



# CASTLE

JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ANGLIAN REGIMENT







**Editor: Captain Peter Hudson**

## Contents

The Colonel of the Regiment	6	4 (Lincolnshire) Company	104
The Regiment	8	5 (Suffolk and Cambridgeshire) Company	106
Personalia	10	Steelbacks News, Exercises and Adventure Training	108
Regimental Matters	12		
<i>Regimental Council</i>	19	Regimental Band	136
<i>Benevolence</i>	20	ITC Catterick	139
Mainly About People	23		
Regimental Museum	26	<b>Special Features</b>	
Diary Dates 2020	28	<i>VE-Day and VJ-Day Commemorations</i>	142
Can You Remember?	29	<i>Mum supports daughter in training</i>	146
		<i>Royal Anglians pay their respects</i>	147
<b>1st Battalion (The Vikings)</b>		<i>Le Paradis Massacre Memorial</i>	148
<i>From the Commanding Officer</i>	38	<i>Letters delivered 80 years late!</i>	149
<i>A (Norfolk) Company</i>	40	<i>Sobraon Battlefield Tour - India</i>	150
<i>B (Suffolk) Company</i>	50	<i>Op Banner - A Postscript</i>	178
<i>C (Essex) Company</i>	55		
<i>D (Cambridgeshire) Company</i>	60	Book Reviews	152
<i>HQ Company</i>	68	ACF	154
<b>2nd Battalion (The Poachers)</b>		<b>Regimental Association Branch News</b>	
<i>From the Commanding Officer</i>	72	<i>Norfolk</i>	156
<i>A (Lincolnshire) Company</i>	75	<i>Suffolk</i>	158
<i>B (Leicestershire) Company</i>	78	<i>Essex</i>	160
<i>C (Northamptonshire) Company</i>	82	<i>Cambridgeshire</i>	162
<i>D (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) Company</i>	84	<i>Lincolnshire</i>	169
		<i>Leicestershire</i>	174
<b>3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)</b>		<i>Northamptonshire</i>	179
<i>From the Commanding Officer</i>	96	<i>Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire</i>	182
<i>1 (Norfolk and Suffolk) Company</i>	98		
<i>2 (Leicestershire and Northamptonshire) Company</i>	100	Deaths and Obituaries	188
<i>3 (Essex and Hertfordshire) Company</i>	102	Regimental Charity Donation Form	198

*Front cover: Op RESCRIPT (COVID-19 testing).*

*Rear cover top: Exercise WESSEX STORM.*

*Rear cover bottom: 3rd Battalion, flood control training.*

**Regimental Internet Website**

[www.royalanglianregiment.com](http://www.royalanglianregiment.com)

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





## Battle Honours

### **Battle Honours on The Queen's Colour**

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

### **Battle Honours on The Regimental Colour**

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



# From the Colonel of The Regiment

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We are often told that we live in a period of instability, where our geo-political anchor points feel uncertain and unclear, and where globalisation, the rapid rise of technology and the impact of both on the environment make for a rate of change that feels unprecedented. The events of 2020 seem to vindicate this view.

The COVID 19 pandemic has, of course, dominated but there has been much else. Conflict continues in the Middle East, indeed the year started with an intensification of the long-running conflict with Iran and her proxies. Libya, while sadly under-reported by western news agencies, continues to be mired in civil war with each side supported by more powerful regional states including Turkey and Russia. Sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel fare little better not least because of a rise in violent Islamic extremism throughout the continent.

The Asia-Pacific region feels only marginally more stable, with turbulence fertilised by antipathy towards China as a by-product of COVID 19 and her increasing influence and reach. Add to this the advent of new technologies that open up new ways in which wars can and most likely will be fought, including from Space and through cyber. This combination of threat and technological opportunity have dominated the thinking behind the Government's on-going review of Defence and Foreign policy, the results of which may well be released before you receive this edition of Castle and a subject that I will return to as I conclude this Foreword.

No update on the Regiment's activities in 2020 would be complete without a report on the way that COVID 19 has influenced those who serve and those who have served throughout the year. All three battalions were committed to Op RESCRIPT, the operational codename given to the military support to the Government's response to the pandemic. You will not be surprised to learn that they performed magnificently throughout, drawing accolades wherever they went. You will be able to read more of the detail later in the edition; what follows is only a brief summary.

The 1st Battalion were committed early and provided essential support to the NHS in London where they helped build the first of the Nightingale hospitals at the ExCel arena, garnering plenty of attention in the national press, not least the Commanding Officer whose front page spread alongside his surgeon brother captured the mood of the NHS and Military partnership perfectly. They also assisted the local Ambulance service and spent a month providing Mobile Testing Units in Chessington, Wembley and Lee Valley. By early June the Vikings were relieved of their COVID 19 responsibilities in order to start training for another tour to Afghanistan.

In line with the way that the pandemic spread across the country, the 2nd Battalion were involved slightly later but no less successfully or significantly. They were the forerunners to mobile testing, taking rudimentary training delivered by Boots the Chemist and devising and delivering training to a multitude of different teams throughout East Anglia. They also organised the collection and distribution of testing samples throughout



the region, no easy task. The Poachers were heavily committed through April and May working long hours in difficult conditions, rarely close to home. While their efforts were recognised on countless occasions, Cpl Hemmings' immense contribution stood out for which he was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. At the beginning of June the Battalion shifted its emphasis to operations further afield with the start of their training for a deployment to Mali, although a resurgent virus pushed much of the Battalion back to COVID 19 duties until the end of August.

153 members of the 3rd Battalion were mobilised in early April, all of whom were volunteers. While they were initially deployed to aid the distribution of Personal Protective Equipment to the NHS, the majority of their time was spent conducting mobile testing, first in concert with the 2nd Battalion and then taking their place to allow their Regular counterparts the chance to train for operations overseas. The exemplary way that the Royal Anglian Battalions operated together was singled out to me by the Secretary of State for Defence after a visit to Cottesmore. The Steelbacks worked tirelessly until the end of June, providing the longest running Regimental contribution to Op RESCRIPT.

None of you will be surprised to learn that the RHQ team have carried on throughout. Working largely from home they were able to sustain the delivery of benevolence as well as the myriad of other functions that fall to RHQ. Like so many of us, they rapidly embraced the opportunity that technology now allows, placing increasing focus on the Regiment's use of social media, including the hosting of a Regimental Day on YouTube which attracted over 7000 participants from across the Regimental family. They have also worked particularly hard to support our in-pensioners at the Royal Hospital, conscious that they have had to withstand numerous COVID assaults over this difficult year.

It would be easy to think that COVID has dominated all that the Regiment has achieved in 2020, but as one would expect of an organisation that prides itself on flexibility and a sense of service this is not the case. Indeed, after a short pause in activity at the onset of the pandemic the Army has managed to sustain its operational deployments, recruiting and critical training; The Royal Anglian Regiment is no exception.

The 1st Battalion supported Ex WESSEX STORM in February, a major exercise designed to bring the 2nd Battalion up to speed in preparation for their operational deployments in 2020 and 2021. After completing their COVID 19 commitments they turned to preparing for their seventh tour of Afghanistan. The deployment was limited to a single Company, aligning the UK's footprint with that of a rapidly reducing US commitment. While those who are not going will be disappointed, the changing circumstances in Kabul are indicative of the broader sense of uncertainty that I alluded to in my opening paragraph. And of course ours has never been a profession characterised by a predictable forecast of events. Beyond that, all Viking eyes are on Cyprus where they will move in 2021.

The 2nd Battalion have begun their tour of Mali with B Coy

deploying as part of the Light Dragoon's Battle Group. It is the first time that the Regiments have worked closely together since 1994 and Op GRAPPLE 4; needless to say they have been quick to forge the bonds so essential to making difficult operations work. Much of the remainder of the Battalion will deploy to Mali in May 2021 for which they have been immaculately prepared. In addition, D Company will deploy to Poland on an operation designed to reassure our NATO allies and deter others.

The 3rd Battalion also deployed in significant numbers on Ex WESSEX STORM, providing the opposition to the 2nd Battalion over a period of particularly inclement weather that saw all who participated stretched both professionally and personally. The Steelbacks acquitted themselves brilliantly, proving new ground for other Reserve battalions to follow. Since then they have continued to train while making maximum use of technology to reduce the chance of COVID 19 transmission, and perhaps show how a 21st Century Reserve Army can and should operate.

I am glad to report that the Regiment continues to enjoy more than its fair share of promotions and awards. At the more senior end of the Regiment, Richard Lyne promoted to Brigadier and Brigadier Dom Biddick moved to take on a key role responsible for the Army's operational deployment. It is a task that is keeping him particularly busy as I write this over the Christmas break, providing the military response to a new strain of COVID 19, a backlog of vehicles at the channel ports and testing of children ahead of the resumption of the school term.

Lt Col Graham Goodey took over the reins of the 1st Battalion in June from Phil Moxey after his hugely successful and demanding tour as Commanding Officer. Lt Col Ben Hawes has been selected to command the 2nd Battalion in 2022 and Dave Haggart will take over the 3rd Battalion at the same time. We have done particularly well on the awards front with Lt Col Ben Hawes and Major David Robinson joining Cpl Hemmings as recipients of MBEs. 2nd Lt Oli Bembridge was awarded the Queen's Medal at the April commissioning parade and 2nd Lt Eleanor Potter was commissioned into the Regiment in December, our first female regular officer who will join a small but growing number of already serving female members of the Regiment.

I will conclude with a few thoughts on the Defence Review. Some of you will have seen that Defence will enjoy a significant uplift in funding over the next 4 years, a reflection of the importance that the Government places on Defence for what it offers against the geo-political context and to a foreign policy summarised by the phrase Global Britain. In deciding how that money should be spent the Government will have to balance the demands for ever-more sophisticated technology (drones, cyber equipment and satellites) with those more traditional but no less important aspects of the Defence portfolio (soldiers, ships and aircraft). Finding that balance will likely generate difficult choices, the results of which should be known over the next few months.

# The Regiment

## Colonel-in-Chief

HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO

## Colonel of the Regiment

Major General RW Wooddisse CBE MC

## President of the Regimental Association

Major General SL Porter CBE

## Honorary Chaplain to the Regiment

The Reverend Paul Whitehead

## Assistant Honorary Chaplains to the Regiment

Suffolk: The Reverend Geoff Brown

Cambridgeshire: The Reverend Alan Jesson

Bedfordshire: The Reverend Stephen Smith

## Deputy Colonels of the Regiment

1st Battalion: Brigadier DSJ Biddick MBE MC

2nd Battalion: Colonel SJR Browne OBE

3rd Battalion: Colonel RFL Lyne

## Senior LE Officer

Lieutenant Colonel R Bredin MBE

## College of Colonels

**Chairman of Regimental Trustees:** Brigadier DJ Clements MBE

**Colonel MS:** Brigadier DSJ Biddick MBE MC

**Colonel Communications:** Colonel SJR Browne OBE

**Colonel Recruiting:** Colonel RFL Lyne

**Colonel Heritage:** Colonel RE Harrold CVO OBE

**Colonel Benevolence:** Lieutenant Colonel PRC Dixon OBE

**Colonel Cadets:** Brigadier OCC Brown

## Regimental Trustees

Colonel of the Regiment, Brigadier D J Clements MBE, Brigadier AJC Wild MBE, Lieutenant Colonel BD Weston, Captain RWH Colgan, Captain SC Lane, Captain KP Tansley, DJ Till and Regimental Secretary.

Secretary: Assistant Regimental Secretary

## County Colonels

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

## Regimental Museum

Chairman of Trustees: Colonel PGR Horrell TD DL

Trustees: Colonel NH Kelsey OBE TD, Lieutenant Colonel SD Etherington OBE, Lieutenant Colonel ACE Marinos, Lieutenant Colonel A Powell MBE, Major T Dormer TD, Major PH Williamson MBE, Captain PR Randall, JMH Naylor and Regimental Secretary. Secretary: Deputy Regimental Secretary

## Alliances

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

The Regiment is affiliated to the Worshipful Company of Poulterers

The Regiment is affiliated to *HMS St Albans*



## Civic Honours

*The Regiment has been granted the Freedom of:*

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

## Regimental Locations

### Regimental Headquarters

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

Tel: 01284-752394. Mil 94205-2001

Website: [www.royalanglianregiment.com](http://www.royalanglianregiment.com)

Shop online: [www.royalangliandirect.co.uk](http://www.royalangliandirect.co.uk)

**Regimental Secretary:** Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) RCJ Goodin OBE

Email: [robert.goodin769@mod.gov.uk](mailto:robert.goodin769@mod.gov.uk)

**Assistant Regimental Secretary (Finance and Benevolence):** Major (Retd) RP Grenfell

Email: [robert.grenfell153@mod.gov.uk](mailto:robert.grenfell153@mod.gov.uk)

**Deputy Regimental Secretary (Communications and Heritage):** Major (Retd) ML Peters

Email: [michael.peters112@mod.gov.uk](mailto:michael.peters112@mod.gov.uk)

**Regimental Adjutant:** Captain K Forsyth (*des: Captain L Talkington*)

Email: [kyle.forsyth100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:kyle.forsyth100@mod.gov.uk)

**Chief Clerk:** Mr SR Dunning

**Records and Benevolence Officer:** Mrs J Laidlaw

Email: [joanna.laidlaw118@mod.gov.uk](mailto:joanna.laidlaw118@mod.gov.uk)

### RHQ Area Office

#### Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Cambridgeshire

The Keep, Gibraltar Barracks,

Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3RN

Tel: 01284-749317

*Area Secretary:* Captain P Hudson

Email: [peter.hudson104@mod.gov.uk](mailto:peter.hudson104@mod.gov.uk)

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

Kendrew Barracks, Cottesmore, Rutland LE15 7BL

Tel: 01572-812241 Ext 7161

*Area Secretary:* Major (Retd) TJ StC Brown

Email: [timothy.brown133@mod.gov.uk](mailto:timothy.brown133@mod.gov.uk)

*Clerk:* Mrs A Godbolt

Email: [anne.godbolt100@mod.gov.uk](mailto:anne.godbolt100@mod.gov.uk)

### Regimental Museum

Royal Anglian Museum, Duxford Airfield,

Duxford, Cambridgeshire CB22 4QR

Tel: 01223-497298

*Curator:* Melissa Kozlenko

Email: [royalanglianmuseumcurator@outlook.com](mailto:royalanglianmuseumcurator@outlook.com)

Website: [www.royalanglianmuseum.org.uk](http://www.royalanglianmuseum.org.uk)

## Battalion Locations

### 1st Battalion

Lieutenant Colonel GJ Goodey MBE

Royal Artillery Barracks, Woolwich,

London SE18 4BB

### 2nd Battalion

Lieutenant Colonel WJ Meddings

(*des: Lieutenant Colonel BT Hawes MBE*)

Kendrew Barracks, Cottesmore,

Rutland LE15 7BL

### 3rd Battalion

Lieutenant Colonel AP Wolfe MBE

(*des: Lieutenant Colonel DJ Haggart*)

Army Reserves Centre, Blenheim Camp,

Newmarket Road, Bury St Edmunds,

Suffolk IP33 3SW

## Regimental Representatives

**Infantry Training Centre (Catterick):** Captain E Wynne

**Army Foundation College (Harrogate):** Sergeant C Lawrence

**Infantry Battle School:** Captain J Raschen

**RMA Sandhurst:** Captain M Durkin

**Cambridge University OTC:** Major M Bevan

**East Midlands University OTC:** Captain SC Hale



# Personalia

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*Please note this list is based upon information provided to RHQ over the course of 2020 and includes some key appointments which are of interest to members of the Regimental Family*

## **Honours and Awards**

### **Member of the British Empire**

Major BT Hawes  
Major JE Powell  
Major DJ Robinson  
Corporal DT Hemmings

### **Chief of the General Staff's Commendation**

Major DT Crosbie  
Major DT Granfield

### **Poulters' Prize**

Colour Sergeant A Howe

### **RMA Sandhurst Queen's Medal**

Second Lieutenant OJ Bremridge

### **Command Appointments**

Lieutenant Colonel APT Wilde command of 1 PWRR  
Lieutenant Colonel GJ Goodey MBE command of 1 R ANGLIAN  
Lieutenant Colonel BT Hawes MBE (CO des 2nd Battalion)  
Lieutenant Colonel DJ Haggar (CO des 3rd Battalion)

## **Promotions**

### **Promotion to Lieutenant General**

Major General RW Wooddisse CBE MC (to be Commander Field Army *wef* April 2021)

### **Promotion to Brigadier**

Colonel RFL Lyne

### **Promotion to Colonel**

Lieutenant Colonel TPD Morris

### **Promotion to Lieutenant Colonel**

Major MC Melia  
Major BT Hawes MBE  
Major DJ Haggar  
Major RJ Bredin

### **Promotion to Major**

Captain TM Duncalffe  
Captain CC Monk  
Captain JG Ryan

### **Promotion to Captain**

Lieutenant JV Ellen  
Lieutenant DB Parker  
Lieutenant AJ Clancy  
Lieutenant EA Williams  
Lieutenant DW Rawdon  
Lieutenant JC Beale  
Lieutenant HGR Deed  
Lieutenant G Scrapps

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### **Promotion to Lieutenant**

Second Lieutenant NC Bromley  
Second Lieutenant SE Fulford  
Second Lieutenant F Islam  
Second Lieutenant P Darby  
Second Lieutenant DA Kitchen

### **Commissions**

#### **Conversion of Commissions**

Major SM Broomfield to Reg C  
Major TJW Green to Reg C  
Major JRP Heugh to Reg C  
Major WR Hoy to Reg C  
Major BS French to Reg C  
Captain B Humphreys to IRC  
Captain JA Mattin to IRC  
Captain EA Williams to IRC

#### **Regular Commissions**

Officer Cadet JR Bamford

Officer Cadet OJ Bremridge

Officer Cadet CD Boffey-Rawlings  
Officer Cadet WC Bagnall  
Officer Cadet MP Wilman  
Officer Cadet EM Potter  
Officer Cadet RA Seel  
Officer Cadet LD Moore

#### **Reserve Commissions**

Officer Cadet AJ Braithwaite  
Officer Cadet S Mercer  
WO2 CR Smith

### **Promotions**

#### **Promotion to WO1 (RSM)**

WO2 W Butterick – RSM 1st Battalion  
WO2 J Rawdon – RSM 2nd Battalion  
WO2 A Johnson – RSM 3rd Battalion  
WO2 S Seaton-Norton – RSM EMUOTC

#### **Promotion to WO2**

Colour Sergeant LF Bobsin  
Colour Sergeant JA Chapman  
Colour Sergeant KJ Price  
Colour Sergeant MJ Willan  
Colour Sergeant PN Wright  
Colour Sergeant TA Fish

#### **Promotion to Colour Sergeant**

Sergeant JE Baker  
Sergeant JM Duckett  
Sergeant BP Hilton  
Sergeant NC Jarvis  
Sergeant MD Leighton  
Sergeant MS Mander  
Sergeant SE Murray

Sergeant CA Steel

Sergeant BR Vine

Sergeant CJ Wade

Sergeant SR Warburton

#### **Promotion to Sergeant**

Corporal J Cobbold  
Corporal JJ Du Maurier  
Corporal SP Ferguson  
Corporal AP Hazell  
Corporal DJ Hemsley  
Corporal PL Hodge  
Corporal LA Leahy  
Corporal DP Monks  
Corporal DJ Mowle  
Corporal JM Pritchard  
Corporal JAR Quelch  
Corporal K Samwata  
Corporal AD Smith  
Corporal T Stafford  
Corporal DM Watts  
Corporal GA White

#### **Long Service and Good Conduct Medal (LS&GCM)**

Cpl GA White

#### **3rd Clasp to VRSM**

WO2 AJ Hunter

#### **4th Clasp to VRSM**

Major GJ Rushmere

#### **Retirements**

Colonel SJR Browne OBE  
Lieutenant Colonel FJR Grounds  
Lieutenant Colonel AM Wylie



# Regimental Matters

## A difficult year for the Field of Remembrance

Due to building works to the Abbey 2020 was always going to be a difficult year in which to set up and hold the Opening of the Field of Remembrance. Space was greatly limited and regimental plots, while not exactly rationed, were in short supply. Fortunately, the Regimental Council had taken the decision in 2018, the Centenary of the end of the First World War, that 2019 would be the last time at which each and every former County Regiment would have its own plot. In recent times, it had become ever

more difficult to find an Old Comrade to act as the plot guardian with veterans not getting any younger and travel by train becoming extremely expensive from our further flung counties.

Thus it was, by some good fortune as things turned out, that 2020 saw the first "large" Royal Anglian Regimental Plot, which included Badge Crosses for all nine of our antecedent regiments. Unfortunately, as the photograph shows the plot was rather busy! However, in future when we can use all the real estate

available our Plot will be significantly larger so that the layout can be more at ease with all Badge Crosses clearly visible.

The Government's regulations for Lockdown 2 meant that there was no Regimental representation allowed at the formal opening ceremony which was conducted by Camilla Duchess of Cornwall, unusually held on Wednesday 4th November in order to beat the lockdown which came into effect at midnight the same day.



The Regimental Plot with Badge Crosses for all antecedent regiments.



A deserted Field of Remembrance 2020 at Westminster Abbey.



Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, formally opened the Field of Remembrance in most unusual circumstances.



