.

At the Eastern Region ACF Regional Cross Country Championships in March 2006, our senior boys were Regional Champions. Three were selected to represent Eastern Region ACF at the National Cross Country Championships at Warcop. Cpl Jamie Dines of Ipswich became National ACF Senior Boys Cross-Country Champion after gaining Silver Medals in 2003 and 2004.

The SACF Junior Boys six-a-side soccer team represented Eastern Region at Warcop in the National Soccer Competition in March. Although knocked out in the semi-finals, they deserve our sincere congratulations.

March 2006 saw a unique 'SACF Cadet Quintuple' at the presentation of awards to members of Suffolk Reserve Forces and Cadets: two Suffolk ACF Cadets appointed as Lord Lieutenant's Cadets to Lord Tollemache, HM Lord Lieutenant for Suffolk: Sgt Frankie Rush, Southwold Detachment and our 'double-bereted' Cpl Storm Rae of both Framlingham College CCF and Woodbridge Detachment; two adults presented with their Cadet Force Medal: SSIs Christine Forsdike and Phil Hubert of County HQ and a Certificate for Meritorious Service to SSI Roger Hemp, Southwold Detachment.



Cpl Jamie Dines.

Teams of eight cadets contested the annual SACF inter-company Colonel's Cup Competition at Stradishall to select the SACF Team for the Brigade 'Combat Cadet' Competition in April. There were three elements - military skills stands, a night navigation exercise, and finally a 2.3km speed march with kit and rifle.

In April Cdt SSgt Matthew Porter of Beccles was promoted on appointment as the new County Cadet RSM. Under command of Capt Cathy Bradshaw and Lt Steve Rhind, the usual successful adventurous training Wales at Easter was held in Wales. Steve, our County D of E and adventurous training officer, has been selected to join the ACF expedition to climb Mt Kenya in 2007.

A new initiative for 2006 is the hosting of an evening reception at County HQ, Ipswich TAC, on 24 June, where there will be a guard of honour, stands and exhibitions manned by adults and cadets. The 2006 annual camp is in July/August at Sennelager, Germany. A vast range of activities are planned including adventurous training, canoeing and sailing at the Mohnese Lake Centre, fieldcraft, first aid, mountain biking, orienteering and parachuting. Visits to 28 Engineer Regiment at Hamelen, the Bundeswehr, Mohne Dam (of 'Dambusters' Fame), Paderborn Street festival, Queen's Dragoon Guards at Osnabruck and the Wewelsburg Museum are planned. Including a 'uniform' of polo and T-shirts with track suit trousers and reversible jacket, for £100 all-found it must be the best bargain this summer!

In recent months we said 'farewell' to three stalwarts: SI Sarah Eagle, Bungay Detachment since 2000 and the Rev Michael Thorpe RACHD, C Company Chaplain since 1993. Lt Barry Forster retired in 2006 after serving since 1992 as a canoeing instructor, with Ixworth, Bury St Edmunds and Sudbury Detachments; A Company training officer; then county public relations officer. In the latter appointment he produced five flagship editions of our glossy *Suffolk Cadet* magazine.

Our county executive officer, Maj Bob Potter (former Viking, Tiger and Pompadour) is undertaking a sponsored London to Paris cycle ride in September in aid of the Royal British Legion. The 200 cyclists will cover 280 miles in three legs: the first to Dover then two in France. At the conclusion they will be escorted up the Champs Elysees.

Maj John L Raybould TD has taken over as SACF PRO and Lt Gary Day has been appointed as training officer A Company with promotion to captain. We welcome Padre David Flower RACHD, who transferred from Oxfordshire ACF.

Oakham School CCF Biennial Inspection 5 May 2006

Oakham School CCF Biennial Inspection was another step forward in what is hoped to be an increasingly close working relationship between the Contingent and our affiliated Regiment. Having thoroughly enjoyed the autumn field craft weekend offered by the Royal Anglians and achieved the highest number of military and civilian qualifications in a recorded year, the cadets were delighted to welcome Lieutenant General John McColl DSO, CBE as the Reviewing Officer. A special surprise for many of the students was the rare chance to enjoy experience flights in the General's Gazelle helicopter. This was accompanied by a Merlin from 28 Squadron, RAF Benson.

Having officially opened the new wing of the CCF HQ, named in honour of the long serving School Staff Instructor, RSM Mick Cavour, he was able to tour the various activities demonstrated by the cadets in the modern youth organisation.

He was welcomed by a Guard of Honour, commanded by Cadet Staff Sergeant Jeremy Green (Royal Anglian sponsored). As he moved on through the stands he observed a variety of leadership tasks, set in a variety of military contexts from the erection of radio masts to 9x9 tents.

As he approached the field craft stand he was 'ambushed' but recovered quickly enough to talk at length to the cadets about their experience. What struck them most was the ease and genuine interest shown by the Commander of Regional Forces.

Having judged the drill competition undertaken by the first year recruits, he sampled the state of the art flight simulation system

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Lt Gen McColl with RSM Cavnor.

enjoyed by the RAF section and witnessed some first class first aid, before moving on to see a the Duke of Edinburgh Award group valiantly construct their tent in simulated wet and windy weather, despite the ambient temperature of 20C on one of the best days of the year!

The shooting team, for which Oakham School enjoys a national reputation, demonstrated their skills in the 7-lane indoor range facility. Many of them aspire to shoot for their country, following in the footsteps of two OO's Shouler and Button, who were part of the GB team to tour South Africa recently.

The grand finale was a section attack, initiated by a low level fly past of 3 Harriers from RAF Cottesmore. Giving generously of his time, the General exemplified the Sandhurst motto of 'Serve to Lead' which should increasingly be seen in Oakhamians with the Headmaster's vision of academic success being supported by explicit leadership skills, supporting the community of which we are a part.

A thoroughly enjoyable day in which all aims were achieved, not least to recognise the support we enjoy from the Armed Services, especially the Royal Anglian Regiment and to raise the profile of the Army as they continue to deliver a first class service to the country.

Gresham's School CCF Biennial Inspection

The Biennial Inspection of Gresham's School CCF took place on Wednesday 10 May 2006. The Inspecting Officer was Gen Sir Richard Dannatt KCB CBE MC.



Gen Sir Richard Dannatt KCB CBE MC inspecting the guard of honour.

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Accommodates 8



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The villa boasts four twin bedrooms, two bathrooms (one en-suite) large lounge with Sky TV and stereo, Dining room, Sun room and a spacious well appointed kitchen with oven, hob, dishwasher, washing machine, microwave, fridge and freezer. Ceiling fans are in all rooms. Outside the villa features two balconies, accessed via the upstairs bedrooms, two covered terraces, large barbecue, patio furniture, sun loungers, illuminated pool area and private parking. Linen provided. Maid service between lets. Approximately 60km Alicante, 80km Valencia.

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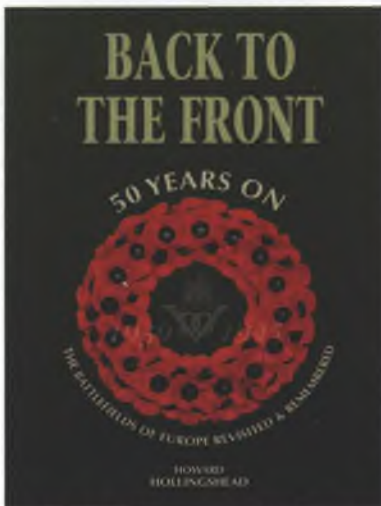
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