# Regimental Matters

## Departure of Deputy Regimental Secretary (Communications and Heritage)...



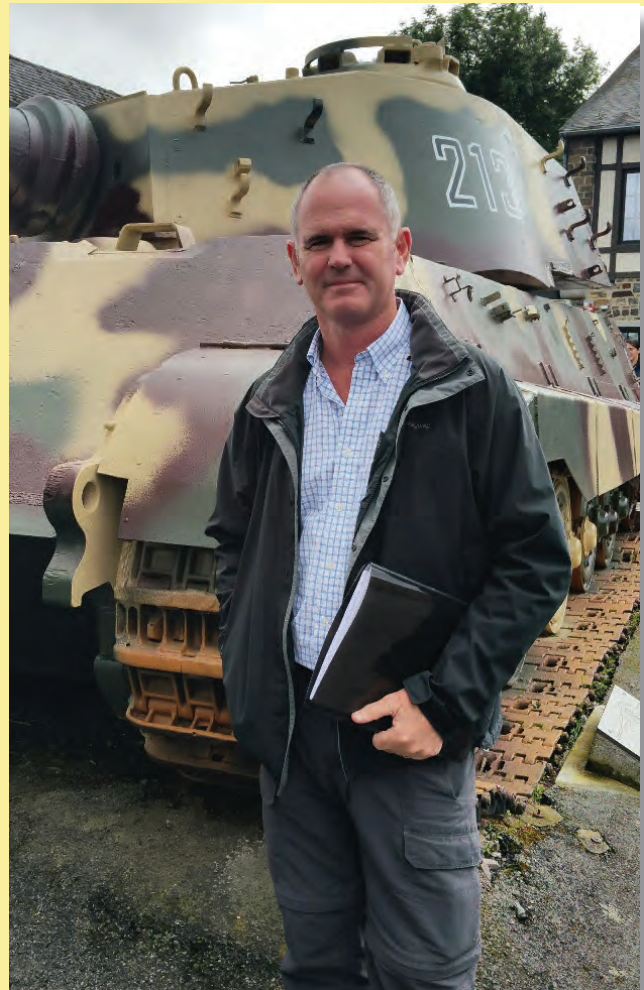
The Regiment thanks Maj (Retd) RG Corcoran MBE, known to all as Corky for his five years as our Deputy Regimental Secretary. He developed our journal *Castle* and our newsletter *The Royal Anglian News* into their current forms, and they are widely appreciated in the Regimental family, for which we are grateful.

Corky was proud of his roots and friends in the old 3rd Battalion (The Pompadours), and never failed to bring Irish Whiskey into work on St Patrick's Day to mark his shared 3rd Battalion, Essex and Irish heritage.

At his farewell lunch, Corky was presented with a bound copy of all editions of *The Royal Anglian News* published in his time as Editor.

Corky has left to become the Regimental Secretary of the Military Provost Staff in Colchester, and we wish him and his cars, all the very best.

## ...and welcome to our new Deputy Regimental Secretary

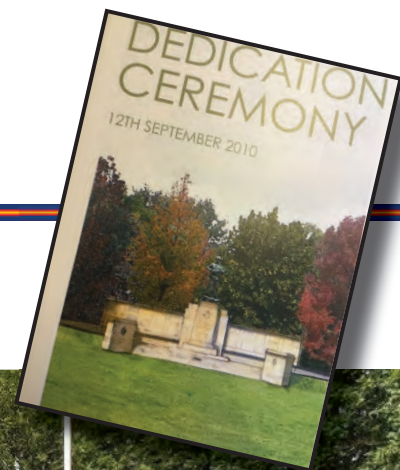


RHQ is pleased to welcome Major (Retd) Mike Peters as our new Deputy Regimental Secretary. Mike arrived in post in December and has taken on the dual responsibility of managing Royal Anglian Communications and Heritage.

Mike left the Army after a full thirty-four year career with the Army Air Corps as a Soldier and as an Officer. He has served on the ground and in the air on operations in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Cyprus, and both Gulf Wars. His final operational tour saw him deploy to Afghanistan on Op Herrick 9 as DCOS JHF(A).

Commissioned from RSM in 2000, Mike was employed in numerous appointments within the Attack Helicopter Force, his final tour was as the lead Army Staff Officer at HQ RAF Tornado Force. Mike left the Army in December 2013 to work as a full time Military Historian and Battlefield Guide. Since then, he has been lucky enough to travel the battlefields of the world as a working historian. In his spare time, Mike continues to work on a number of military history projects, he is also the Chairman of the International Guild of Battlefield Guides.

## 10th Anniversary of the unveiling of The Royal Anglian Regimental Memorial



Commemoration is one of the Regiment's important tasks. For our first four decades our Regimental Commemoration was at County and at National events and services. In our counties we are lucky to have the Regimental Memorials and Regimental Chapels of our Forebear Regiments, which increasingly included today's Regimental family, and of course, we were part of National commemorations at the Cenotaph, at the National Memorial Arboretum, at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and elsewhere. However, there was a feeling that the Regiment should have a memorial commemorating its fallen.

As a regional Regiment, we were increasingly using the IWM at Duxford for our Regimental events, including the Presentation of Colours, our annual Regimental Day, and of course our fine Regimental Museum. It was the operational tours in Iraq and Afghanistan and the casualties on those tours, which provided the impetus to commission our memorial at Duxford. The public had made generous donations to the Regiment, and it seemed absolutely right to have a memorial to the fallen, and that this memorial should carry the



names of all those who had died on duty.

The memorial is set in an octagonal enclosure which represents the eight-pointed star on our cap badge. The rear wall forms the roll of honour on which the names of the Regiment's fallen are inscribed. The names are carved directly into the wall to create a sense of

permanence and directness.

At the centre of the wall is the plinth surmounted by a statue of a young soldier dressed in combat kit belt-order (Afghanistan 2007), armed with a GPMG loaded with a belt of ammunition.

The memorial is looked after by Regimental Headquarters, with regular checks and maintenance work being undertaken to ensure that it is kept in the best of condition for our visitors and in respect to our fallen. RHQ checks recent ongoing maintenance and repairs ensuring the upkeep of the highest standards.

Our memorial has always been available for visits from the Regimental Family through Regimental Headquarters, and has for the last ten years been the focus of all our regimental commemorations including the Regimental Day, Remembrance Day, and all other major regimental events including the presentation of our new Colours.

For the past ten years, and looking to the next ten years and beyond, our memorial will always be the focal point for the Regiment and our Regimental Family.



# Regimental Matters

## Fundraising

Fundraising has been a challenge in the COVID era, social distancing has meant that events have not been able to be staged. The majority of income has come from generous donations, for which the Regiment is most grateful. It is estimated the indicative income this year will be down by 50% with last year's income having been £47k.

If you wish to donate to the Royal Anglian Benevolent Charity (Charity Commission Number 108550) you may do by:

- Cheque – payable to the Royal Anglian Benevolent Charity.

• BACs – Please request bank details via [INFHQ-QUEENS-RANG-groupmailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:INFHQ-QUEENS-RANG-groupmailbox@mod.gov.uk)

• Online – via the Benevolence page on the Regimental Website: [royalanglianregiment.com](http://royalanglianregiment.com)

Please complete the Gift Aid Form to rear of this publication if paying by Cheque.

If you are doing a fundraising event consider your Regimental Charity as a benefactor or part benefactor of your event.

## Harold Payne donates £10,000 to Regimental Benevolent Charity



On Saturday 1st February Brigadier Olly Brown attended a Gala Charity Event at Harold Payne's renowned Café on the A17 near Holbeach, accompanied by Regimental Area Secretary 2, along with veterans from World War Two and more recent conflicts.

A great evening's entertainment 1940s style was enjoyed by all, and Brigadier Olly accepted a cheque from Harold Payne for the sum of £10,000 to

help our Regiment's serving and retired members in times of hardship.

This is one of many incredibly generous donations made by Harold over recent years, and the Regiment is enormously grateful to him and his band of brothers who collect and fund raise in so many different ways.

It is a phenomenal achievement and takes many hours even days to accomplish.

In addition, the wonderful Ladies of CHOSEN, a charity shop in Holbeach, also made a donation of £1,000 on the night.

This sort of gift from deep in our recruiting heartlands is incredibly heart-warming at a time when cuts and austerity is so often in the headlines. Lincolnshire has done us proud once again and we are grateful.





## Exercise WESSEX STORM 2020 from a Regimental Perspective

*by Captain Matt Tovey*

Ex WESSEX STORM was a 7th Infantry Brigade capstone event for its battlegroups, The Royal Anglian Regiment was the largest part, making up almost half the total numbers deployed, and played a big role in the Desert Rats' development of fighting power prior to assuming the role of Vanguard Light Brigade. All three battalions came together to train and maintained our reputation as being able to rise to any challenge and deliver an excellent performance.

The 2nd Battalion had already been working through the challenging conversion from Light Role to Mechanised Infantry – something made all the more difficult by the vicious weather. We experienced 90mph winds, driving rain, sleet and snow in the short few weeks that the exercise ran for. This was their test exercise; they deployed as part of 7th Infantry Brigade alongside the Queen's Dragoon Guards and 7th Regiment the Royal Logistics Corps in the largest UK deployment for a decade.

It was a cold morning in February that saw the 3rd Battalion the Royal Anglian Regiment take over Rollestone Camp on Salisbury plain – the lead elements of the Limarian Armed Forces preparing to defend the Yevlakh Corridor. Supported by the 3rd and 4th Battalions the Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment, as well as specialist capabilities from a number of Regular Army units, they provided a

Battlegroup of Limarian Armed Forces and insurgents to fight the NATO Brigade.

It could not be a regimental deployment without the 1st Battalion who found themselves all across the exercise. Whether it was D (Cambridgeshire) Company bolstering the enemy, A (Norfolk) Company supporting the battle exercises and CALFEX, C (Essex) Company attached to the 2nd Battalion or HQ Company supporting the entire exercise's real-life support you couldn't visit any element without encountering some Vikings.

Every aspect of this exercise was a tough. Deploying almost 2,500 soldiers from across the Desert Rats onto Salisbury Plain was a challenging undertaking in itself, let alone achieving a successful exercise where the troops received high quality, well-resourced training at the same time as testing the Brigade HQ team.

The exercise was an amazing opportunity for the Regiment to work together. It was exciting to go head to head with our fellow battalions, the Vikings Recce Platoon and C (Essex) Company had particular fun battling it out in Fxruli! It will be a long time until we have this opportunity again and it was a privilege to be part of the Regiment coming together in a world class collective training event – despite Storm Dennis.



# Regimental Matters

## Easter Eggs from the Worshipful Company of Poulters

As many of the Regimental family will know the Regiment hugely appreciates the support we receive in many forms during the year from the Worshipful Company of Poulters.

The Poulters started giving Easter Eggs for the children of our soldiers when we first had Battalions deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. This year it was not possible to have Easter Egg hunts for our children, but Capt Jona Jones, the 1st Battalion's resourceful Welfare Officer told the families on the 1st Battalion's patch in Woolwich, that if their children would like to paint an Easter poster or picture, and display it in the window of their home, then Easter Eggs would be delivered to them from our friends, the Poulters.

There was a super response, and much excitement. The Poulters, on behalf of the manufacturers also offered Easter Eggs for the NHS and supporting staff at the Nightingale Hospital, and the 1st Battalion kindly arranged for Easter Eggs to be made available to them from the reception at the Hospital.



## Virtual Regimental Day 2020 Success

Our Regimental Day has always been a popular event. More senior veterans will remember the event moving to Duxford when the depot at Bassingbourn closed. A Drumhead Service at our Memorial supported by our Band, an address by the Colonel of the Regiment and a March Past by our veterans have started the day well, and have set the scene for thousands of our Regimental family to share this commemoration and then to meet and enjoy a day of comradeship.

As far as is possible, our virtual Regimental Day for 2020 filled this gap with a similar programme. We had a socially distanced filming day at the



Memorial with the Honorary Chaplain, and a supporting party from the 3rd Battalion, including a Colour Party. Other contributions from the Colonel of the Regiment and the President of the Regimental Association were filmed separately. The Regimental Band supplied all the music and many members of the Regimental family answered the call for photographs and clips of video. The expert editing of WO1 Mick Latter produced a really

good virtual Regimental Day.

The production was well advertised and trailed in Regimental and social media, and released on our website at 1100 on Sunday 6th September, when we would otherwise have all been at Duxford. Nearly 7000 watched it on the day, and the Regiment received plenty of positive feedback. For those who have not seen it, it is still available on the website. Next year we hope to meet at Duxford on Sunday 5th September..

## The Regimental Council in 2020

The Regimental Council meetings in May and November this year were held by videoconference.

Our Council is chaired by the Colonel of the Regiment supported by the three Deputy Colonels of the Regiment who lead on Careers, Communications and Recruiting. Other key members of the Council are the three Commanding Officers, the Chairman of Regimental Trustees, the President of the Regimental Association and the Regimental Senior LE Officer.

Senior members of our College of Colonels are routinely invited to advise on Regimental projects. The Regimental Plan is kept updated during the year, allowing Council meetings to focus on high priority matters. In 2020 these included:

- Regimental funds were well managed, and the Trustees had adopted a new operating model with sub-committees for: Investments, Audit and Assurance, and Operating. At the Nov 20 meeting the total value of investments was £6.23M. Partly due to the cancellation

of Regimental events, a reduced income from fundraising was forecast.

- Benevolence was not to be interrupted by COVID. If COVID caused an increased demand, then Benevolence was to be the high priority for the budget in 20/21.

- Regimental communications were developing well with the Regiment's new website being launched on time and in budget in Feb 20. The Regimental Recruiting and Engagement Sync Matrix was increasingly effective at coordinating our social media to support recruiting. Numbers of followers had increased: Instagram to 22,300, Facebook to 12,000 and Twitter to 2,000. The Regt was investing in media packs for Battalions, and prizes were to be offered for the best video each month, because more video was needed on all platforms.

- Recruiting and recruit training had been challenging during COVID but Battalions were well manned and recruiting remained a high priority. Our Regimental recruiting teams were restricted in the contact they could

have with potential recruits and were increasingly working remotely with potential re-joiners and potential recruits.

- The Regiment gave a high priority to the integration of female infanteers, and with our first female regular officer joining in Dec 20, there were now regular and reserve female officers as well as female regular and reserve soldiers in the Regiment.

- The Regiment's Cadet engagement plan was to be reinvigorated as soon as Cadets returned to training.

- Although there had been restricted activity in our Museums, the Regt Heritage Committee continued to support heritage projects and as an example, the Regt had made a grant to the Essex Regt museum for an acquisition and display.

- Two items of dress were to be procured and distributed at Regt expense as one-time issues: 1964 pattern ROYAL ANGLIAN rank slides and 1994 pattern soft cloth green belts. As an overspend was forecast in this FY, the new Regt PT Kit, was moved from the 20/21 budget to the 21/22 budget.



# Regimental Benevolence

## Regimental Benevolence

*Major (Retd) RP Grenfell*

At the start of the period who could have predicted what was to come? Regimental Benevolence Delivery in the second half of the Financial Year became a challenge, receiving clear guidance, in advance, that working from home would be implemented the Benevolence team rehearsed procedure and ensured that access to all platforms was achievable securely from home. Not without its challenges and not helped by the author developing a (non-COVID) cough on day one and having to self-isolate for 14 days.

### COVID Protocols

With direction from COBSEO it was agreed by all stakeholding parties that casework would be presented without having face-to-face contact with the client. The biggest challenge was completing the verification of service. Joanna Laidlaw, the RHQ Benevolence Officer, was able to assist in many cases with confirmation using the new database system introduced into RHQ last year. This proved invaluable in ensuring timely delivery of grants to the point of need.

### Financial Year Output

The Benevolence Committee was only able to meet once this year using a virtual platform. All statistics used in this article are for the last financial year up to 30 Jun 20.

### Casework

RHQ has no casework outreach capability, relying on the well trained caseworkers of SSAFA and the RBL. In this period, they had to make many adaptations, for some, using modern technology to achieve the completion of the required Form A for the first time. In the early part of the first lockdown there was understandably a drop in casework delivery, this was due the need dropping away and caseworkers getting used to the new methods of working. There was soon a steady flow of casework being received. No significant spike has been identified, but trends are being closely monitored, to allow early warning briefs

to Benevolence Committee and Council if required. The trustees have discussed at length the likely future need and will ensure that it is met.

A significant change in this period is The Officers' Association (OA) who have historically looked after all officers' cases. Since WW1 the OA received funding from The RBL, who have made the decision to implement a graduated stop to that funding line. This means the OA will no longer have a grant making capability. They will continue to support their commitment to annuities. This will see the Regimental Charity responsible for grant making to officers. Standing Order No 19 has been amended to reflect this change.

### Statistics

In the Financial Year 114 grants were awarded with an average of £465. There were 90 grants declined mostly falling outside the scope of the charity or no need identified. There were 9 grants rejected from applications that never served with the Regiment, in the main this is due to caseworker error. The charity continues to support in service requests and those from our forebear Regiments.

### Budget

The budget for benevolence is £120k made up of 51% of the Day's Pay Scheme and the Regimental Council granting the remainder.

The Benevolent Charity delivered £66k. The exact total combined delivery is not known at this time but estimated to be £200k.

### Fundraising

The Day's Pay scheme income was £107.3k, down by £1.3k on last FY. The target set in the budget for fundraising by RHQ from donations and events was £50k this wasn't achieved but making a credible £43.7k with four months in lockdown.

The indicative amount for the current financial year is in the region of a 50% decline.

### Children's Fund

In the wake of recent conflicts, the Charity set up Trust Funds for the children of those that died on operations. The fund matures on their 18th Birthday when they receive the dividend, Tristan Teague the son of the late Cpl Darren Bonner had his cheque presented to him on his 18th birthday.

## Do You Need Assistance?

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



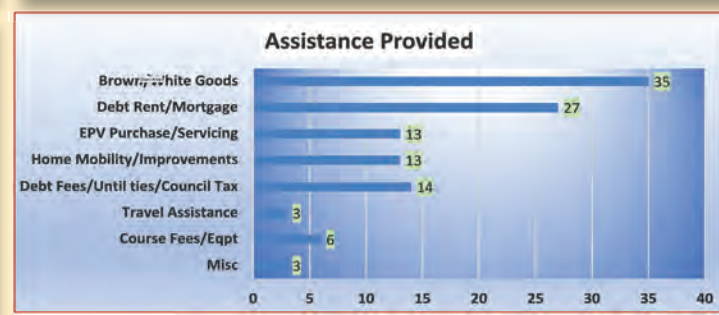
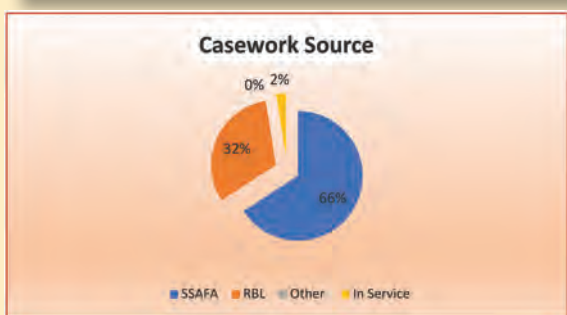
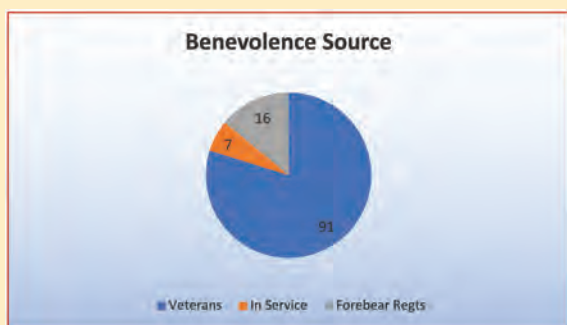
They will forward your request to the  
Regimental Charity.

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

## Royal Anglian Benevolence Statistics 2019-20

Cases Presented	Total	<b>213</b>	Awarded:	<b>114</b>	Declined	<b>90</b>	Rejected	<b>9</b>
Benevolent Fund	Grants	<b>£51,577.00</b>	In Service	<b>£1,491.0</b>	Wayland	<b>£0.00</b>	Average	<b>£465.51</b>
Other Grants/Funds	ABF	<b>£13,000.00</b>	Children's	<b>£53,000.0</b>				

<b>Regimental Total</b>	<b>£66,068.00</b>
ABF	£34,118.00
RBL	£10,691.00
Others	£7,890.00
<b>Almonised Total:</b>	<b>£118,767.00</b>



## Benevolence in Action

### Case Study One

R Anglian Veteran, Full Service.  
 Recently separated from his wife, found himself sofa-surfing. Considerable managed debt, unlikely to be allocated social housing, advised to rent privately. Required assistance with the purchase of brown and white goods (£1,900).  
**Assistance provided:** Regimental: £400; ABF: £500; RBL: Thought to be circa £1000.

### Case Study Two

R Anglian Serving Soldier  
 Foreign and Commonwealth soldier had been financially supporting a close young family member with medical costs, depleting all his savings. Regrettably the loved one passed away.

The soldier did not qualify for compassionate flights home to attend the funeral. The charity and the soldier's Battalion agreed to fund the flight on a 50:50 basis. The soldier was a subscriber to the Day's Pay Scheme.

### Case Study Three

R Anglian Veteran – Three years service and two with the Reserves.  
 Married with children, in the process of changing jobs the promised start dates moved creating a hiatus in income. Priority debts accrued (rent and utilities) and the threat of eviction was imminent. £3,957 was requested.  
**Assistance provided:** Regimental: £500; ABF: £1500; RBL: Amount unknown.



# Regimental Benevolence

## Case Study Four

Ex-Spouse of Veteran

Applicant was unable to work due ill health, in receipt of benefits. Living in rented housing with her two children she was having to COVID shield due to her health conditions. She was desperate for heating oil to provide hot water and food vouchers. The case worker was requesting £500, for which the Regimental Charity was happy to make a grant. Negating asking other agencies to assist.

**Assistance provided:** Regimental: £400; ABF: £500. RBL: Thought to be circa £1000.

## Donations

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

**[royalanglianregiment.com](http://royalanglianregiment.com)**

## Useful contacts

### Mental Health Support and Emergency Services

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

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

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

### NHS Veterans Support

#### Wales

Tel: 0800 2183 2261

Email: [Admin.vnhswc&v@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:Admin.vnhswc&v@wales.nhs.uk)

#### Cornwall

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

Tel: 01579 373737

Referrals: 012579 335245

Email: [cpn-tr.veteranassastance@nhs.net](mailto:cpn-tr.veteranassastance@nhs.net)

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

#### North-West

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

Tel: 0300 323 0707

Email: [mviap@enquiries.nw@nhs.net](mailto:mviap@enquiries.nw@nhs.net)

#### North of England

Tel: 0303 123 1145

Email: [vwals@nhs.net](mailto:vwals@nhs.net)

North End House, 42 North End, Durham, DH14LW

#### Midlands and East of England

Tel: 0300 323 0137

Email: [mevs@mhm.org.uk](mailto:mevs@mhm.org.uk)

### London and South East England

Tel: 0203 317 6818,

Email: [cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net](mailto:cim-tr.veteranstilservice-lse@nhs.net)

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

### South Central and South West England

Tel: 300 365 0300

Email: [awp.swveterans@nhs.net](mailto:awp.swveterans@nhs.net)

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

### Other Assistance Providers

#### Samaritans

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

Tel: 116 1123 (24hr Freephone)

Email: [jo@samaritians.org](mailto:jo@samaritians.org)

Website: [samaritians.org](http://samaritians.org)

#### Mind

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

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

Tel: 0300 123 3393

Email: [info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

#### SANE Health Helpline

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

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

Tel: 0300 304 700



# Mainly About People

## Tribute: David Greenfield

*Colonel Patrick Shervington MBE*

In the mid 1960s, officer cadets spent two years at the RMA Sandhurst learning their “trade” before being commissioned as second lieutenants and joining their regiments and corps.

Almost all of us went directly from school as 18 or 19 year olds. We were callow youths, younger and more impressionable than the modern, predominantly graduate entry.

The Brigade of Guards held sway, with the Academy Sergeant Major and all 12 Company Sergeant Majors selected from the Foot Guards, together with Drill Sergeants for each intake.

This cohort was leavened by Senior Non-Commissioned Officers from Infantry of the Line Regiments. It was axiomatic that only the very best were appointed.

Without my realising it at the time, I was immensely fortunate to join Blenheim Company, Old College. Enter Sergeant Greenfield into my earliest military life.

He was an outstanding instructor and we hit it off at once. I respected his quiet authority and mastery of the skills I was aspiring to reach.

On a tough early exercise, yomping (long before that word came into vogue)



in the Brecon Beacons, we were given a 10 minutes break for a brew. I clumsily managed to heat the water in my mess tin with those archaic hexamine blocks when Sergeant Greenfield announced: “Get moving gentlemen” and to me

“Throw that tea away Sir. You’re out of time!”.

I can still picture his slight squint and what I thought then was a sadistic smile. Only at the debrief later did I realise the eternal truth – he was testing me out and observing my attitude. Some weeks later, and with a gentler smile, he suggested to me that I should consider joining his Regiment, the first of the newly established large regiments, the Royal Anglians.

His actual words were more along the lines “I think we may be able to make something of you, so I’m recommending you for an interview with the College chief instructor, Major Creasey.

I thank both of them from the bottom of my Pompadour, Poachers and Sultan’s Armed Forces heart for their initial and later key influences on my military life. And I like to think that when David was waiting at the Pearly Gates and making his brew, St Peter called out “No time for that, Sir. Get moving; you’re out of time!”

**Senior Under Officer  
Blenheim Company  
Intake 35,  
September 1963 – July 1965**

## Veteran Wayne pedals to International Cycling Record

On 11th January 2020 at the Derby Velodrome, Wayne Harrod who served with the 1st Battalion, having to have his leg amputated as the result of an accident whilst on pre-deployment training for Operations in Afghanistan, took on the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) MC4 one hour challenge. He completed 42.460 kilometres making this a new world record. This totalled 171 laps with the previous record being 168.

Wayne trained for many months, was subjected to compulsory anti-doping testing, but says “the challenge may have taken its toll, but it was all worth it”. Whilst justifiably incredibly proud of his achievement, he does not want it to stand forever, and hopes others are encouraged to dig deep and challenge it.





# Mainly About People

Last year I attended my first reunion, "Poachers 89 Vintage Reunion."

It was really good to see and talk to so many Regimental friends. I was often asked what had I done since leaving the forces.

Kevin Hodgson sent me an e-mail, which I responded to in outline. When he read it, Kevin suggested it would be good to share it with the readers of the regimental magazine. For those who do not know me, I attach a photograph.

I left the army after 33 years service. I joined as a boy soldier, two days before my 16th birthday. I then had a varied career, serving in the Royal Leicesters, which later became the 4th Battalion, as a private/JNCO. 2nd Battalion, as a Senior NCO and later as a LE officer. I also served in the 3rd Battalion, as a Senior NCO.

I left the army in 1998 at the age of 49. I had never been a civilian or aware of the way of life outside. I sold my house when I was commissioned and went to Germany. When I left, the first thing I had to do was put a roof over our heads and do all the other things like register with doctors etc. Then came a period of calm, when I had time to sit and suddenly think, god! No job, no routine, you are on your own. I still kept up my running, it helped me think and work out the future.

I started to apply for work and quickly found out, that whilst I had a CV, it did not open the doors to interviews. This was when I first became

## From Army to Civilian

*Major Bob McDonald*



involved with the Royal British Legion. (More about them later). Through them I eventually secured an interview with a firm of solicitors in Plymouth, who were looking for someone with military background, with knowledge of Courts Marshals. I attended two interviews, and secured the job. 6 months after I left the army. Frightening, but good grounding and character building. It also taught me that we do not have anything to fear once we leave the forces. Again, more about that later. I then went through a series of courses through the Law Society, to qualify me as a Police Station advisor. I also worked in the Crown Court Department, preparing criminal cases for the Crown Court

and also Courts Marshal cases. I struck up a good working relationship with the barristers. Some were ex forces, predominantly Navy. It worked well when we did Courts Martials because they knew Navy and I knew Army/Marines. We were very successful as a team. Never lost one case that we took to trial. In the Crown Court, I gained the respect from the majority of the Judges. Primarily because my cases were well prepared and my barristers/clients were well briefed. I did have to

move home again having promised my wife we would not move again. Oop's, we are still married, 55 years. I remained in the job for 16 years. I was head hunted by another firm of solicitors, to take over and run their failing Crown Court department. We built an archive to hold the files, put them in order and computerized the system. Saved money and time. I was paid well!! Again, during all of this, I kept my fitness and actually went and visited "Peni Fan", Brecon, where I spent a few happy years at Senior Division. Ha! When I was 50 and 55. Just for my own satisfaction. Unfortunately, I then had to have a hip replacement which changed a lot of activities.

I retired from my second career when I reached 65. We had planned to move back to Somerset, where I met my wife. I did not have any firm plans for my retirement. Again, we had to move and settle into the area where I now live. This is when the Royal British Legion, became an active part of my, third career. I was a member, but not active.

I was socialising one evening and was approached by the then Chairman of Watchet Branch, a retired major. Before the end of the evening I was being proposed as the new branch vice chairman. I eventually became the Chairman.

At the same time, I took an interest in the community where I live and was co-opted onto the Parish Council. Within six months, I became the Chairman of the council. During that time, the village was flooded. There were no emergency plans to prevent houses from flooding or arranging cover. So, after the event, I wrote the Village Flood Plan, (army style) set up a Flood Warden team. We cleared the streams and drains, and alerted the riparian owners. The plan is still in place and it still works.

We also set up the West Somerset Flood Group (WSFG) with, initially six other villages. I was again elected to Chair the group. They are now 12 strong, we also set up the District Flood Board (DFB), with the District Council, on





which we had three seats. We were given an awarded from the “Prince of Wales Trust” for the work in the community.

The other group that I set up, at the request of the village, was the Community Speed Watch. Two people had been injured, one fatally, nothing was coming from the County Council, so I set, and ran it. I was able to do all of this because of what I was taught whilst in the forces. There were many other things that I was able to do, because I was a good manager and leader.

Whilst doing this I was approached, again by a mixed group of civilians and ex-servicemen, asking me to join a group to build a war memorial for Watchet. The Town had wanted one for a long time. Because of my military background they thought I would be able to help them. They had no plans, no money, but they did have a site. I was also asked to be their Chairman.

We raised the money £25K in 18 months and got the Stonemasons from Wells Cathedral to build it, we are known as the Watchet Remembrance Project Group.

(WRPG). I managed to get General Sir Michael Rose to unveil it and one of our old Padres to conduct the service. David Cooper. Our padre in NI. I found out he lives on Exmoor. The Memorial

is 6 years old this year. One of my best light bulb moments.

During this period, I was asked to join the Royal British Legion, County team. Initially, as the County Recruiting Officer. But, again, it was not long before I was elected as the County Vice Chairman, and then a year later I became the County Chairman of Somerset and City of Bristol. A post I still hold. When I took over the County was in the doldrums and the Legion was going through changes nationally. There were financial issues. Some people had to move on. Morale was not good and leadership was lacking. I reformed the county, established the management into an organization that I knew would work. Wrote a plan, set a proper company orbat, and set up the management teams for welfare and training. The branches all have their own computers/e-mail addresses.

We set up a County newsletter, which goes out online, establishing better communication all round. No more complaints. I have a Membership Support Officer (MSO), the only paid staff, everyone else are volunteers. That is still working today. The County is financially sound and I was invited to speak at the County Chairman’s Meeting, in London last year, to explain

how we had achieved the transition. Very well received.

The other organization I am involved with is an assisted transport company. (ATWEST). I was asked to be a Director/trustee. The bus company stopped the buses going out to outlying villages to cut costs, and stopped some of the school runs. We are filling that gap. Once again, I have helped to bring it into the 20 century. Set up staff training, amended the constitution and improved communications.

Of course, this has not all been plain sailing. I had a mild heart attack last year, but I am fine now. I stood down as chairman of some of the groups, to slow down a little. We also, recently lost our granddaughter, Kirstin, she was special needs. These things do tend to put life into perspective. We are stronger, as a family.

All of this has been possible because of the opportunities I had during my service. Anyone leaving the forces, in my opinion, has nothing to fear. We are as good and, in many cases, better than our civilian counterpart. I did all that I did because I could think, work and action a plan, through good leadership and management. I learnt it all and thought it throughout my service. I wish you all well for the future.

## Poulters’ Prize Winner 2020

The Regiment warmly congratulates CSgt Andy Howe on being selected for the Poulters’ Prize for 2020. This prize is awarded annually ‘to the individual who has best promoted the ethos of The Royal Anglian Regiment in a significant way’.

His nomination was for his work in the Training Wing during the COVID restrictions, when access to external training areas was limited. He led the development of an exceptional training facility which now includes various CQB lanes, demonstration areas (Ops, trench positions etc.), troop shelters, IED lanes, and, incredibly, an approved simmunitation ‘kill house’ based around an old respirator testing facility. It is now so good that it is used every day by members of the Battalion for individual



skills training, and has been highlighted by CFA as a shining example of what can be achieved with some imagination

and determination.

In the last 21 years he has delivered the same high level of dedication. During his career he has completed every operational deployment that the Vikings have undertaken, and, remarkably, managed to volunteer for additional deployments with other units – one in Iraq with the Grenadier Guards and one in Afghanistan with the Coldstream Guards, only a year after a Vikings deployment.

The Worshipful Company of Poulters are long-standing supporters of the Regiment. They have kindly invited CSgt Howe to a Poulters event in London later in the year, where the prize will be presented by the Master Poulter.

CSgt Howe is currently deployed in Kenya.



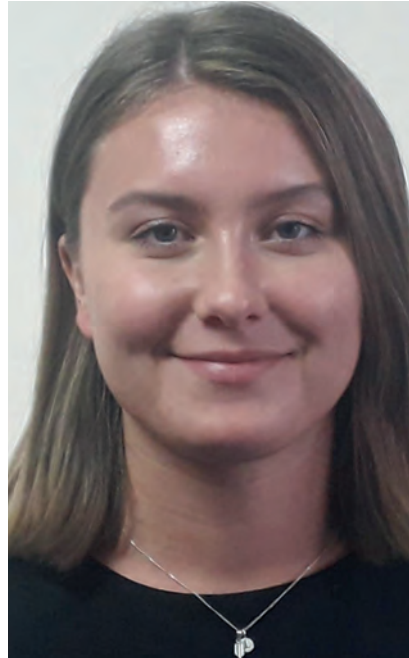
# Regimental Museum

Well, it has been an odd year to say the least. The Museum has sadly had to be closed for about half the year. We continued to do work behind the scenes and when possible, staff and volunteers came in to do work.

From home the massive task of standardising our collections database was undertaken. There are over 10,000 records, but there was a lack of standardisation, so reviewing each record and amending was time-consuming but accomplished.

During the time spent at work, we were fortunate to welcome guests from the Cambridge OTC, 1st and 2nd Battalions. It was great to see people and tailor Museum talks and programs to suit each group. Another lovely part of these visits was time spent at the memorial. I was somber but we were truly grateful to hear stories from the Poachers and Viking about lost comrades, and the things it taught.

We have also been given a



**Lucy Brown has joined the Museum as an intern during her Masters.**

substantial legacy from Eric Sharpe, who served with the 5th (V) Battalion. Eric joined the Army and served in the Suez Canal Zone in 1952/53, and ended his career as Regimental Sgt Major Instructor in January 1987. As we hoped it would be fitting, we are using the legacy to update the TA and reserve sections of the Museum. We have been researching, and spending some time with the 3rd Battalion so that we can get the fullest picture when adding to displays. Thus far we are planning to add more boards that explain in more depth the importance through the years, exercises, and the integral roll they had and still do have today.

Although there haven't been any Air shows this year for us to participate in, the IWM have had some showcase days on a smaller scale, which we had a table at. With social distancing we needed to be outside, under a gazebo. We had our normal handling table but created a barrier so only we would hold



**1st Battalion visitors to Duxford, at the Memorial with the Padre.**



**The Museum table is deployed at major events at Duxford...here with Lucy Brown, our intern, Jimmy Naylor, ex Viking and Museum Trustee and Gary Cushing, ex Poacher and Museum Trustee.**

items and show them and talk about our history instead of letting people handle items. It went well and we heard lots of interesting things from visitors who seemed happy we were there.

Lastly our last intern Georgina has moved on to a job at the Essex Regiment

Museum. We wish her all the best and are glad she has stayed part of the Regimental family. We now have a new intern named Lucy, who comes from Chelmsford and is also doing her Masters degree. She has had previous work with an internship with the Commonwealth

War Graves Commission and thus far she is exemplary at her role, we only wish we didn't keep going into lockdown!

2020 has been a strange year for all of us, but hopefully things will get back to normality sooner rather than later, until then, onwards and upwards!



# Diary Dates

# 2021

See also the Regimental Diary on the  
Regimental Website at [www.royalanglianregiment.com](http://www.royalanglianregiment.com)

## February

10th Sobraon Day - 175th Anniversary

## March

17th Annual Meeting of County Colonels  
17th St Patrick's Day

## April

TBC MOBBS Memorial Rugby Match  
1st Regimental Recruiting Meeting  
25th Almanza Day

## May

5th Regimental Museum Trustees Meeting  
7th Regimental Council Meeting

## June

18th Regimental Representative Event  
- Great Hospital Norwich  
25th Royal Tiger's Day  
27th Cambridgeshire Reunion - Ely Cathedral  
30th Royal Norfolk Show

## July

22nd Salamanca Day  
27th Talavera Day

## August

1st Minden Day  
13th Blenheim Day  
14th FEPOW Service, Lichfield

## September

4th Regimental Rugby - Location TBC  
5th Regimental Day - Duxford  
26th RHC Regimental Service - Royal Hospital Chelsea

Regimental Battlefield Tour. The advance through  
Holland into Germany 1944/45

## October

9th 4th/5th Leicestershire Regimental Dinner - Leicester

## November

5th Regimental Council - Army & Navy Club  
5th Officers Club Dinner - Army & Navy Club  
11th Opening of the Field of Remembrance  
14th Cenotaph Parade - London  
14th Regimental Remembrance Sunday Services  
at Regimental Memorial

## December

11th Regimental Carol Service - Bury St Edmunds  
20th British Battalion Day

### Further to the above the following events are also noted

*The Regimental Chapel at Warley will commence services on  
first Sunday of each month when COVID restrictions allow.*

*All County Regimental celebration days will be confirmed as  
and when it is known if they can proceed.*



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# Can You Remember?

**Two years ago and 102 Years ago!**



The Regiment's Armistice Centenary Dinner in the Great Hall, Trinity College.





# Can You Remember?

**5**

YEARS AGO



1 (VIKING) Platoon strike a pose at Camp Qargha along with one of their much utilised Foxhounds.



10 Platoon, the Poachers, with their Foxhounds after the CALFEX.



Cambrian Patrol Team, the Steelbacks, at the top of Triglav Mountain, Slovenia.



# Can You Remember?



**10**  
YEARS AGO

The Poachers Boxing Team about to receive their winners medals.



LCpl Ruffell on patrol above Kabul.





Poachers' Sniper Platoon in Canada.



Pte McCabe, FSG C, provides fire support from one of the many irrigation ditches (Op HERRICK).



# Can You Remember?



**20**  
YEARS AGO

WO2 Hill with some new Ukrainian friends!



LCpl Butcher, Pte Sauce and Pte Bushell on the helipad in Eniskillen.



Exercise Rhino Spear - Sgt Starrie, Capt Morris, (Adj), Sgt Lamb and WO1 (RSM) Abbs.



Maj Nick Nottingham and WO2 Bredin running the SLA through their drills.



# Can You Remember?

**30**  
YEARS AGO



Crossing a barricade - Poachers warfighting training.



Troops await helicopter extraction at G20, one of the observation towers at the border.



Royal Anglian Regimental rugby touring side.



Milan Cadre on combat fitness test.



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

## From the CO

*Lt Col GJ Goodey*

In light of the current national situation it may seem banal to say that the Vikings have had an exceptionally turbulent year, but even by 2020 standards that has indeed been the case.

It began with confirmation that the Battalion would deploy on its seventh operational tour of Afghanistan on Op TORAL 11, only 18 months after returning from Op TORAL 7. This led to the promising addition of Ex WESSEX STORM to the Battalion's programme in April, followed by the prospect of mission specific training over the summer and autumn.

Disappointingly however, the Covid pandemic led to the cancellation of said Ex WESSEX STORM, and thereafter the accelerated drawdown of NATO forces in Kabul incrementally reduced

the Battalion's commitment to Op TORAL 11. Ultimately only a single company deployed for a short period, with another retained as a high readiness reserve. So for much of the year the Vikings have lived under a cloud of uncertainty and have got used to major events being cancelled, with all of the challenges that brings.

However, focussing on what the Battalion hasn't had the chance to do in 2020 would misrepresent all the great things that Viking soldiers have achieved around the world this year.

The pages that follow provide a sense of those things, which include among others: training teams in Nigeria and Zambia; a battalion effort supporting the Poachers on Ex WESSEX STORM, with C Company as BLUFOR and A



**Lt Col GJ Goodey, CO Vikings.**  
and D Companies providing the bulk of the OPFOR alongside the Steelbacks; short-notice support to the initial Covid



**Lt Col Moxey and his twin brother meet at the Nightingale Hospital London.**

response, where my predecessor and his twin brother rightly captured national headlines and illustrated the cross-governmental nature of Op RESCRIPT; mission specific training for Op TORAL 11, where both Viking companies received high acclaim from MTMC; an urgent force protection deployment to Oman; and an excellent support weapons cadre which will now form the foundation of the Battalion's warfighting reset in 2021. So whilst 2020 turned out to be very different to what was planned, it has packed-in as much as previous years, with the added challenge of most activities taking place at short notice.

So my final but most important point is to pay tribute to the professionalism, adaptability and forbearance of all ranks in the Battalion, without which these achievements would not have been possible. In every endeavour the quality of our people has been evident. Despite frequent changes and frustrations, they have remained steadfastly positive and focussed on delivering the task in hand to the highest possible standard. Looking ahead, 2021 is likely to offer similar uncertainty, at least until the Battalion moves to Cyprus in August, but whatever it brings the Vikings will be ready. *Stabilis, as ever!*



**Vikings deployed on Op TORAL 11.**

## From the RSM

*WO1 RSM Wayne Butterick*

In April this year I had the great honour to take over as the Regimental Sergeant Major of the Vikings. After a career serving in the Battalion it really is a privilege to be in this position now and be able to guide and influence the Battalion that has done so much for me.

2020 has been an extremely busy year for the Vikings and has forced us to demonstrate our flexibility, a challenge the Battalion has risen to at every occasion. Much of the early part of the year was dominated by Op RESCRIPT, the support to civilian agencies dealing with Covid-19. This saw Vikings deploy in several roles from assisting in the building of the Nightingale Hospital to supporting the London Ambulance

Service. Originally set to deploy to Afghanistan on Op TORAL 11 the Battalion changed course again later in the year with far fewer soldiers deploying than expected. This has given us the opportunity to return our focus to conventional war-fighting training and refamiliarize ourselves with our core role.

As RSM I have been particularly focused on JNCO development this year. We are very fortunate to have such a talented crop of JNCOs who are excellent at everything they do. I firmly believe that with the right guidance the future of the Battalion is in very safe hands. This year has also seen the development of a new course headed



**WO1 Butterick, RSM Vikings.**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

up by the Training Wing, the Viking Advanced Infantry Skills Enhancement Course (VAISEC). This has really helped develop new Vikings arriving in the Battalion from ITC by building their skills and confidence to ensure they are as ready as possible to join their Platoons.

Unfortunately the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess has not had a chance to get together for any functions yet due to the restrictions of Covid-19 but I am sure we will get the chance next year to make up for lost time next year.

This is an exciting time to be a Viking and the fast pace of life reflects

our capability and deployability. Next year sees us completing a hard conventional exercise on Salisbury Plain and in Germany.

We will then reset for the move to Cyprus, an exciting opportunity for us all. I am looking forward to making this move with the Viking family.

## A (Norfolk) Company

### OC's Introduction

*Maj Adam Mackness*



**WO2 Willan instructing in Zambia.**

12 months ago we should have remembered the phrase 'expect the unexpected'. It has been a busy year, with significant planned and unplanned, dynamic activity. In Q1 we had a clear PDT pathway for Op TORAL 11 and a steady drum beat of retention positive

activity; with troops recently returned from a Zambia STTT and others deployed on a Nigeria and Sierra Leone ETT. A (Norfolk) Coy also deployed on Ex WESSEX STORM 1/20 as OPFOR; a unique and rare opportunity for all three battalions of the Regiment to

exercise together.

With the outbreak of the Covid pandemic, our plans were paused as the Battalion was mobilised as a Covid Support Force (CSF). The Fighting Ninth, keen to do their bit, were swiftly rewarded with a hasty deployment across



the Thames to NHS Nightingale (L). As the first CSF sub-unit to deploy on Op RESCRIPT the Coy received significant, national, media exposure; Lt Andrews and Sgt Anderson were duly crated for making the front pages of the Sun. The Coy also supported the movement and distribution of PPE across the London Ambulance Service. At times, it was unglamorous work, but those involved added significant value and undoubtedly made a difference.

Throughout Q2/3 A (Norfolk) Coy returned to focus on Op TORAL and completed a series of MST events. With the ongoing drawdown in Theatre, the plan for A (Norfolk) Coy changed multiple times. However, the troops remained undistracted, performed well and maximised the excellent training opportunity. At the time of writing A (Norfolk) Coy remain held as a Theatre Reserve.

Moving into Q4, A (Norfolk) Coy are now held at readiness for both Op RESCRIPT and Op TORAL. In the meantime, we are leaning in hard to support the D Coy cadres and embracing a welcome return to some green warfighting. Steadily building a foundation that will set the conditions for success during CT2 and CT3 exercises in 2021, as well as a much anticipated RSB role in Cyprus.

As ever, there has been continual personnel churn. Notably, Lt Andrews and Sgt Ferguson have moved to the Trg Wing, Sgt Hodges is now a PSI with the Steelbacks, CSgt Lake has moved to HQ Coy and 20 soldiers reinforced D Coy. We thank all of them for their contribution to the Coy.



**Maj Adam Mackness and Lt Luke Talkington at NHS Nightingale (L).**

Finally, I am due to move on in early 2021 to be COS Op TANGHAM (Somalia) and it would be remiss of me not to take this opportunity to thank

the Coy. It has been an honour and a privilege to command the Fighting Ninth, and I wish them all the very best for the future.

## **Nigeria Enduring Training Team (ETT)**

*Lt Mike Andrews, A (Norfolk) Company*

Early in 2020, 24 soldiers and I deployed to Nigeria on an ETT as part of the British Military Advisory and Training Team, delivering pre-deployment training to some of the Nigerian Army's most deployable units in preparation for their continued fight against Boko Haram.

After a short stay in Abuja, the

team travelled to Jaji where we would be for the following 3-months. Sparing no time, we jumped straight into the delivery of training, teaching formations such as the School of Support Weapons, Drill and Maritime Operations. The usual weeklong training packages would mostly focus on section level skills from the Battlecraft Syllabus such as fire &

manoeuvre, casualty evacuation and medical training.

Despite the challenge of teaching classes upwards of 120 students, the instructors drawn from across the Vikings delivered first rate instruction in challenging conditions. In addition to the smaller audiences from across the Nigerian Camp, the training teams also



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)



The training team in Nigeria.



Cpl Adcock instructing.

delivered pre-deployment training to the Nigerian 81st Battalion who would be the next unit to deploy to the country's North East as part of the ongoing battle against Boko Haram.

Whilst most stayed in Jaji for the duration, a small team deployed to Freetown, Sierra Leone where they would spend 6-weeks training the country's Quick Reaction Force. The QRF are soon to be tested by the UN as to their suitability to deploy under the UN banner; a privilege which would see their standing elevated in the region. Despite the challenges the nation has endured, the country was spectacular and the soldiers trained had high morale and an obvious desire to learn.

Keen to deploy as part of the UN for the benefit of their regional allies, showed eagerness and determination like no other. Before finishing the STTT however, the team, unfortunately, had to return to the UK prior to their final exercise due to the Covid pandemic.

Both teams returned to the UK in late



**Lt Andrews in Sierra Leone.**

March to assist in the Battalion's role as a Covid Response Force. An exciting start to 2020, it was an excellent opportunity

to deploy abroad, challenging ourselves as instructors and as partner forces in an interesting and diverse part of the world.



**The training team dealt well with large class sizes.**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

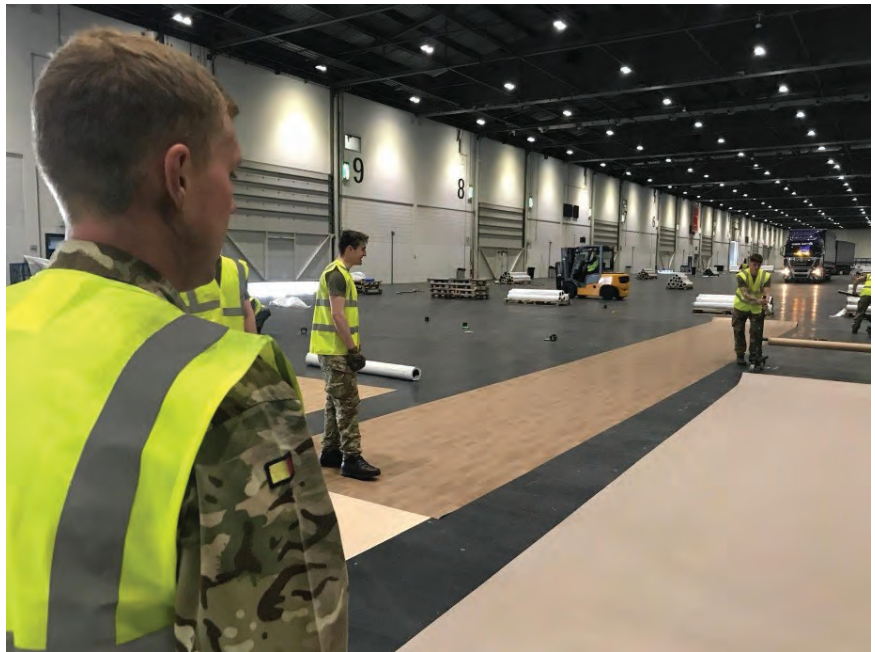
## Op RESCRIPT

*Capt Dave Coyle, 2IC A (Norfolk Company)*

A (Norfolk) Company anticipated many things throughout 2020; Conducting a company “back to basics” exercise, deploying on Ex WESSEX STORM and a steady Pre-Deployment Training package before deploying to Afghanistan to finish off the year. The reality saw A (Norfolk) Company deployed as the first Sub-Unit across the British Army on Op RESCRIPT, the Military Aid to the Civilian Authorities against the Covid 19 pandemic.

With the outbreak of Covid 19 our focus switched from preparing to enjoy the delights of a woodblock in Brecon to deploying onto the streets of London. With the unprecedented nature of the situation, the early days saw our preparation look necessarily generic with attention paid to working with the emergency services and how we could best interact with them.

Project Nightingale saw the transformation of various infrastructure into Covid 19 specialised hospitals. One such hospital was to be created



**Viking soldiers lay flooring at the ExCel Centre.**

in London’s ExCel Centre, a mere few miles from the Vikings’ home in Woolwich. With the deadline for

completion measured in days rather than weeks, the Vikings were tasked through London District to assist with the build. A



**Vikings assembling hospital beds.**



**A Company soldiers assisting the London Ambulance Service.**

(Norfolk) Company deployed rapidly to assist, supplying willing hands to assist with labouing and general duties. The

enthusiasm and effort of A (Norfolk) Company soldiers was often commented on by those who they worked with, from

contractors to the NHS staff. Every task set was completed well within timelines and to the highest of standards.

Following the completion of our tasks on Project Nightingale, A (Norfolk) Company returned to a readiness rotation which saw our soldiers alternate between being dispersed (to minimise interaction and the spread of Covid) and readiness to deploy on any further Op RESCRIPT tasks that fell to us.

Whilst on our rotation as the Battalion's high readiness company, the London Ambulance Service (LAS) required assistance in the movement and supply of PPE to various locations. Again A (Norfolk) Company was able to deploy quickly and effectively to the task based out of the LAS site in Deptford. The task was supposed to last a few days however the tempo and work rate from our soldiers saw the job completed in one. Op RESCRIPT appeared suddenly and unexpectedly, yet the soldiers of A (Norfolk) Company adapted and performed to the highest standards.



**The finished Nightingale Hospital.**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

## Op TORAL 11 Mission Specific Training

*2Lt Ross Simmons, A (Norfolk) Company*



A (Norfolk) Company during PDT.



LCpl Wood wearing full PPE (including face covering) whilst providing FP whilst on a task.

Following our deployment on Op RESCRIPT, the company has been focused on preparations for deploying on Op TORAL 11. Throughout this turbulent summer the Company has prepared to deploy as an Incident Response Company located in New Kabul Compound completing all the various training requirements and validation. Due to the current drawdown the company is now held at readiness to deploy. This has caused a busy period – A (Norfolk) Company has had to get to grips with working in Foxhound vehicles and train with a focus on Force Protection.

Many private soldiers and junior commanders attended Foxhound courses so that they would be qualified to use the vehicles. This was a new experience for many, in a light Infantry battalion anything but the good old 'brown taxis' is a bit unusual. The newly qualified soldiers then passed on their knowledge to their peers as the company went through Foxhound familiarisation lessons. This enabled all members of A (Norfolk) company to understand the properties and capabilities of the Foxhound vehicles and get hands on with the equipment required for the role

they were training for.

The Company then began to bring all the training together for several exercises. The first of which, Ex KABUL HORIZON, involved navigating through London to Army Reserve Centres and practising mentor briefings and 'Guardian Angel' drills. Although a relatively low tempo exercise this enabled the company to become more familiar with the Foxhound vehicles and the drills specific to this operational setting. It also represented a challenge to the newly qualified drivers and commanders, who were navigating the suburban areas of London in 7.5-ton armoured vehicles! The Company then ran an internal exercise, Ex NORFOLK SHIELD, which introduce a variety of incidents such as insider threats, IEDs, FOB defence and all manner of scenarios that could happen whilst in theatre.

The culmination of the Company's pre deployment training was the mission rehearsal exercise Ex KABUL DUSK. This was an externally run exercise involving the Company being assessed in all areas relevant to Op TORAL. Serials included VBIED threats, insider



**Cpl Cerveno briefing a Mentor before moving out onto a FP task on Ex NORFOLK SHIELD.**

threats, camp attacks and much more. The serials got more complex as the exercise went on, with Afghan nationals, amputee casualties and 250 role players

adding to the realism and complexity. A (Norfolk) Company now stands fully qualified and ready to deploy on Op TORAL

## ZAMBIA Short Term Training Team (STTT)

*Lt Luke Talkington, A (Norfolk) Company*

At the end of 2019 a small group of officers and SNCOs from across the Battalion deployed to train SNCOs and officers of the Zambian Defence Force (ZDF) so they could in turn cascade Pre-

deployment Training in advance of their upcoming tour of the Central African Republic.

The Vikings split into two teams, one officer heavy, the other largely SNCOs.

The officer led team worked with the ZDF to plan a Mission Rehearsal Exercise to be incorporated into their PDT in the new year. This involved conducting reces of training areas and



**The training team in Zambia.**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)



Lessons underway in with the ZDF.



The training at Victoria Falls.

ensuring we passed on our knowledge of running safe, realistic training that would set the ZDF up for success in their coming deployment.

The second team made up of SNCOs was the primary instructing team. They delivered a train-the-trainer package where they outlined how to plan and then deliver lessons. This included lessons on orders, patrolling, running ranges, med, and counter IED.

The team managed to get some down time whilst in Zambia including a particularly memorable weekend visit to Victoria Falls. This was a spectacular sight in what was already a beautiful country and an absolutely unique experience. There was also plenty of opportunity for physical training in an incredible environment.

Working with the ZDF was a fantastic experience. They were warm and welcoming and excellent hosts. The ZDF were receptive to the training we offered and their desire to learn was obvious. It was apparent that they had enjoyed working with us as much as we had with them when they asked us to return and run further training in the future.



## Task Force HANNIBAL

*Sgt Anderson, A (Norfolk) Company*

Task Force HANNIBAL was the OPFOR tasking in support of the Poacher's EX WESSEX STORM. A composite platoon from A (Norfolk) Company deployed to Salisbury Plain Training Area in February to operate as a live, dynamic, thinking enemy to test the exercising Battlegroup. We viewed this as more than just facilitating the exercise but as an excellent training opportunity for us. As much as we were providing an enemy for the Poachers to train against, they were doing the same for us.

The exercise was broken down into three parts. The first of these involved several days of probing attacks on to the Poachers who were occupying Imber Village. This set the tone for the exercise and saw the soldiers of A (Norfolk) Company experimenting with small team tactics and ended with a more conventional platoon attack on to the village. LCpl Freemantle and LCpl Sayell demonstrated their individual skills as the last two members of the platoon standing inside Imber Village.

In the second phase of the exercise



**A Company soldiers working in small teams.**

the soldiers of A (Norfolk) Company occupied a defensive position on the

Salisbury Plain airfield where they had to contend with not only the QDG but also Storm Dennis which was in full swing. This created some exceptionally difficult weather conditions to train in as well as some amusing scenes with some unsecured porta-loos.

Finally the platoon occupied Copehill Down Village where they set about making life as difficult as possible for the attacking Poachers and QDG. LCpl Gibson demonstrated his skill with the Sharpshooter rifle and secured his position as top shot on the exercise.

It is fair to say that A (Norfolk) Company took as much from the experience as they possibly could. It was an opportunity to train against a live enemy in arduous weather conditions. It was also a chance to experiment with new tactics, and skills in an environment where we had the freedom to do so.

Finally HANNIBAL was an opportunity to allow a number of soldiers to practise their one-up job in a relatively low pressure, but still demanding and realistic environment. Overall it was a valuable training experience.



**A Company soldiers practising their skills as part of Task Force HANNIBAL.**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

## B (Suffolk) Company

### OC's Introduction

*Maj Tim Hearne*

B Company's year has been representative of the 1st Battalion's in 2020. Sat now at the end of the year, things haven't gone to plan.

Initially, the Company contributed 6 Platoon (Mighty VI) to Ex WESSEX STORM 1/20 attached to C Coy within the Poachers Battlegroup. This exercise saw incredibly cold and wintry conditions but a great performance by all during an ambitious 7 Infantry Brigade multi – Battlegroup exercise.

After this, the Company switched to preparations for both Op TORAL 11 and the Battalion's own, but soon to be short lived, Ex WESSEX STORM 6/20. B Coy also welcomed WO2 Tom Fish as the new CSM and said farewell to WO2 Chris Brooks. The preparation stopped mid-Lydd range package as the COVID lockdown began.



Lt Rob Smith with 6 Platoon on Ex WESSEX STORM.



B Company at NHS Nightingale during Op RESCRIPT.

Op RESCRIPT offered a significant challenge to the whole Battalion but some respite for others. Already in the Op TORAL ORBAT and supported by Recce Pl, the Company rotated through readiness and support which included liaison at NHS Nightingale.

As the restrictions eased, the Company continued training for the Kabul deployment. Also, at this time, B Company said goodbye to Maj Charlie Singleton, the Company Commander who had led through both Op TORAL 7 and Ex SABRE in Finland. IMST continued up to summer leave with a deployment expected in the autumn.

After summer leave, B Coy received the disappointing news that reductions to Op TORAL would mean that we would no longer deploy. This disappointment was short lived as a Platoon of volunteers quickly refocused to prepare for a short notice deployment to Oman, supporting the drawdown of Afghanistan. The remainder of the Company switched focus to the “Suffolk Warfighting



**Live Firing as part of MST.**

programme” and a return to training for the demanding core role of light role infantry operations. This continues until Christmas leave looking forward

to a series of exercises in 2021 and the Regional Standby Battalion commitment in Cyprus – a very different year to what was planned.



**LCpl Gilbert teaches a lesson as part of the ‘Suffolk Warfighting Programme’,**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

## Fighting Five Platoon in Kenya

*Sgt Scott 5 Platoon Sergeant, B (Suffolk) Company*



### 5 Platoon in Kenya

In October 2019, 5 Platoon B Company deployed as the Force Protection (FP) Platoon for the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK). Following a short stay in Kifaru Barracks Nairobi, the Platoon headed 200km north of the capital to Nanyuki where the Vikings completed a HOTO with 3 PARA.

5 Platoon rotated through camp security and QRF. The camp security was primarily manning the sangars and providing training on basic search techniques and VCPs to the local security forces.

Whilst on QRF the Platoon received training on loading casualties onto the various types of helicopters which would be used on numerous occasions in the coming months. The platoon also ran many practice drills on actions on a complex camp attack and many other scenarios that we could have been expected to deal with. Other tasks included visits to the training areas in between ASKARI STORM exercises to ensure the security at the FOBs on Archers Post Training Area was running correctly. These long drives enabled us to get up close and personal with the wildlife and amazing scenery that Kenya had to offer.



**Sgt Scott in Kenya.**



**5 Platoon working with the Royal Engineers outreach programme.**

Away from the routine of FP and QRF taskings, a midweek football league was organised. We also had ample opportunity to go on Safari and AT. Activities available ranged from white water rafting to mountain biking and rock climbing. We were also keen to support the local community. In partnership with the Royal Engineers outreach programme, the platoon took the lead in helping renovate and supplying a local orphanage. The children enjoyed the many visits and the sports that were put on. Equally they benefitted from the classroom and accommodation refurbishment.

At the end of the task in Kenya there was an opportunity for one last adventure; six volunteers headed by Lt Dan Kitchen set off to climb Mount Kenya, the second highest mountain in Africa. The group attempted to reach Lenana summit, a height of 4,985 metres. The recommended route took four days, however due to time constraints the group attempted to summit and return in just two days. This resulted in a steep climb and meant the effects of altitude sickness hit hard. This was combined with attempting the climb in the rainy



**5 Platoon at the base of Mount Kenya.**

season, the steady driving rain gradually becoming snow and thick blizzards. Sadly, the group never reached its goal, and was 400m short, but enjoyed a worthy endeavour.

5 Platoon enjoyed their three months of working and playing hard in a fantastic

and exciting environment. The Platoon was recognised for their hard work, high standards and professionalism by Lt Col Messenger DComd BATUK who said a personal thank you and goodbye and awarded each Viking the BATUK Coin before departure.



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

## **B Company Adventurous Training**

*Lt Robert Smith B (Suffolk) Company*

Soldiers from B 'Suffolk' Company were able to enjoy some hard-earned adventure training throughout this year. Alongside their operational training commitments, many enjoyed a week in France where they took part in alpine and cross-country skiing. For many of those who went it was their first time on the slopes but regardless of previous experience, all were challenged and excelled.

Latterly in the year teams of Vikings took to the mountains in order to undertake Covid-compliant mountain biking courses in Wales and Sonnenberg, Germany. Young Vikings were pushed to their limit both mentally and physically as their days were spent riding up arduous terrain and then descending at what for many were frightening speeds. The course itself was Mountain Bike Foundation which pushed the soldiers progressively beyond the basic skills



**B Company practising the basics.**



**The team stop for a well earned break.**

on the bike and its maintenance and developed their understanding of the terrain, how to manoeuvre as a team and asked even the most junior soldiers to brief and lead the group.

The training concluded by reaching the summit of Groberknollen mountain, a physical and navigational 900m vertical challenge and then working as a team to descend 6 km. Whilst they were pushed to their limits, each and every Viking took to the challenge with great enthusiasm and left with an improved level of self-confidence. Moreover, their time away together was more than an opportunity to travel but brought them closer together as a team – this will stand them in good stead for all future military training.



The descent.

# C (Essex) Company

## OC's Introduction

*Major Dave Crosbie, OC C (Essex) Company*



**C Company soldiers on Ex KABUL HORIZON as part of the MST for Op TORAL.**

2020 has not been the year any of us expected it would be, as COVID-19 has ripped through the country leaving Company training programmes and the national economy in tatters alike. For the soldiers of C (Essex) Company, the year has been one of three distinct phases: conventional soldiering, culminating in Ex WESSEX STORM; Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) as part of Op RESCRIPT; and finally training for and deployment on Op TORAL 11.

For C Company the constant aiming marker on the horizon during 2020 has been Kabul, Afghanistan. For a Light Role Company, this made identifying 2020's Main Effort easy: driving qualifications, from B license all the way through to Foxhound and CAV. On Ex WESSEX STORM, an important CT3 event, we were still extracting and inserting personnel weekly over the month-long exercise to meet the required driving end-state.

During Op RESCRIPT and the enforced dispersal that initially came with it, the team quickly identified that individual discipline and the oversight of JNCOs would win the day. Troops were initially testing mainly symptomatic NHS workers; there was a very real concern over contamination down to poor drills. The use of fire-teams imposed a natural military chain of command, and allowed soldiers to rotate through, mitigating complacency. Despite long



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

shifts over many weeks, troops regularly reported a sense of pride and purpose in their work. This same approach – and the positive results – continued on Op TORAL where JNCOs often led small Advisor Force Protection (AFP) nodes.

C Company concluded 2020 by deploying back to Kabul in Oct on Op TORAL 11. By then, the 1 R ANGLIAN commitment had reduced to a small Company group, principally supporting 2 SCOTS. The Company role and location had changed three times, reflecting the pace of change in an operational theatre that was rapidly drawing down to a close. As MST commenced in June, I outlined the five Principles of War that I needed all members of the Company group focus on.

The first of these was maintenance of morale, perhaps the most important factor in war. This meant keeping everyone abreast of changes, providing



C 'Essex' Company group on Ex KABULDAWN (MRX).



The C Coy team reviews lessons learned on MST



a fulfilling training programme, and balancing work & play where possible. Secondly, security. Advisor Force Protection (in essence, close protection) is about the provision of security, to allow growth in Afghanistan's political and military institutions. Thirdly flexibility, Of mind & ORBAT, was key. The 'road to TORAL' took many detours, and the uncertainty continued once in theatre. After helping close Camp Qargah, we were to be 'the Battlegroup reserve', plugging gaps caused by COVID and delays to the RiP

(which were many). Next, cooperation was a consistent area of focus. Based mainly from HKIA, an international 'base of bases', we had to embrace cooperation, or risk being redundant. This meant quickly developing good working relationships with 2 SCOTS, the on-site Portuguese and Turkish QRFs, GuardaWorld contractors, and a multitude of Australian, American and German mentors. Finally, Sustainability. Protecting the force from COVID-19, perhaps most importantly: a reserve is useless if it can't be deployed. Relentless

adherence to basic hygiene drills and social distancing kept C Company 'clean' all tour.

At the time of writing, it is likely that C Company will all return to the UK before Christmas. Thereafter a re-focus on conventional warfighting beckons before the entire Battalion prepares for the Unit Move to Cyprus. This week, the first COVID vaccine had also been announced. One hopes that my final contribution to Castle as OC C Company in a years' time is not further dominated by COVID.

## Op RESCRIPT – from Nigeria to Wembley

*Lance Corporal Cole, C (Essex) Company*

I was part of an ETT (Enduring Training Team) deployed to Nigeria at the start of 2020 with several others from across the Battalion. A whirlwind of information and 12 hours later, we had collapsed the camp in preparation for a hasty withdrawal back to the UK due to the uncertainty surrounding the COVID pandemic.

We arrived in the UK and returned to Woolwich. It was apparent that it was not only us reacting to a quickly unfolding situation, but also our own Coy HQ. I found this strange; I've always looked up for direction but in this scenario we all knew roughly the same. We soon found out we would be supporting the new COVID Regional Testing Centers. My Platoon Sergeant insisted on small meetings within the Op RESCRIPT Team. This helped to iron out any worries that we had and concerns about the risk to our loved ones. It was also a chance to voice our opinions and thoughts: an open dialogue from the newest soldier to the most senior aided in our ability to work cohesively as a team.

We drove to Wembley through the ghost town of lockdown London and began our training for Op RESCRIPT. Training consisted of testing your partner with a COVID swab, placing it at the back of their mouth and in their nostril - this was not pleasant. After practicing on each other and being validated by NHS staff it was then time to test the public. After the first few people went through, the mandatory brief and testing became



**Regional Testing Facility Wembley: Cpl Du Maurier oversees testing.**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

easier and more polished. At our busiest we were testing more than 70 people per day, per booth.

Our Wembley task carried on for a few weeks, and teams also moved to other testing sites to assist in filling in the gaps of civilian testers. Op RESCRIPT posed a new challenge for all involved and tested our ability to react to urgent tasks. Although some elements of the Armed Forces remained involved, our involvement ended as quickly as it started. Our services were no longer required as civilian capacity grew. We immediately turned our sights onto the next task: Op TORAL.

From an ETT, Op RESCRIPT and Op TORAL it reminded me of my notes taken before I began Basic Training: “the Royal Anglian Regiment is one of the most versatile regiments within the Infantry, able to deploy at short

**“This won’t hurt...much!” LCpl Campbell practises swabbing Pte Fitzpatrick under supervision.**



## Covid Response – A personal perspective

*WO2 Paul Kennedy, Training WO*

In May 2020 I was the CSM of C (Essex) Company. The Company was aligned to conduct COVID Testing at the centres being created across London. We were working at both IKEA and Chessington testing sites and were fortunate that Sgt Du Maurier had completed the COVID train-the-trainer package and was well on the way to having the entire Company qualified to test. Manning the test centres consumed the platoon and section level leaders so when the Company was tasked to provide an individual to work remotely in a team for a consultancy company on behalf of the DHSC I was selected.

A very surreal first day saw me dropped into a national teleconference discussing the selection of testing sites, legal agreements and the project management of building these sites. I was to work as one of three service members in a team which would select and agree on testing centre locations with local authorities across the country.

By the end of the five-week period

I spent on this task I was involved in developing sites from Ebbsfleet to Inverness and Exeter to Ipswich. The initial task fit very much into my skillset and background in Infantry Recce. Once a city was selected based upon DHSC criteria I would be given up to eight locations by the local authority. I would use information provided and my experience on the sites in London to provide COA back briefs up the chain of command. From these recommendations a site would be selected. The main difference was I was using PowerPoint to back brief rather than models in a wet and cold woodblock.

As the urgency of the development of these sites increased and the project gained momentum my role was expanded. I was tasked with project managing the build of a number of new sites. Initially I was apprehensive at this prospect and unsure how the many civilian firms and contractors would take to having an Infantry soldier ‘managing’ them. This need not have concerned me.

I soon realised that the skillset and style developed over my time in the Army was well suited to the task; a generalist who could listen to ideas, bring people together to form a consensus, and deliver an end state was exactly what was required.

Throughout this task I was pleased to constantly find the support of members of the Regiment. 3 RANGLIAN allowed me to use IT in their many locations and I met Maj Ian Robinson on site who gave sound advice. CO and RSM Poachers kindly put me up in their camp whilst I was working in the area and I worked alongside helpful and effective Royal Anglian officers at various JMCs and Standing Joint Command. The strength of a family regiment ran deep throughout.

I would especially like to thank the soldiers and leaders within C (Essex) Company who showed the strength and resilience to continue throughout this period manning testing centres every day with pride and professionalism.

## Op TORAL 11

*Lt James Heal, OC Machine Gun Platoon, 2 R ANGLIAN attached to C (Essex) Coy 1 R ANGLIAN*



**'VANQUISH 62' – Poacher MG PI in HKIA with their Foxhounds.**

The 2nd Battalion's Machine Gun Platoon joined C (Essex) Company in May 2020 to prepare for deployment on Operation TORAL 11. C Company integrated us well, with two platoons deploying on the final ORBAT to Kabul in Sep 2020.

The pre-training utilised the experience of the 1st Battalion from TORAL 7 which allowed all personnel without TORAL experience to reach a high standard in preparation for the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX). The organic training put on by the Vikings' Training Wing culminated in Exercise KABUL HORIZON where multiples moved around south London to practise their Advisor Force Protection (AFP) measures and operate in realistic traffic situations.

The MRX further developed these skills and put into practice our QRF drills as all platoons deployed around the AO dealing with traffic incidents, vehicle IEDs and extraction of casualties from helicopter crashes and complex attacks. Our final deliberate operation saw the company plan and execute security for the ANAOA graduation parade. This enabled Company HQ to get out on the ground and command and control a difficult situation.

After a 14-day isolation period, with two tranches of manpower deploying 5 days after the other, the Company moved to Kabul. The Viking Platoon of C Company, plus some support from the Poacher Platoon, moved immediately to





# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)



## **Maintenance – keeping the Foxhounds on the go in the heat and altitude of Kabul required daily work.**

Qargha where they surged the manpower required to complete the deconstruction and recovery from that location. With no issues, a week later the company was complete back in HKIA (Hamid Karzai International Airport).

The Poacher Platoon, with some of Company HQ, had set the conditions back in HKIA for the return of the Company to their base in ‘Tent City’. The Poachers immediately worked hard to prepare the Foxhound fleet from Qargha for further operations in support of HKIA Company. Both platoons

worked hard to provide manpower so that the RiP between the RIFLES and the SCOTS could take place as easily as possible. We were rewarded for our readiness with AFP missions from HKIA around the city. Both Multiple Commanders were eager to pick up missions and worked flat out keeping vehicles on the road, deploying every day for a two-week period, until the RiP was complete. The Viking Platoon pushed pairs and fireteams out around HKIA for AFP as well as base defence across the range of RS locations. Every

man deployed on tasks in support of the RS Mission.

In the final weeks, the LAD became the main effort, preparing the return of Foxhounds to the UK by air. By the end of this period, REME and Royal Anglian soldiers were indistinguishable climbing over the vehicles to keep them maintained. As would be expected of every Royal Anglian soldier, every task, whether maintenance or operations on the ground, was undertaken with quiet professionalism and delivered to the highest of standards.

## **D (Cambridgeshire) Company**

### **OC’s Introduction**

*OC D (Cambridgeshire) Company, Maj Phil Lenthall*

D (Cambridgeshire) Company’s year like the rest of the 1st Battalion’s was a year marked by change and challenges but ultimately success through resilience of character.

Early in 2020 D Company took a role on EX WESSEX STORM 1/20 adding Mortar capability to both 2 R ANGLIAN BG and alongside Reconnaissance Pl, provided staunch resistance to 7X forces as part of Task Force Hannibal.

Shortly afterwards the company quickly shifted its focus to Op RESCIRPT, providing platoons to Rifle Company COVID Support Forces in and around London. This included Anti-Tank Pl working in the ExCel Centre to assist with Project Nightingale.

The national lockdown presented challenges to the Company’s training but through unique and alternative methods, the Company was able to maintain a

steady drumbeat of development. The experience has broadened our horizons on how to train our soldiers and now provides a tool in generating interesting training to D Company soldiers. The Company was also able to brief CFA on its efforts in developing modern Infantry ISTAR capability through his innovation fund securing a micro UAV and infrared helmet camera.

After another equally short period



**Sniper Platoon pause on exercise for a moment on Armistice Day.**

the Company showed its pedigree by, at short notice, switching its training to Op TORAL without fuss or fanfare. However, change continued to mark the nature of the year and the requirement for D Coy to deploy on Op TORAL diminished.

Opportunity now presented itself and through hard work of the Company Captains and SNCOs an excellent Company Reinforcement Cadre was put in place running from Oct to Dec. Equally this was extremely well supported by the Battalion and provide much needed

warfighting training opportunities for all Rifle Companies involved. In detail D Company spread across the typically cold and wet training areas of the UK. The Company's ISTAR capability of Reconnaissance, Sniper and Anti-Tank Pl deploying to Catterick whilst



**Machine Gun Platoon training in Sennybridge.**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

Mortar Platoon conducted their training in Castlemartin and Machine Gun Platoon with Assault Pioneer Platoon conducting training in Sennybridge.

To return to our Core Warfighting function has provided professional satisfaction across all ranks and begun to hone the Company's edge once again. The traditionally high-quality D Company cadres were elevated another notch this year as they culminated in Otterburn alongside A (Norfolk) Company in a Live Fire Company Group Attack.

D Company looks forward to 2021 which will include overseas Operations, Battalion level training and further exploration into enhancing D Coy capability through technology and we are set to continue our growth. With its desire for continuous improvement D Company will continue to be the forward edge of the 1st Battalion.



**Mortar Platoon firing on their cadre.**

## Anti-Tank Platoon 2020

*Capt Tim Lister, OC Anti-Tank Platoon*

The year started with a routine 'Back to Basics' training exercise on Salisbury Plain. This exercise was aimed at refreshing the fundamental light role infantry skills which would ordinarily be carried out by a rifle platoon. However, the Coronavirus outbreak in March resulted in a significant change of circumstances.

The Anti-Tank platoon re-rolled and formed a COVID Support Force (CSF), attached to A (Norfolk) Company, prepared to support civilian authorities in London. Between March and July, the Platoon rotated through levels of readiness ranging from 24hrs to 5 days-notice to move.

The Anti-Tank Platoon was called up at short notice to deploy to the



**Anti-Tank Platoon.**

ExCel Centre in London to assist with Project Nightingale; the building of a large-scale hospital with a 4000-bed capacity. Members of the Platoon worked alongside civilian contractors, NHS staff and other military personnel to construct hospital beds, lay flooring and assist in the movement of medical supplies. Working on the project was an immensely rewarding and eye-opening experience for the soldiers.

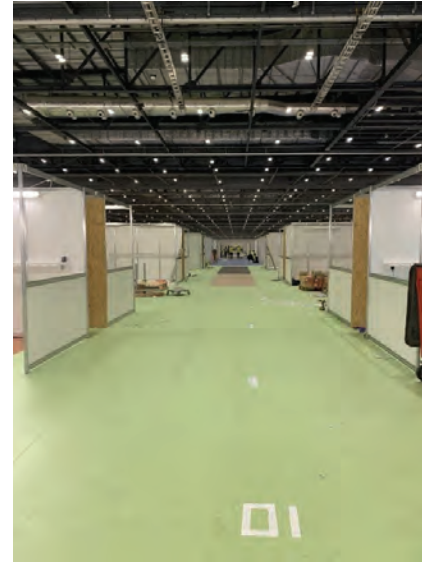
After the Battalion's commitment to Coronavirus came to an end, the Platoon were able to turn their attention back towards training and an operational focus. Between July and August, approximately half of the Anti-Tank Platoon conducted pre-deployment training (PDT) for an operational deployment to Kabul, Afghanistan. However, the overall reduction of the British Army's commitment to the operation meant they did not deploy in the end. Regardless, the mission-specific training was still a worthwhile training experience for the troops.

To round off the year, all the Support Weapons Platoons within D (Cambridgeshire) Company will



**Back to basics exercise.**

complete their annual cadres. With a significant number of soldiers from the Rifle Companies transferring to D Coy, the cadres provide the opportunity for the new-look Platoons to train together in a testing environment and qualify the new arrivals in their specialist roles. The Anti-Tank Platoon cadre took place on



**Building the Nightingale.**

Catterick Training Area and involved extensive weapon handling lessons, armoured fighting vehicle recognition training and practical lessons. The cadre culminated in a physically demanding and arduous training exercise; only accentuated by the climatic conditions they faced in the bleak Yorkshire winter!

## From Stabilisation to Warfighting – Viking Mortars

*Capt Toby Reid, OC Mortars*

Between 2018 and 2019 Mortar Platoon retrained onto the Foxhound Vehicle and deployed to Afghanistan in support of the NATO mission in Kabul. Whilst both rewarding and exciting we returned to Woolwich in late 2019 eager to resume focus on our core role – warfighting.

We began immediately with an intense three-week cadre period that finished on a bitterly cold Salisbury Plain. This culminated in firing hundreds of live 81mm high explosive, smoke and illumination rounds to qualify as mortarmen. Now 'badged', the platoon had a solid foundation upon which we could build.

Returning to Salisbury Plain on Exercise WESSEX STORM provided the perfect opportunity for us to keep getting better. The platoon deployed two mortar lines for the exercise: one attached to the Poachers Battlegroup, one in support of the Steelbacks as



**Cpl Rogers demonstrating how to control mortar fire to LCpl Priestley.**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)



**Pte Jackson and Pte Watts ready to fire in support of friendly troops**

OPFOR – nothing like sending a bit of counter-battery fire onto your rival section! The exercise was certainly tough for the platoon, but was just the challenge we needed. Everyone in the platoon returned to Woolwich confident that they were both better soldiers and better mortarmen.

Sadly, this year saw the departure of two first-class mortarmen and excellent SNCOs. CSgt Warburton, who left on promotion, and Sgt Warwick (who joined the platoon in Londonderry in 2000 and served for 20 years as a mortarmen!) have taken up posts at the Steelbacks as SPSI and Mortar PSI respectively.

They will be sorely missed. On a positive note, most welcome were the recent additions of Sgt Rowland and Cpl Cupples, they have strong futures ahead of them and will be vital as the platoon grows.

Additionally, Cpls Atkins and Baker promoted after passing 'Bravos', and as I write LCpl Mayes is over halfway through his Bravos course. Training and maintaining the numbers of our qualified NCOs is vital if we're to be effective in any future conflict.

Finally, even in these strange times we retain our focus on this unique skill of mortaring. Whilst a brief period earlier in the year saw members of the platoon deployed in support of the country, combatting COVID-19, we now look forward to another year of worthwhile and challenging training.

This continued development will see us set for the move to Cyprus and ready to deploy anywhere in the world at short-notice if required.



**'Five rounds, fire for effect'.**



## Close Reconnaissance Platoon

*Capt Jonny Taylor, OC Recce Platoon*



**The local insurgent threat to Copehill Down.**

In spite of the global pandemic and uncertain operational commitments, Viking Close Reconnaissance has worked hard to retain its tactical edge this year, closing off 2020 with a successful cadre in Catterick to bring twelve new patrolmen into the platoon.

Viking Recce began the year by participating in Ex WESSEX STORM 1/20 in January to March, providing the Reconnaissance capability to the Task Force HANNIBAL OpFor concept within the 3 ROYAL ANGLIAN Battlegroup. Appalling weather aside, this presented an interesting opportunity for the platoon to experiment tactically. This led to some valuable lessons learnt in the utility of close recce as an offensive force by conducting flanking and spoiling attacks on an already decisively engaged enemy force.

The Recce PI was then committed to Op RESCRIPT, providing an at-readiness force to the Nightingale centre in London EXCEL as part of the nations effort to combat the COVID-19 virus. This afforded the time to focus on conceptually developing modern Infantry ISTAR capability, bringing the platoon to the fore of the Battalion's warfare development project. This has seen some success with the acquisition



**Cpl Bellingham covers the long threat.**



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)



## **Viking Recce stands triumphant over the end of 2020's Patrolman Cadre.**

of Infrared helmet cameras to record imagery during night-time patrol actions, and the purchase of micro-UAS and subsequent approval for use by the Military Aviation Authority. These developments were briefed in person by members of the platoon to the CFA on his visit to the Battalion, and were well received.

After training hard to provide a

Foxhound task-line to Op TORAL 11, the theatre drawdown meant a rapid change of axis to the platoon when its task switched from operations to running a Patrolman Cadre in the UK. At relatively short notice, the Platoon was able to put together a diverse, exciting and well-resourced 5 week course to successfully train and retrain old and new members of the platoon

alike in core Infantry reconnaissance skills. Culminating in Company attack onto Whinny Hill Village in Catterick Training Area, and involving members of A, B and D company, this was a satisfying return to conventional training that brought much of the Battalion together. The end result was a cohesive, hardened and proud Recce platoon ready to lead the Vikings forward.

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## New to Support Company – An Experience of the Recce Platoon Cadre

*LCpl Josh Freemantle*

I was fortunate to be allocated a place on the 1 Royal Anglian Light Close Reconnaissance Patrolman Cadre (LCRPC) held at Catterick Garrison and training area over October and November this year.

The course and the job role of a reconnaissance patrolman required a higher level of soldiering and physical and mental robustness compared to that of a conventional role within the Battalion's Rifle Companies, which has always appealed to me.

The opening week was designed to test the baseline standard of soldiering amongst the hopeful applicants and involved physical, fieldcraft and military knowledge based assessments. It quickly highlighted the standards and expectations of the platoon and gave a good indication as to what would follow in the weeks to come.

The course was largely formative and progressive in nature. Applicants received detailed and thorough lessons by LCRCC qualified instructors on subjects such as Types of Observation Post, Limited Offensive Action and Close Target Reconnaissance, to name a few.

Each week would conclude with a 12-24 hour summative exercise ensuring we had understood and retained what had been taught. It stressed the importance of self-reliance, individual discipline and how each member of the platoon must have the confidence to perform each role within their patrol. This stood out to me as it places much more responsibility on a private soldier or JNCO than you would expect typically in a Rifle Company.

The course was five weeks in total, the final week culminating in a testing exercise to ensure we had grasped the role of a Recce Patrolman. Working alongside and in support of a Rifle Company the final day concluded



**LCpl Freemantle, Ptes Booth and Raymond extract from a CTR.**

with an assault on Whinny Hill OBUA village.

This assessed all the skills and tactics we had been from recce action through to CQB and offensive action while working together as a platoon. The cadre was a challenging and rewarding course which highlighted to me how previous skills could be improved and built on by new specialist expertise. I would highly recommend anyone to try

a support company cadre; the working environment is certainly different to what I have previously experienced in the Infantry; high expectations and standards are placed on every soldier irrespective of rank, while the working environment is relaxed and each soldier is entitled to a voice. The cadre demanded a determined attitude but was both fulfilling and rewarding and I'm proud to be where I am now.



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

## HQ Company

### OC's Introduction

*Major Granfield, OC Headquarters Company*



**CFA presenting Cpl Tull and Sarpong coins for their work creating I-STAT and SMaT.**

This year has contained just as many unexpected twists and turns for Headquarters Company as it has for anyone else. Over the course of the year flexibility and tight deadlines have been the name of the game. It speaks volumes for the 13 different departments in Headquarters Company

that the Battalion has been able to react at such short notice to the challenges of Op RESCRIPT (COVID-19), the ever-changing deployment on Op TORAL 11 (Afghanistan) and an unexpected deployment to Oman. Headquarters Company has been vital in enabling all this key activity.

Headquarters Company has seen some of its own soldiers deploy to Op TORAL from CIS Platoon, LAD and the CMTs. Cpl Grey of CIS Pl is deploying on Op NEWCOMBE to Mali with the Poachers. This year CIS platoon has been busy supporting Op RESCRIPT and the Mission Specific Training for



**CIS Platoon conduct training in using improvised antenna.**

Op TORAL 11 as well as providing support to all other Battalion training. The MT PI and LAD have continued their outstanding work at home and on operations. They have also deployed several soldiers to Kabul where they have been preparing the Foxhound fleet to return home. This is no mean feat and they have achieved it with aplomb.

The AGC (SPS) detachment have continued to impress and support the Battalion. Of particular note, Cpl Sarpong has developed an outstanding IT platform that enables a more effective and efficient way to deliver move and track, accommodation and travel bookings. Whilst Cpl Tull has been working hard on another platform that better connects our soldiers to their HR. The remainder of the team have been working equally hard, supporting deployments across the globe and

delivering results at every opportunity.

This year has seen considerable development within the Training Wing. This has included a complete redesign of the Battalion induction process with a new course, the Viking Advanced Infantry Skills Enhancement Course, or VAISEC. This further develops new Vikings arriving from ITC Catterick and is designed to meet the residual training gap.

2020 has presented numerous challenges for the Gym staff and PTIs too. They have had to adapt quickly and frequently to everchanging COVID measures, ensuring that our physical development could still be conducted so the Battalion is fit to face any challenge. Their flexibility has been commendable and the need to work within these restraints has led to some creative, yet very beneficial, sessions for everyone.

A thunderously busy and challenging year, but the Officers, and NCOs of Headquarters Company have worked tirelessly to overcome and adapt. The continued support to the Battalions activity has never faltered. We all look forward to the next year as the Battalion prepares to move to Cyprus.

Welcome back to CSgt Turner and CSgt Haldenby on return from 3 R ANGLIAN. Congratulations on Commissioning to Capt Larry Holmes (LE); on promotion to WO1 - RSM Butterick; WO2 – WO2 Wright; CSgt – CSgt Duckett and CSgt Jarvis, SSgt Gates RAPTC and SSgt Anderson RLC Chef; to Sgt – Sgt Mowle, Strike, Sammwata and White; to Cpl – Cpl Gray and Oliver; LCpl – LCpl Devaney. Finally, Cpl Woods has been selected for RAPTC(I) he leaves us in Jan 21. Well done to all.



# 1st Battalion (The Vikings)

## VAISEC Platoon

*Sgt Alan Taylor, VAISEC SNCO*

This year the disruption caused to training at ITC Catterick by Covid 19 was the catalyst for the formation of a new induction process at the Vikings that tackles the residual training gap and ensures that new members of the Battalion are as well prepared as possible to join their Platoons.

This new process became the Viking Advanced Infantry Skills Expansion Course or VAISEC. As I write this we have just completed our first course and 27 new Vikings are now with their Companies having completed an FTX in Brecon. The next course will begin in Jan 21.

The aim of the VAISEC is to

introduce new Vikings to the Battalion and its traditions and culture, add context and polish on skills taught at the Infantry Training Centre and teach new skills that will be valuable within the Companies. In addition to this it is an excellent steppingstone for new soldiers arriving at Battalion. The course develops their mental resilience and allows them to settle into Battalion life surrounded by their peers.

One of the main constraints to running a course such as VAISEC is the disjointed nature that soldiers pass out of training. Rather than having large groups arrive together it is often an intermittent trickle. To deal with this the VAISEC

process is delivered four times a year and each time consists of three phases; arrivals, holding and the course.

The arrivals phase involves the Training Wing engaging with new Vikings whilst they are still in training at ITC to manage the soldier's transition to Battalion. Key to this arrivals phase is identifying any potential welfare, discipline or pay issues. We also use this phase to screen for any injuries developed at ITC and fitness levels so that we can tailor their further training appropriately.

The holding phase is one of our biggest risks but can also create great opportunities. Some soldiers will not



Sgt Taylor oversees training.

spend any time in this phase and others up to six weeks. Maximising this time is key and so far, our holding periods have included driving training, GPMG focus weeks, pistol training weeks and civilian accredited education courses. Our force multiplier here is having excellent Section Commanders; Cpls Charlie Sultana and Jake Harraway who ensure the soldiers feel part of their new battalion.

The VAISEC course is a five to six-week program designed to develop thinking soldiers, build confidence and develop skills. The course breaks down into a navigation week, comms week, range week, team medic week, and a fieldcraft based FTX. Support from across the battalion has allowed this to fit into the Battalion forecast of events and has led to soldiers leaving us qualified as radio users and team medics. The benefit of taking our soldiers on a range that is not under time pressure and oversubscribed with shooters is immeasurable. Key to the delivery of our first VAISEC FTX was CSgt Chris McKendrick who's drive and enthusiasm kept the course moving forward and who's standards never wavered.

Getting new soldiers' arrival to our Battalion right is vital to the long-term health of our regiment. I believe



**VAISEC Platoon demonstrating their skills on FTX.**

by instilling and encouraging our regimental ethos of being classless and deliberately developmental in nature it will allow our junior commanders to

place more trust in our Vikings and in turn better practice mission command allowing for long-term improvements in our effectiveness.



**Navigation and comms training are two key areas of focus during the VAISEC.**



## 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

# From the CO

*Lt Col Will Meddings  
Commanding Officer*

The impact of COVID 19 is such that 2020 will be remembered as a year unlike any other. The Poachers have felt the impact up front, in a year that began with a ruthless focus on readiness for operations, switched to delivering Op RESCRIPT in support of the nation, before turning back to preparing our soldiers for some of the most demanding overseas operations the British Army has to offer.

The year began with the headquarters deploying to Sennelager on Exercise JERBOA CAST, testing the staff and CIS Platoon in the freezing weather of Germany. And - continuing the tempo of 2019 - it was only a week after returning

to the UK that the Battalion headed down to Salisbury Plain to begin Exercise WESSEX STORM alongside its attached engineer squadron, intelligence cell, gun battery and C-IED troop.

Exercise WESSEX STORM 20/1 was the largest scale exercise conducted on the Plain in years. The Poacher Battlegroup numbered over 750 soldiers and included C (Essex) Company of the Vikings. We were fighting alongside the Light Cavalry reconnaissance squadrons of the Queen's Dragoon Guards and were supported by the logisticians of 6 Regiment RLC - and all this in a battle against Taskforce Hannibal, a regular and reserve force of Vikings, Steelbacks





and soldiers from 3 PWRR.

The demanding exercise took place during the wettest Exercise WESSEX STORM on record; Storms Ciara and Dennis meant it was the UK's wettest February on record too. The weather was so appalling that snowstorms called short the penultimate attack. On the last day, led in by the ISR Group and with support from the Machineguns and Assault Pioneers, B (Leicestershire) Company led a final brutal assault into a flooded Imber village. The Battalion's Foxhounds were used to maximum effect, with A (Lincolnshire) Company charging in as reinforcements while the Sniper Platoon crept into the back of the village and negotiated the surrender of the last pocket of enemy to achieve our certification as 'combat ready'.

But this year has not just been about WESSEX STORM. As COVID 19 bit

hard the Poachers were at the forefront of the national test and trace response. Four JNCOs from D (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) Company designed the MOD's mobile COVID testing course and, reinforced by four more JNCOs, went on to train the MOD's entire mobile testing capability. Cpl Hemmings, the team leader, was awarded an MBE for his role. Between April and June the Poachers delivered a dozen 12-man testing teams across the East of England. By the time the government reached its target of 100,000 tests-per-day, 20% of the national capacity had been trained by Poachers and a significant proportion were being personally delivered by members of the Battalion.

While Operation RESCRIPT was rewarding and put us at the forefront of the UK's national effort, operational training has still been going on. The

Machinegun Platoon began training for Operation TORAL in May, deploying in October as part of the Viking's regimental deployment on Operation TORAL 11. D Company was selected and began training for Operation CABRIT, the UK's deployment to Poland as part of NATO's enhanced forward presence. When they deploy in April 2021 they will be the first infantry company to deploy on Operation CABRIT in Poland, a task normally reserved for Light Cavalry squadrons.

B Company trained alongside the Light Dragoons for Operation NEWCOMBE, the first UK deployment as part of the UN's MINUSMA mission. Repeatedly praised by 4 Brigade and Collective Training Group, their December 2020 deployment will be the first deployment of a Light Mechanised Infantry company in its





## 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

combat role. They will be providing the infantry component of the Long Range Reconnaissance Group, working directly to the UN Force Commander on the UN's most dangerous peacekeeping mission.

A and HQ Company will be following behind B Company as the lead Battlegroup and infantry company on the second rotation of Operation NEWCOMBE; training is going on

in earnest with field firing, company exercises and individual courses getting them in the best place for the tour. And C Company will support all the deployments: Mortar Platoon are deploying on both tours to Mali; the Assault Pioneers will support Operation NEWCOMBE 2 and Op CABRIT with individual soldiers and commanders; and when Machinegun Platoon return from Kabul they will be re-rolling to a

new vehicle fleet and training hard.

So, after a demanding 2020, with operational roles both overseas and in the UK, 2021 looks to be an even busier and even more professionally rewarding year. The Battalion has perhaps the best operational programme in the British Army. We are looking forward to a superb opportunity to yet again demonstrate our ability and build on the reputation of the Royal Anglian Regiment.

## FROM THE RSM

*WO1 (RSM) John Rawdon  
Regimental Sergeant Major*

My first article as Regimental Sergeant Major comes as we learn and adapt to life with the COVID-19 virus. The first 6 months have not been as I expected them to be! However, it has allowed me some time to step outside of "normal" Battle Rhythm and evaluate how I would like to drive the Battalion forward heading into what is going to be a very busy 18 months for the Poachers.

The Battalion is now in the depths of preparing for three operational theatres. B (Leicestershire) Company will be the first British troops into Op NEWCOMBE as part of the light Dragoons Battle Group. A (Lincolnshire) Company, along with the Battalion Headquarters will subsequently relieve in place mid-2021. Concurrently, D (Beds & Herts) Company will also deploy, during the first quarter of next year, on Op CABRIT. The Machine Gun Platoon from C (Northamptonshire) Company will be deployed on Op TORAL attached to the Vikings.

With deployment to Mali, we are heading into the relative unknown which brings excitement but many frictions that the troops must deal with. As always, we are training hard and preparing well for whatever challenges lay ahead. D Company will re-role as an LMI ISR Company. It is in this role they are going to test themselves and the concept to be the leading light for the remainder of the



Light Mechanised Infantry to follow.

My next priority is to establish the Operation Readiness Wing (ORW). This will be designed to serve the Battalion and assist in all training and to provide continuity during this fractured time;

especially as every subunit is aligned to a different commitment and timeline. A key function of the ORW will be to prepare our soldiers for all battle courses at IBS, SWS and ARMCCEN. We have a good reputation on external cadres, this

must be maintained, we must strive for continued improvement in preparation and execution of these arduous courses.

A new concept to be aimed at our Junior Non-Commissioned Officers is the Leadership & Mentoring Cadre. Its core purpose, to develop leadership and improve the overall effectiveness

of those JNCOs. It is well known that Poacher JNCOs are of the highest quality. This has been highlighted on several occasions, recently a Battalion sustain point on the Ex WESSEX STORM report. It is the daily, in camp routine business where we really want to develop by training in better leadership.

I strongly believe that everything we do on operations is reflection of the standards we set and hold ourselves to in camp. The Leadership Cadre will make us better on operations by building a strong ethos and culture that will radiate throughout the Battalion.

All the best and stay safe.

# A (Lincolnshire) Company

## Ex WESSEX STORM: A Battle of the Elements and Enemy

*Lt Rory Smith, OC 3 Pl, A (Lincolnshire) Company*



**The workhorse of A (Lincolnshire) Company on Ex WESSEX STORM, the FOXHOUND protected mobility vehicle.**

The Battalion deployed on Exercise WESSEX STORM at the start of 2020 before social distancing, local lockdowns, and self-isolation forced their way into our daily vocabulary. It was the first time A (Lincolnshire) Company would be thoroughly tested in our new Light Mechanised Role since returning from Cyprus and converting onto Foxhound.

These first two muscle moves formed

significant hurdles for the battalion with tight time pressures. I was proud to say the Lincolnshire fighting spirit was present in all we did, and we crossed the line of departure in excellent condition physically, morally, and conceptually, ready for the challenges ahead; not only from the serials we would conduct but also some of the worse weather conditions experienced by members of the Battalion whilst on exercise.

Every element of the Company grafted to incorporate the Light Mechanised capability into our Infantry DNA, and the integration of Lincolnshire Infanteers and Foxhounds did not disappoint. The Company threw itself into the tactical action with a rapid tempo of defensive and offensive Battle Exercises while still getting to know what our new Foxhounds could deliver. Battle Exercises on the urban-rural



## 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)



**A section crosses the Infantry Assault Bridge during the CALFEX.**

interface posed tremendous challenges and unveiled previous unknown opportunities to the Company. As you might expect when compared to Light Role, the burden of sustainment and equipment care increased by orders of magnitude. However, the ability to deliver Infanteers on to the target, over complex terrain quickly and with fire support was a revelation.

Keeping the Foxhounds in peak performance for the comprehensive training package ahead placed a huge responsibility on the Company Driving and Maintenance Instructors. When critical maintenance took place the Poachers of A (Lincolnshire) Company went right back to basics with Individual Close Quarter Battle Lanes building up to Platoon Attacks on to shoot through houses. Whilst the Foxhounds were not supporting the Live Firing Tactical Training package with mounted fire, their morale and administrative support cannot be overstated. Especially with the heating turned up to full to dry out kit



**Awaiting their next orders having gone firm in a woodblock.**



**Pte Dennis suppresses enemy depth having dismounted from Foxhounds on the initial enemy positions during the CALFEX.**

and boiling water readily available from the Boiling Vessel (BV).

Storm Dennis, the first of two major storms to hit the UK over the course of Ex WESSEX STORM, coincided with the most anticipated event, the Combined Arms Live-Fire Exercise (CALFEX). The CALFEX was a live fire company attack with support from artillery and mortars as well as live demolitions provided by the engineers. High winds of up to 90 miles per hour well exceeded the safe limits for firing mortars and artillery amid fears of cancelation. Thankfully the winds eased, if only slightly, and despite driving rain and snow, A Company stepped off with tenacity.

The devastating effects of mortars and artillery were highlighted to the soldiers as the Company cleared through woodblocks which had over £1 million

worth of ordnance dropped on them.

Having been thoroughly prepared through the Battle Exercises and LFTT the battalion was joined by C (Essex) Company from the First Battalion for the two-week test exercise. Their envy of our Foxhounds was palpable as they would be operating entirely dismounted for the two weeks. For this test we were put against Task Force Hannibal, from the 3 R ANGLIAN Battlegroup, drawn from 3 R ANGLIAN, 3 and 4 PWRR, and The Household Cavalry.

The free-thinking and cunning Task Force Hannibal were an agile and aggressive opponent which is just what you want.

It also proved a unique opportunity to have all three battalions on the same exercise, an incredibly rare event. Unfortunately, over the course of the two weeks, weather conditions grew

worse with driving winds, and torrential downpours which only seemed to let up for snow as Storm Ellen moved in.

The conditions made manoeuvre in the Foxhounds extremely difficult and getting bogged in became a routine occurrence, forcing the use of roads to generate speed at the expense of surprise and deception after tactical cross-country routes were ruled out.

A varied and demanding six weeks saw A Company demonstrated that we could operate and deliver tactical effect in the Foxhounds over extended periods in the most demanding of conditions.

Our increasing comfort with Mounted Close Combat will serve us well as we march to the sound of the guns and reorientate onto our next challenge of preparing for the second rotation of Op NEWCOMBE in Mali in Summer 2021.



# 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

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## **B (Leicestershire) Company**

**AT THE CUTTING EDGE**

*Lt Harry Di-Lieto, OC 4 Platoon*





In preparation for their deployment to Mali as the first Light Mechanised Infantry Company in the Long Range Recce Group (Mali) (LRRG(M)), soldiers of B (Leicestershire) Company Group have been getting to grips with the latest and most technologically advanced equipment that the Army has to offer.

The Night Vision Goggle – Enhanced (NVG-E), otherwise known as KESTREL, and the D40 nano-UAS drone are game-changing capabilities.

The latest in night vision capability, the KESTREL is rarely seen outside of the Special Forces community, but is being trialled by the LRRG(M) prior to its introduction across the Army. The binocular-style goggles offer

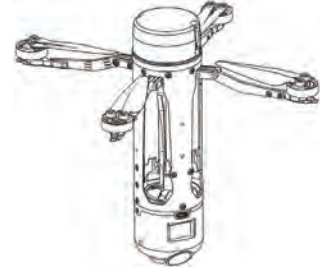
unparalleled night viewing capability and depth perception that vastly improves an infanteer's ability to operate at night; be that dismounted or working in tandem with the Foxhound Protected Patrol Vehicle. Commanders are also issued the Enhanced Clip-On Thermal Imager (ECOTI), which provides a thermal overlay, Heads Up Display (HUD) and navigational tool. This clips onto the KESTREL goggles, increasing situational awareness by enabling one user to identify enemy and friendly forces locations and communicate them to other ECOTI users' devices. Throughout B Company's Mission Specific Training, we have put this equipment through its paces and it worked brilliantly in both rural and urban environments. The new

equipment will be invaluable to B Company whilst deployed with the LRRG(M), allowing us to truly 'own the night'.

Nano-UAS devices are an innovative move for the Army with a considerable increase in capability from devices used on Op HERRICK like the Black Hornet, and B Company are at the cutting edge of their introduction. A small drone that can either be hand-launched or fired from a UGL, the D40 drone fundamentally changes a commander's understanding of the battlefield. With a range of up to 10km and flight time of 30 minutes, this pocket-sized drone sends a live camera feed to the operator's tablet, allowing a greater understanding



# 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)







of the ground and what is ahead. B Company have extensively tested the drones and integrated them down to section level to employ in Mali in a number of roles. They can be used to scan routes, observe vulnerable points, identifying ingress and egress points on buildings,

look over compound walls and conduct clearance patrols along pre-programmed routes to cover gaps in the Surveillance and Target Acquisition Plan.

It is empowering to see such technology being rolled out and tested on operations, bringing

CGS' 'prototype warfare' to life. B Company soldiers are privileged to be the first to trial them on operations and will pass on their knowledge and experience to A (Lincolnshire) Company and the 2 R ANGLIAN Task Group deploying in Summer 2021.



## 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

# C (Northamptonshire) Company

### Support to UK Operations

*Maj Frank Atkins, OC C (Northamptonshire) Company*

“In my 15 years in the Army, throughout all the stuff we’ve done, it’s the first time I’ve felt like I made such a positive difference to British communities.” Colour Sergeant Dan Tanner, C Company CQMS reflected on the flood relief effort known as Op ALMON in Doncaster, South Yorkshire.

He spent a long day grafting alongside members of C and D Coy of the Poachers to help with the flood relief effort. The shared sentiment could be judged by the grins of satisfaction across all members of the company group that evening.

Training and being held at readiness for UK operations isn’t the most exciting of tasks but our deployment on Op ALMON brought home to us the importance of the role. Wherever we went; in support of the Environment Agency conducting reconnaissance of vulnerable river-banks, building defences around electricity sub-stations or rolling our sleeves up at an industrial sandbagging facility, everyone saw that we were making a difference to a grateful community.

The Prime Minister had been in the area that morning and the news cameras

and journalists patrolled throughout the day. It was, however, the less glamorous anecdotes that were being re-told at the day’s end; the tea and sandwiches offered by members of the public, waves, smiles and gratitude from all they met, and good-natured banter with emergency services and local council workers. Being held at readiness for UK ops didn’t seem so bad anymore.

It was a theme we were to get used to again this year as the Bn twice trained and provided a significant workforce to conduct COVID testing for Op RESCRIPT. Once more, the view from



LCpl Masawi supporting the sandbagging effort.



LCpl Wilson supporting the sandbagging effort.



**Op RESCRIPT: Pte Moreton awaits the next member of the public.**

the ground was resoundingly positive. “We want to get out there and do our bit. We just like being able to help out with the country’s fight against this pandemic.” Explained Private Matthew Sims of Mortar Platoon.

Small groups of Poachers led by junior and senior NCOs, ran mobile



**Op RESCRIPT: A Mobile Testing Unit at the King Power Stadium.**

testing teams across the East Midlands and East of England and worked hard to deliver the testing capacity promised by the government. Working to the direction of the Department of Health and Social Care, in liaison with local councils, alongside Steelbacks and RAF reservists then training and handing over to

civilian contractors, the whole operation had a very joint and multi-agency feel. “The training went really well, and we can reflect on a job well done.” Said Cpl Jack Hicks of Assault Pioneer Platoon reflecting after the handover to civilian counterparts.



# 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

## D (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) Company

### Overview

*Maj Sam Thomas, OC D (ISR) Company*

D (ISR) Company have had a frenetic and tough but fulfilling last twelve months. When I last sat down to write my bit for Castle, we were fresh off the boat from Cyprus with the complexity of conversion to Light Mechanised Infantry in front of us and the spectre of Ex Wessex Storm 1/20 looming over the near horizon.

There were opportunities to get away on operations for some members of the Company, but by and large 2020 looked like it was going to be a pretty straightforward training year, certainly when compared with the challenges of 2019. Looking back now I was pretty naïve. But then, no one saw 2020 coming.

It started with Ex Wessex Storm and according to the Met Office the wettest February since 1862. Having had very little opportunity to conduct platoon or company training and grasping our literally paper-thin concept of how an LMI ISR Company Group was supposed to operate in a battlegroup context against a peer enemy; we drove our eclectic mix of vehicle platforms onto Salisbury Plain Training Area and just started soldiering.

The CSM and Sgt Chandler will talk in the next couple of pages about the experiences of the lads in D Coy as they fought the enemy, the weather and the ground to learn some self-determining lessons in addition to providing battle winning capability to the CO and the Poachers Battlegroup, but I will just mention some of the stand-out performances.

Sgt Riley and LCpl Salsi from Signals Platoon physically built and wired together our Battlegroup HQ from the ground up. Without them we would almost certainly have failed to



**The first and only rays of sun on Ex WESSEX STORM set over Snipers and Javelin Platoon.**

deliver the excellent Battlegroup HQ performance that we did. Cpl Frost, stepping up to Patrol Commander and Pte Heubler from Recce Platoon demonstrated truly impressive levels of light-role soldiering and shone within a platoon that was asked to soldier for fourteen days without a full night's sleep and did just that, without question or hesitation. Cpl Wiles from Javelin Platoon, junior in terms of seniority, proved he was a star in the making, often stepping up to section command and demonstrating an outstanding affinity with the Jackal vehicle platform and its utility in delivering the Anti-Tank screen. Last but not least, Pte (now LCpl) Cutmore and LCpl Bullivant of

Sniper Platoon, stepped up time and time again to positions of leadership and responsibility above their paygrade. The Snipers did Ex Wessex Storm on quadbikes and the resilience they showed in order to have a kinetic effect on the enemy, was at time awe inspiring, but those two really stood out.

D Coy left Ex Wessex Storm feeling proud of their achievements having proved that operating as an ISR Group was workable and had real potential, but we all felt like we could do better and wanted another chance with a common vehicle platform and some time to really experiment. That time will come.

After some well-earned leave in early March, D Coy found itself as Battalion's



**Javelin Platoon move into position during the CALFEX**

lead company group as the UK entered COVID-19 lock down and the Army prepared to support the UK through Op RESCRIPT. Sgt West will cover his experiences as a Mobile Testing Unit Commander later and offer a ground truth view of our time supporting the UK during this difficult time.

I would like to highlight a smaller group though if I may. Cpl Hemmings, Cpl Freeney, Cpl Frost and Cpl Wormall from Recce Platoon were launched at very short notice to establish the training base for the Mobile Testing Units in Grantham. This small team led by Cpl Hemmings, wrote and delivered the training for over 1000 soldiers from all over the country as the government pushed to deliver the required 100000 tests per day.

This milestone was reached on 30th Apr 20 with 20% of all tests being delivered by Mobile Testing Units trained by D Coy soldiers. It is also my pleasure to congratulate Cpl Hemmings on being awarded The MBE on the Queen's Birthday honours list for his role in establishing and delivering this crucial training. He would want me to say



**Cpl Hemmings following the news that he had been awarded a MBE in recognition of his support to Op RESCRIPT.**



## 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

that it was a true team effort and he is right, but he stepped forward to lead and I am very proud that one of D Company's number has rightly been recognised at the highest level.

Every member of D Coy put in a magnificent performance under such strange and unique circumstances. The CSM and I have talked about this at length, but it was an inspiring time to be the leaders of such an impressive company of Poachers.

After being rotated off OP RESCRIPT in July, it felt like D Company deserved a break and a move back to that 'straight forward' training year looked good. But it was not to be. Circumstances conspired to see D Company selected at short notice to go to Poland in Mar 2021 on OP CABRIT, as the UK's contribution to NATO's Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) Poland.

We are to be the Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Company attached to the US Stryker Battlegroup, within a Polish Army Brigade, that is tasked with guarding against Russian aggression towards Poland. When we were tasked we were already three months inside the twelve months force generation timelines and so had some real catching up to do. Since then, D Company has been on the treadmill, seemingly upping the pace each week. CAT C, Jackal driving courses and heavy weapons training are now our daily our bread and butter and we have some seriously technical mounted live firing to look forward to in Nov 20 and Feb 21.

When I or my successor next writes to you, we will have just got back from our Polish adventure, I'm sure it will be a good story to tell! 2020 has been a crazy but fulfilling year for all of us in D Coy, wish us luck in Poland, thank goodness it's a summer tour!



LCpl Salsi takes a break from networking the BGHQ.

## Battlegroup Headquarters: From the Ground Up

*Capt David Rawdon, Regimental Signals Officer*



**Sgt Riley begins the refit.**

In the 100th edition of Castle, Sgt Harrison spoke of a vision for redefining the Poacher Battle Group Headquarters, a concept very much in its infancy.

That vision had manifested itself

on a warm afternoon on Pyla Training Area in Cyprus; then Company 2IC and RSDC were contemplating the unit move back to the UK and conversion to LMI. Trying to understand how the

cumbersome BGHQ which deployed on Ex ASKARI STORM, behind light role troops, through the plateaux of East Africa; might fare providing C2 for fast moving Light Mechanised Sub-Units on



## 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)



Poachers' BGHQ in full swing during Ex WESSEX STORM.

Salisbury Plain.

The conversation concluded, the Poacher light role BGHQ configuration (old type canvas tentage) was not the fit for an LMI BG futureproofing. Despite the hectic unit move and subsequent conversion, a transition period within both the BGHQ and the Signals PI facilitated working groups and discussions round the tactics table with aims of developing the blueprint for the concept.

Our mood boards suggested that we must be more agile, resilient and prepared for the digital age. Notwithstanding current/recent ops, where HQs are typically static for prolonged periods (if not indefinitely); A BG HQ must be able to rapidly deploy while maintaining C2 and protecting itself from a peer enemy.

How would the Poacher Signals Platoon update its BGHQ? It had to explore the technology, get into the detail of the doctrine and be prepared to break conventional norms. Equally,

a change of mindset on how the staff operates within the HQ itself. The Poachers BGHQ wanted to harness the extra horsepower gained by converting to LMI in its headquarters and the uplift to BCIP 5.6 while reducing its physical footprint and electromagnetic spectrum emissions.

Fortunately, the Signals PI has been gifted with some supplementary skills. Less dramatic fantasy football draft more Ocean's 11. Sgt Riley was poised to assume role as project manager preconditioned by his amateur carpentry and eye for detail. LCpl Salsi, the "Cable Guy" and eSports Team Captain used his unfathomable knowledge of CIS to build the internal network.

While our SV drivers had to develop their night driving skills and ability to park a 9-tonne truck in confined spaces; our Signallers got to grips with rehearsing the setup of the HQ, the deploying of cam nets and thermal sheeting.

The plan and subsequent execution of the build was underpinned by communications, camouflage, concealment and comfort. Hours of construction and rehearsals on Kendrew Barracks Airfield ensued.

The Poacher BG HQ consisted of three 9 tonne SVs with accompanying Comms Vehicles (FFR). Deploying a mounted HQ reduced the time it takes to establish and "tear-down" during planned ChoC and hasty withdrawal while maintaining the ability to stay a tactical bound behind mobile sub-units. There is no longer the tedious packing of tents in the mud or the complete upheaval of data terminals and radios every time we move.

The whole process has been rewarding for the team. Not least their performance but the experience of developing and building the BGHQ from the ground up has provided the Signals PI with an opportunity to be innovative within an evolving area of operations.





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## 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

# Poachers' Sport

### Ex FROSTED BLADE

*Capt Jack Wright, 2IC D (ISR) Company*

In line with a strong recent heritage in commitment to snow sports, The Poachers sent yet another ski team to the annual Infantry Alpine Championships in Val d'Isere, France: Ex FROSTED BLADE 35.

With an incredibly busy Battalion schedule readying four separate elements for operational deployments on three different continents, the opportunity to reward hard work with a fantastic offer to our soldiers was very well received. This year was particularly unique with the opportunity to combine both

Battalion teams by sharing apartments and resources.

With only one of the team having skied previously, our chances of clinching silverware in competition with the established and experienced teams who had completed multiple interactions together was slim. However, the true value of the endeavour was in introducing our soldiers to a challenging, beautiful and exhilarating environment never previously experienced.

In the first two weeks of the exercise the team was split through experience

and skill level. They were attached to world renowned French ski instructors and, for the most part, were taken from complete novices to daring intermediates within the time frame. After only two weeks of planks on snow the team progressed into a phase of two weeks of race skiing familiarisation. This is by no mean feat: skiing is hard enough for the inexperienced, having to turn their way down the mountain controlling their speed.

When the locations you are required to turn are dictated to you in a manner



Getting ready to race.



## 2 Royal Anglian Ex FROSTED BLADE 35 Ski Team.

that ensures maximum speed it becomes an entirely different beast! Nonetheless, the men of the 2nd Battalion stepped up to the plate with admirable nerve and tenacity, attacking the slopes with fervour and plucky courage. Disney Pixar's Woody could be heard in the background chuntering away: 'That's not skiing, that's falling, with style!' Nonetheless, with the unavoidable falls and crash-outs, came the inevitable progress in skill level.

On the 21 Dec a week long leave break began in the beautiful alpine town of Val D, the troops spent the week letting their hair down free skiing and enjoying the festive delights of a snow-covered mountain hamlet over Christmas and New Year. Presents were exchanged and much merriment was had by all as we rang in Christmas and the New Year in one of the most enjoyable and sought-after destinations on the planet.

Back to the slopes in the New Year

in our sparkling and 'slimming' Royal Anglian race suits, the team quickly picked up where they left off. With just a week of warming the race legs back up again Poacher and Viking soldiers and officers were carving glorious race lines through the unforgiving Olympic practice slopes. The mood of the exercise transitioned to a more serious tone as training intensified and evenings became more about sharpening and waxing skis rather than fuelling the local night-time economy.

Race week was to consist of four main categories of competition: Slalom, Giant Slalom (GS), Super Giant Slalom (Super G) and Downhill. Each event consisted of larger turns and increasingly higher speeds from Slalom to Downhill. The culminating category saw the Royal Anglian skiing competitors reaching speeds of 100-120kmph while descending almost straight down from the very top of the mountain via an

ex-Olympic Downhill run. With quads shaking, wind roaring, and inaudible cursing to the heavens to stay brave and tucked into an aerodynamic position to optimise speed, each of the two teams completed the exhilarating event.

No silverware was to be clinched this year due to the novice nature of the team. However, the novice capability of the Poachers team on Ex FROSTED BLADE 35 worked in our favour to secure a victory of our own. The chance to introduce a group of soldiers to a new activity, environment, and way of life, and to see a group of proficient skiers by the end of the exercise was truly remarkable. Whilst the two Battalions in The Royal Anglian Regiment will continue to be busy for the foreseeable future, it is absolutely vital we do everything we can do to continue to provide the great 'offer' of exciting and thrilling opportunities such as Ex FROSTED BLADE.



## 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)



### Poachers 7's Rugby Tour to Dubai

*CSgt Farrell, CQMS D(ISR) Company*

**The Poachers 7's Team posing at the Sevens Stadium in Dubai (Capt Wright, Capt Snoddon, CSgt Farrell, Cpl Myburgh, Sgt Wallis, LCpl Vakadewa, Capt Forse, Cpl Parker, Pte Patience, LCpl Hyde, LCpl Spence, Cpl Lotter).**

On 1 December 2019 12 Players from the Poachers Rugby Team left the UK to go and take part in the Dubai 7's Rugby event held at the Sevens Stadium in Dubai.

Opportunities to be able to go play Rugby at such a good level are few and far between, but we made sure that we represented the Battalion and got our name out there, which we did as people started to ask who we were. Teams from all over the world come to play at such events and knowing that we were there representing not only our Battalion, but the British Army was an honour and a chance to hopefully open the door to more Battalions to take part in the future.

We played against some players who were looking to get into their national 7's team and as we were predominantly 15's players, the difference in technical skill showed at times, but we had some fit and robust players and we held our own. All of us were enjoying the fact that we were playing rugby in the sun and were getting to take part in an amazing event.

For some of our younger soldiers who came it was the first time they'd seen the opportunities that serving in the Army can offer you and what an event like that can do for team cohesion. A sport like Rugby also helps develop skills which go hand in hand with serving in the Army: leadership, self-



**Poachers Team Strip.**



**The team after their final game.**

control, teamwork and resilience to name just a few.

As well as the memories we made on the pitch we made good use of our down time by going out and exploring

what was on offer from such an amazing country. A few of the players went up the Burj Khalifa, while some of us visited some of the largest mall's in the world. As the Captain of the Poachers Rugby

team it was a privilege to walk the team out in all our games and we've all gained memories that would not have been made if it wasn't for the Army and the support of the Battalion.



# 2nd Battalion (The Poachers)

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## Ex BELIZE POACHER in Pictures







## 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

# From the CO

*Lt Col Adam Wolfe MBE*

It has been a great year for the 3rd Battalion with two significant headlines, deployment as Task Force Hannibal on Salisbury Plain and mobilisation to Operation RESCRIPT. At the same time the Steelbacks have maintained increasing numbers and continued development of all five Companies' warfighting skills.

Back in February amidst Storm Dennis, it was a privilege to be in an Army Reserve led Task Force and take to the field on Exercise Wessex Storm as part of 7 Infantry Brigade's force preparation. This was a real step up and excellent to see what can be achieved. The Steelbacks combined with our fellow Reservists in 3 and 4 PWRR, the 1st Battalion's Specialist Weapons and Recce as well as Warrior AFV from the HCR, 400 soldiers in total. The collective utility of the Army Reserves on this exercise and the manner in which they performed set an important benchmark for the future.

Not long after the recovery from Wiltshire came the call to support the military effort against Covid-19. After a terrifically positive response from the Steelbacks, 150 mobilised - ready and able to support on an unknown task for an unknown timeframe. We got the opportunity to crew Mobile Testing Units across the length and breadth of the East of England, East Midlands and East Anglia. The men and women of 3rd Battalion absolutely relished this task, Majors Little and Blayney (OC 3 and 1 Company) led their parts of the Covid Support Force excellently. The wider support to this effort has seen the Bn 2iC, three OCs and WO2 Waters all remaining dedicated to the Op RESCRIPT mission.



Rightfully so, a number of our Battalion have received external recognition for their roles on UK Ops this year. Amongst these exemplary Steelbacks were Cpl Hyde and Pte Deeley awarded Lord Lieutenant's Awards in Recognition of Outstanding Service to the Community, WO2 Beard received a Lord Lieutenant's Award for meritorious Service and Pte Skeels earned a DCFA coin for her part in the Mobile Testing Units.

At the same time, all five Companies have worked hard to combine robust force health protection measures with keeping our warfighting basics going. We were extremely fortunate to be able to conduct our Annual Deployment Exercise in Penally and Brecon this year. The Ops Officer, Capt Ottaway, and WO2 Shropshire did a terrific job on the field training phase and Sgt Harding's team put on a great adventurous training package.

2020 has been a tough year for our

recruiters but Capt Green and the team continue to deliver excellent results. The numbers remain high and will sustain the lifeblood of high quality new Steelback men and women. WO2 Sweeney, CSgts Bishop and Hardy, SSgt James were joined by SSgt Norris this year - these five are really first class Recruiters and warrant a particular mention in this year's Castle Magazine. Their dedication and innovation has absolutely paid off in this challenging period.

There have been some important changes within the Battalion's core team. Amongst these I single out a few. RSM Johnson arrived early in the year and immediately delivered his part of Ex Wessex Storm. He was followed by new SPSIs and PSIs: CSgts Hunt, Warburton and Alderman, Sgts Hodges and Warwick. Maj Kev Main has taken up the mantle of XO as we said a fond farewell to Maj Ben Kelly back in the summer. We welcomed Capt Caleb



Smith into the mess following his success at AOSB, Lts Braithwaite and Mercer soon followed having completed RMAS. Congratulations to WO2 Chambers for his recent successful AOSB. Lastly, we said goodbye to our excellent RCMO, Capt Rich Hind and great outgoing SPSIs and PSIs.

Now, we look ahead to 2021! First up, we will be following a core training

progression focussed on warfighting and offensive action that will help us deliver on a main effort of investing in the Platoon Level Leadership. We will be set to seize opportunities to contribute to Operations – whether that is the home match of UK Ops or supporting overseas. On top of this, we plan to train alongside the 1st Battalion on Ex Viking Storm, conduct pairing activity with

the Poachers and exploit opportunities with the Royal Gibraltar and Royal Bermuda Regiments. Lastly, after some disappointing but necessary curtailing of activity, we must get sport, Army and Div level competitions, adventurous training and mess life back as soon as it is safe to do so.

Get ready Steelbacks.

# From the RSM

It has been a huge privilege to take over as The Steelbacks RSM and I am extremely proud of what the Battalion has achieved over a challenging year.

A Steelback Battlegroup formed for Wessex Storm which was made up of 450 reserve and regular soldiers.

When the national lockdown begun Circa 150 Steelbacks mobilised for Op Rescript providing 10 mobile testing units for the East of England as well as military liaison officers to the NHS. The troops were excellent throughout the mobilisation period.

We conducted our annual deployment exercise this year which took us to Penally for Adventurous Training and then Sennybridge training area for the exercise phase focussed on Platoon battle drills and the fundamentals of tough infantry soldiering. 74 Steelbacks took part, considering the two other major commitments the Bn had this year it was impressive to see so many dedicated soldiers commit.

On top of this, five Steelbacks mobilised to deploy on operations; two with the Vikings on Op TORAL and three with 6 Rifles on Op TOSCA. More of the same to follow in 2021, five is just the tip of the iceberg of Steelbacks ready and able to deploy on ops overseas or in the UK.

We also had our first female



Steelback, Pte Kirk, to complete the Combat Infantry Course, congratulations to all our soldiers who have completed CIC this year and those that have stuck with the Recruiting pipeline to get to the start.

This year we have had record number of recruits attesting to join the Battalion. Positive outflow has been very good with Steelbacks joining the Regular Army and we have also had Vikings and Poachers complete the Regular to Reserve transfer.

These former Regular soldiers bring great professional knowledge and experience to enhance our Battalion

and continue to serve within The Royal Anglian family.

As well as changing over myself, we have had a high turnover of SPSIs and PSIs, Thank you to the outgoing SNCOs for your hard work and professionalism during your time with the Army Reserve and good luck on your future endeavours. A thank you must also go to both the Vikings and Poachers for continuing to provide high quality SNCOs in these vital roles within the Steelbacks.

I look forward to 2021 which will see us investing in our Platoon Level leadership balanced with the wider offer to our committed Steelbacks.



# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

## 1 (Norfolk & Suffolk) Company

*Major Matt Blayney, OC 1 (Norfolk and Suffolk) Company, 3 R ANGLIAN*



**No. 1 Company on Op Rescript.**

If you had told me in January 2020 that by April of the same year, No. 1 Company would have undertaken a key part within the Battalion's success on Ex Wessex Storm, followed in very short-order by a Battalion-wide mobilisation to support the UK's efforts in the fight against COVID-19, I would have been hard-pressed to believe you! Nevertheless, these are the tasks that have dominated the training year for No. 1 Company and our soldiers from Norfolk and Suffolk.

Before I outline the work of the Company during the past few months, it is worth me reflecting on the strangely distant memories of pre-COVID times between last October and March. During this time the Company continued to focus on CT1 level training with an emphasis on building the confidence and functional knowledge of our JNCOs and Platoon Commanders.

In November, the Company provided a significant contingent to parade in Lowestoft for Remembrance. Remembrance is a rare occasion for our reservists to wear the decorations that they have earned through either operational or long-service and I was proud to see so many of the Company displaying medals



**No. 1 Company and a Mobile Testing Unit during Op Rescript.**

that were earned during operational service overseas, underlining the vast array of experience that we have within No. 1 Company. After the parade the OC and CSM were invited to witness the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant by the Mayor of Lowestoft. This was a highly significant moment for us as the Covenant is designed to support both Regular personnel and Reservists who live and work in the area, both during and after military service. The reception afterwards allowed us to meet local councillors as well as representatives from organisations within the Lowestoft area.

In February the Battalion took part in Ex Wessex Storm forming a Battlegroup that participate in a two-week exercise on Salisbury Plain. No. 1 Company provided a significant number of soldiers to the Battalion's overall contribution including the CSM, platoon leadership and section commanders/2ICs. Many Private soldiers also stepped into leadership roles which gave them invaluable experience that will no doubt influence them as they progress into becoming JNCOs within No. 1 Company.



**The OC witnessing the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant with the Mayor of Lowestoft.**



**No. 1 Company parading for Remembrance in Lowestoft.**



# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

In April, as the COVID-19 pandemic took hold across the UK, the Steelbacks were mobilised to support with this effort. The soldiers of No. 1 Company volunteered in very high numbers, eventually providing 37 soldiers to the overall Battalion effort. This was the highest number of soldiers provided by any Company within the Battalion and I was very proud of the soldiers within the Company for stepping forward during this national time of need. Once again, No. 1 Company provided key personnel to the Battalion's overall effort including Task Force Command, a CQMS, and several Mobile Testing Unit (MTU) Commanders who would lead teams of approximately 12 soldiers to conduct testing in East Anglia. During this period of conducting testing, the patience, professionalism and understanding that my soldiers demonstrated during the testing day was second to none. Soldiers who had, a matter of weeks before, been working in shops, hospitality, studying at university, or teaching children in schools were now supporting a nervous, apprehensive, and in some cases, visibly ill British public, wearing full PPE

and overcoming a range of difficulties including supporting those who couldn't read the testing instructions, those who were deaf, those who were worried or scared, as well as a tiny minority who were rude and abusive. All scenarios that these reservists were faced with during testing were handled with the utmost professionalism that we have come to expect within the 21st century Army Reserve.

In July we demobilised and returned to our civilian employment. However, it wasn't long before the drumbeat of reserve commitments began again and in September 2020 No. 1 Company took part in the Battalion's ADX, once again providing soldiers to train and gain invaluable experience. At this time, we also bid a temporary farewell to LCpl Fuller who joined 1 R ANGLIAN on their operational tour of Afghanistan.

During this year we have also welcomed Captain Tim Jones into the role of PSAO having bid farewell to Captain Bob Goulding. Bob was a committed member of the No. 1 Company team and we wish him all the best for his retirement. Captain Tim

Jones has wasted no time in getting his feet under the table and has been hugely supportive of the soldiers within No. 1 Company during his short tenure so far! We also bid farewell to CSgt Jay Haldenby who returned to his post as CQMS of Headquarters Company, 1 R ANGLIAN. CSgt Haldenby will also be sorely missed by the No. 1 Company team and his commitment to ensuring reservists received high quality training will be his legacy to the Company. We welcome CSgt Sam Warburton who, once again, has wasted no time in getting himself accustomed to working with the Reserve and we look forward to the coming two years of his tenure as SPSI.

In summary, No. 1 Company continue to dedicate themselves to serving their local community and country during this time of need. We continue to have a strong bond with our local counties of Norfolk and Suffolk and have had an incredibly busy year, both on operations to support the UK during this on-going pandemic whilst maintaining the normal pattern of training and support to our regular battalions on overseas operations.

## 2 (Leicestershire & Northamptonshire) Company

*Maj Ian Ginns, OC 2 (Northamptonshire & Leicestershire) Company 3 R ANGLIAN*

I hear in casual conversation that 2020 'has been a write off' and that plans will need 'pushing back to when this is all over'. I don't agree. In business terms it has been a shock, it has led to a change in the operating environment. It has meant some restrictions yes. But this change must present opportunity.

We deployed 17 members of the Coy on Op RESCRIPT. Delivery of Mobile Testing Units (MTUs) is a great way of demonstrating Reserve utility and also a narrative to help with recruiting in the future. We've also deployed Pte Betts to Cyprus on Op TOSCA, a great contribution towards Defence.

What COVID has done has made us look at how we deliver training. Keeping people interested and striking the right balance between distance learning and



**OC 2 Coy on build up training for Ex WESSEX STORM.**



2Lts Matt Wilman and Alan Cousins after their Commissioning Parade.



Lts Matt Wilman and Alan Cousins passing out at RMAS.



## 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

hands-on training is not easy. We've had to think about what other resources we can draw on and this has led to some new opportunities. Recently East Midlands Ambulance Service came in and helped run a number of serials based on road traffic collisions. The paramedics were fantastic and gave valuable insight into most likely injuries. Rather than the usual gunshot wound or IED strike, that is often the scenario we pose. We returned to field training before Summer leave and this was a real positive step towards embracing the new 'normal'. We can now look forward to some time on the ranges prior to Remembrance.

We also continue to feed the Regular Commissioning pipeline with two passing out, Lts Alan Cousins and Matt Wilman. We have OCdt Greg Mann there at present and have OCdt Scott Howard on the January intake.

With Sgt Leighton, LCpls Sammons and Moore all promoting recently, it continues to be a positive year for 2 Coy.



**Pte Betts on Op TOSCA.**

## 3 (Essex & Hertfordshire) Company

*Major Rhys Little*

What a year it has been. It is safe to say that I could not have guessed that this is where we would be a year ago. 3 Company were riding high at the start of this year having dominated at the Battalion sports at Christmas.

With the break in training over we began our drive towards WESSEX STORM. A focus on patrolling skills and urban operations was the order of the day, and training that the soldiers joined for. Although cold there was always good numbers as soldiers got to carry out their designated roles in challenging and exciting training with the final confirmatory exercise with 3 and 4 PWRR in STANTA ensuring the everyone was ready.

WESSEX STORM was something else entirely, the difficulty of fighting

the POACHERS made harder by fighting through storm Dennis, which brought gale force wind, rain, hail, and some snow. But through all of this it was proper soldiering; it was a chance for us to test our skills against a live opposition who was trying their best to find and destroy us. Commanders were tested like they hadn't been before, some soldiers shined, some had work on points highlighted. Cpl Stevenson performed outstandingly for the Coy demonstrating the skills required to lead soldiers in these conditions.

With the Exercise out of the way there was an incident that threw a small spanner in the works for training. COVID-19 hit and hit hard. Training plans went out the window and the Battalion soon found itself mobilising

soldiers to support the national COVID response. Whilst some could not mobilise due to being key workers many of the Company found themselves carrying out mobile testing units across the East of England. This was a chance for Reserve soldiers to help in their local communities and was an opportunity that they relished. An occasion to interact with the public, help them when they were scared and worried, talking them through an uncomfortable test. Pte Clement shone in this role, able to engage with everyone and put them at ease, I am certain that he could sell ice to an Eskimo. This was also another great opportunity for 3 Company's group of new junior commanders to exhibit all the values of leaders in spades.

Whilst most of the Company were

working on Op RESCRIPT there was still training to be done. The ever busy RRTM team having built up a massive pipeline of people looking to join the Reserves now needed to get them ready and develop them whilst we were on lockdown. The Company leant into the new normal of virtual training, putting in lessons to keep soldiers up to speed and ensure that the Reserves remained at the forefront of their lives.

With lockdown over we moved into Exercise DAGGER - a chance to get us back into the field and building up the skills that had faded over the last few

months. It was a weekend that was set right, and introduced our new, bravo trained soldiers to Battalion training. It was also an opportunity for Lt Islam to lead her platoon on exercise for the first time. From Exercise DAGGER the Battalion moved towards ADX with a week of adventurous training and a week of green training. Off to Wales we went for a strenuous course of mountain biking, rock climbing, hill walking, coastering, and water sports. It was loved by all, where else can you throw yourself into the sea off a cliff? Here Pte Middleton led the way, fearless in the

face of heights and weather.

Even with COVID the Company moves towards the close of the year still in a stronger place than when it started. Close to fully staffed, and hungry to get back into the field training. 6 Platoon has moved training locations from Hertfordshire to Hitchin, sharing a location with 254 Med Reg. This test is to ensure that the platoon has the facilities that it requires and is being accommodated very well by 222 Sqn of 254. There have already been discussions about joint training, but this will have to wait till next year.

## Commissioning Course Short 202 “Zero to Hero”: Same, same but different

*2Lt Andrew Braithwaite*

On a beautiful, sunny day on the 31st May 2020 I arrived at Victory Gate, The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Eager, determined and slightly nervous: it is a feeling and a moment that countless Officer Cadets have experienced before me, both Regular and Reserve, since the original college's inception in 1801. And although many things were the same as with those that have come before: ironing board, boot polish and Brasso in the car, there were a few glaring differences.

I was alone, as cadets were not allowed accompanying guests. I was directed to a socially distanced carpark and I approached the Company Sergeant Major's office via the newly installed one-way system.

In truth, this day was similar yet strangely different to most Ironing Board Sundays that have come before, Commissioning Course Short 202 was the first course to be run entirely during the Covid-19 pandemic, which by this time had already claimed thousands of lives and seen the UK grind to a standstill in the preceding months.

The course can be summarised in much the same way society is oft referred to now: a new normal. RMAS has taken several steps to minimise the risk of transmission on camp, whilst ensuring the pipeline for future British, and various International, officers is maintained.

The Academy instituted 'platoon bubbles', which operated in the same way as a household in the UK would: contact with anyone outside your bubble, including Permeant Staff and Regular cadets, was avoided; social distancing was rigorously maintained by our ever-present and oft-shouting CSM and cadets were unable to leave camp for the duration of the eight-week course.

Though being unable to leave camp was obviously a drawback, the entirety of the intake completing the course from start to finish was an undoubted positive consequence of the new rules. It allowed for us to build relationships across the company and particularly in our platoons that would have been impossible with people coming and going every two weeks. I know 38 Platoon, Dettingen Company went through many highs and a few lows over the course but doing it all together strengthened us as a unit, and I know I have gained several friends for life consequently.

My personal highlights from the course include Ex Wavell's Warrior, which as well as being our only visit out of Sandhurst/Barossa in eight weeks, was an intense but highly rewarding four-day exercise that gave me my first experiences of command in the field and ended in the same way it began: non-stop platoon attacks.

In barracks, lectures on leadership and values gave an insight, often through the personal experiences of our instructors, of the true value of an officer. They also gave us fine examples of how we could aspire to be. Moreover, training alongside several Caymanian Officer Cadets on the course, the first to commission into their newly established regiment was a privilege as well as a testament to Sandhurst's global footprint. I can also now claim to know all but one of the Cayman Island's army officers personally!

Lowlights, though few, must include not being able to wear no.1 dress uniform nor invite more than two guests to our Commissioning Parade. This however ultimately was a small price to pay to be able to train and commission in such an uncertain world.

It is a credit to the Academy and the staff there that they were able to commission 96 Reserve Officers in July, despite the challenges being faced world-over. It was also a pleasure to commission alongside a fellow Steelback, 2Lt Mercer, and have the CO and Major Little in attendance. When I arrived at Sandhurst in May the country was under lockdown but when I left things were starting to return to normal, and after eight weeks, and the three months of lockdown before that, it was time to go to the pub and celebrate!



# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

## 4 (Lincolnshire) Company

The year started off relatively normally for 4 Company with preparation for Ex WESSEX STORM in February – with both field exercise training and staff training for those to be employed in Battlegroup HQ.

Deployment to Salisbury Plain for the actual exercise coincided with two significant ‘actual’ storms and the atrocious conditions in the field were matched by resolve, acceptance, high morale and humour by troops in the field who wondered if the weather could get any worse. If they had been asked then how they felt about conducting virtual training online, I would probably have had my arm torn off!

How different it was a few weeks later when the country was in lockdown and training at the Reserve Centres was suspended. At the same time, 34 members of the Company had been mobilised on Operation RESCRIPT



Pte Sammie Kirk, the Battalion's first female infantry soldier.



Pte Dom Parry on MTU duties.





**MTU staff based at RAF Scampton after a tour of the Red Arrows.**

to help in the fight against Covid. The excitement of carrying out online training soon wore off and the wait to deploy eventually ended. 4 Company then manned 2 complete Mobile Testing Units and half of another and deployed across much of the East Midlands. A small team worked in support of the MTUs and one individual, LCpl Liam Wells had his mobilisation changed to Operation TORAL to deploy with The Vikings to Afghanistan. He has not been seen since! The Officer Commanding also remains deployed having been reallocated to be the Military Liaison Officer for the NHS in Lincolnshire and is now the MLO for the County's Local Resilience Forum.

The Company is still growing after its reformation in August 2017, when its strength was around 30 soldiers and is now over 90 strong. Not all of these are in the right ranks yet as this takes time but, recently, we gained a Company 2IC for the first time and the first Platoon Commander. More recently, we also welcomed the Battalion's first female Infantry soldier, Private Sammie Kirk.

Plaudits also go to: Private Ian McLeod for being awarded the Brigade Commander's Coin for his work on Op RESCRIPT; Private Chloe Wilkinson for being awarded the Commanding Officer's Coin for going to the assistance of a man who had collapsed in Grimsby; Private Steve Wall for the award of his Volunteer Reserve Service Medal.

15 years ago I stood in this same building as an Army Cadet and got told by a recruiter that women would never



**OC 4 Company laying a wreath at Grimsby Cenotaph on VJ-Day.**



## 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)



4 Coy Sponsored Christmas Tree display at St James' Church, Louth.



CO about to present Pte Steve Wall with his VRSM.

be able to join the Infantry. Now, at 30 years old, I've made history for the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment (The Steelbacks) by becoming their first ever female Infantry Soldier. I

remember thinking back then that I was sure I would be able to do that – it is not my gender that affects my capability to perform a job role. I will not lie and say I found the course [Combat

Infantry Course] easy. Physically, it was challenging but if you work hard enough – want something enough – then you will achieve it. Never let anyone tell you otherwise.

## 5 (Suffolk & Cambridgeshire) Company

5 Company were in high spirits starting 2020 after a successful year and were soon back into the routine preparing for Ex STEELBACK THUNDER, the urban exercise which saw an assault on Eastmere village. For many this was the first opportunity for urban ops whilst for others it was time to remind and revise. A successful and enjoyable exercise was had by all and the look forward to the next one was already being discussed.

Exercise WESSEX STORM was next on the list, with 18 members of 5 Coy deploying to Salisbury Plain to

face some bleak weather conditions - it always pays to be available for the Summer ADX, for your annual camp to qualify for bounty. Despite this the spirits were again high and the reports back from the soldiers was that it was well worthwhile and the experience gained by everyone, particularly the JNCOs was excellent.

This led into the end of the training year which saw 80% of the Coy be awarded their Commanding Officers Certificate of Efficiency and their tax free bounty, the biggest percentage

achievement seen by 5 Coy in the last 5 years. The SPSI was well in to the planning of the Exercise DAGGERS, two Company weekends followed by the Battalion main event, however COVID soon put a stop to this. Big changes required all round.

The news headlines took over, "Army to support Coronavirus". The Brigade request for personnel was advertised to the Coy and immediately 35 personnel (including some of the unknown Reserves) volunteered their service to be mobilised to support the UK Operation

RESCRIPT. There were also plenty more volunteers that wished to mobilise but unfortunately couldn't due to them already being in Key Worker roles. Tasks undertaken during this period included County Military Liaison Officers, Brigade Watchkeepers and Mobile Testing Unit staff. All vital roles to achieve the success rates over the course of mobilisation. Two key members of the Coy, Cpl Hyde and Pte Deeley were tasked almost immediately from signing the mobilisation paperwork, thrown straight in at the deep end to run the Suffolk PPE warehouse to controlling the supply, demand and distribution across the County. They were rewarded with the Lord Lieutenant's Special Certificate of Merit for their outstanding work.

So, at the beginning of the new training year the question was what do we do for those Reserves that haven't been able to mobilise? What about those recruits that were in the pipeline about to start their phase one or two training? The same questions were being asked by the soldiers. The decision to instigate online and virtual training was taken. Who would have thought of it? Bringing the



Army in to the 90s.

Somehow it was managed. Twelve weeks of virtual, online training. MATTS on DLE, rifle lessons on skype, the list went on. Essays and case studies were being presented by soldiers with their interpretation of the Values & Standards and the Army Leadership Code.

The decision to return to training was made for the 1st of July, an alien environment with the social distancing and force protection measures in place, but thankfully it didn't keep the soldiers

away, happy to be back and wanting to get back into some sort of normality in training. The build-up and planning to Ex STEELBACK DAGGER was back on. On a nice summers weekend in the middle of July an exercise on STANTA was just the ticket, 29 attendees from 5 Coy enjoyed a back to basics occupation of a harbour and patrol exercise.

The next main event on the calendar was the annual camp held in Wales, with restrictions in place there was a smaller uptake of Coy personnel, only





## 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

18 deployed, but a great week of AT for all based from Pennally Camp in Tenby which included climbing, mountain biking and coasteering. Then on to the Exercise phase which was Platoon Level training on the Sennybridge training area. Also there was the option for an IBRU course run by the CIS PSI, giving the Private soldiers an opportunity to become familiarised with using radios and other comms equipment.

5 Coy Recruiting: Although a hold was put in place due to COVID the Coy has remained in an extremely strong place in the recruiting zone. Worried

this period would have a negative effect it produced the opposite. Over the lockdown the RSUSO and RRMTs conducted online training to keep people interested. Now back to being able to attend, to date, the Coy has attested 13 new recruits in this training year, as well as seeing 9 pass their phase 1 training and 2 passing their phase 2 CIC.

The Company's footprint in Peterborough is continuing to grow, the plan to have a full Rifle Platoon is well on the way, with a Platoon HQ and two sections of fully trained soldiers in place, and with 26 recruits in the

pipeline and booked on to their Phase 1 & 2 courses we will soon be complete and working over capacity. With similar steady numbers in Bury St Edmunds the Company is looking strong.

We still continue to support Exercises and range support for the paired Units with planning in place to assist the Vikings and Poachers in future events.

Mobilised: Currently Pte Maythan is mobilised on Op TOSCA and Maj Robinson, Maj Rushmere, WO2 Waters have remained mobilised on Op RESCRIPT

### **Studying and training with 5 Company - now Sandhurst awaits...**

*Pte Jooste-Jennings*

In the summer of 2019, after what felt like an eternity, I had finally completed my undergraduate degree in London

and was eagerly preparing to move to Cambridge for a Master's.

Having indulged in the University

of London Officer Training Corps for two years, I now wanted to transfer to a proper infantry regiment to break the



tedium of studying. An officer at the ULOTC was very supportive of this idea and suggested that I transfer to 5 Company 3 Royal Anglian, who were—according to this officer— ‘based near Cambridge’. He kindly offered to sort out my transfer papers to which I eagerly agreed.

However, when I investigated the location of 5 Company on Google Maps myself, it became very apparent that my idea of ‘near Cambridge’ was quite different from what the officer had in mind. I was—in all my naivety—expecting to hop on my bike and whiz to training nights within half-an-hour; and so, I was a bit shocked at the reality of negotiating a train to Bury St Edmunds during rush hour: I had no car.

My shock was amplified when I discovered that the final train back to Cambridge from Bury St Edmunds was as early as 21.45.

I grasped this unfortunate truth the hard way when, at 21.50 after my first training night, I found myself stranded and dumbfounded in the middle of nowhere. My morale was only resuscitated by the goodwill of a soldier whom I luckily exchanged numbers with. After giving him a desperate call and pouring out my tragic predicament, he kindly drove me all the way back to Cambridge.

He added me to a group chat where lifts from Cambridge were organised, and getting to training was no longer a logistical nightmare. It quickly became apparent that the goodwill and support I had experienced on that first training night was characteristic of 5 Company. After my ‘admin-vortex’ of a start, I was able to attend training more easily, and I soon felt at home. The training I received with 5 Company was first class, and it was great to mix up a standard student life with PT and weapons handling on a Wednesday evening.

Time flew by, and - before I knew it - Covid-19 struck, and the world changed. Nevertheless, 5 Company adapted to this unprecedented situation with remarkable speed by providing its troops with weekly virtual training on a variety of topics.

This training proved to be effective



preparation for Ex Dagger (our first post-lockdown field training exercise) which consisted in practicing harbour routine, recce patrols, and coping with the unrelenting screaming of Thetford sheep.

A highlight of the training year was undoubtedly ADX in Wales during the first two weeks of September. Based in Penally Camp, we spent the first half doing AT: a thrilling succession of coastering, mountain biking, kayaking, hiking, paddle boarding, and climbing. It was illuminating to discover that when faced with the prospect of jumping 10ft into the sea, even the most grizzly NCOs bear striking similarity to a frightened lamb.

At the end of each day’s activity—once all the cuts, scrapes and fractured egos were patched up—we headed back to camp. The location of Penally camp is stunning. A scenic coastal walk led to a vast golden sand beach, and a proper chippy. The latter proved to be particularly welcome since the socially distanced ‘scoff house’ evoked vivid memories of school detention. AT was concluded with a morning of paddle boarding and kayaking around

the colourful Penally harbour which, in all its tranquility, represented the calm before the storm; for I was about to deploy to Sennybridge training area for the first time.

I had listened wide-eyed to many horror stories about Sennybridge, and I was anxious to find out whether these stories had much substance. Before long, we were speeding up into the training area and—as prophesied—my ears were popping. Soon we passed over the infamous cattlegrid into what was effectively a cloud, and I started thinking that all the horror stories were probably true.

Regardless, however, I was very keen for some proper ‘green’ training, for it was the precise reason why I signed up. However, as it turned out, I was to attend an IBRU course for 4 days. If I’m honest the thought of ‘death-by-powerpoint’ seemed somewhat more horrific than stag. In the end however, my initial cynicism was unwarranted; I really enjoyed the course.

It was good fun getting to grips with BATCO, making sense of the BOWMAN, and dabbling with antennas. But, more realistically, my



# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

enthusiasm for IBRU probably stems from the boiling water on tap and our evening trips to the Co-op for a snack resupply. After passing the practical and theoretical assessments, IBRU was over and those on the course were to get stuck into the last two days of the exercise.

As we rocked up to the harbour area well rested, fresh faced, and adequately stocked up on Haribo, we were greeted by a weary looking Corporal clearly envious of our gleaming morale. We quickly 'bombed up' and slotted into the harbour area to await the platoon commander's orders in preparation for the following day's advance to contact.

The next morning after a short TAB

we were soon engaged from a challenging assortment of depth positions. Clearing all the positions demanded a solid four hours of kinetic platoon attacks, and many of the assaults demanded some memorable moments of 'billy-goat-gruffing it' through knee-deep rivers. It was a considerably worthwhile experience, and one that undoubtedly developed my basic infantry skills.

Overall, then, my experience with 5 Company has been very positive and I'm grateful for all the mentoring and training I've received while slogging through my studies. Now I've finished my degree, I'm looking forward to braving the regular commissioning

course at Sandhurst in the new year. In preparation for Sandhurst, I recently spent a week with the Poachers in Kendrew Barracks for a potential officer's visit.

The experience was fantastic, and I got stuck into a wide variety of activities characteristic of battalion life; ranging from observing an O-Group to weapons handling on the 50.cal, and—most notably—nearly seeing my breakfast again during battle PT.

It quickly became apparent that the professionalism, robustness and egalitarian ethos of 5 Company undoubtedly applies to the Poachers as well.

## Op RESCRIPT - A CSM's perspective

In April, the Steelbacks were asked to mobilise Army Reserves (AR) from across the battalion to help with the national COVID-19 pandemic. Many AR from the battalion volunteered to help and, once trained and qualified to operate as Mobile Testing Units (MTU), we were split into two task forces (North and South) based on our Army Reserve Centre (ARC) locations.

As the newly appointed CSM for 5 Company in Bury St Edmunds, I was tasked to become the Southern task force CSM and to help oversee six MTUs operating in Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex. All AR MTUs rose to their new challenge and interacted with the public extremely well - it helped that most were directly helping the communities they come from. This task proved to be very rewarding for all involved from the battalion and one that will be remembered for a long time.

Once this task had been handed over to other units within the British Army, I was asked if I wanted to work within 7th Infantry Brigade's Joint Military Command (East) (JMC(E)) operations room to help with the wider coordination of MTUs and to assist with



the data analysis being provided. Given that JMC(E) had the largest number of MTUs across the UK data management and MTU Coordination was a significant task. Being an Infantry soldier for more than 27 years, handling data wasn't something I thought would interest me, but as the weeks rolled by, I found myself getting more involved as the JMC(E) Battle Captain, which unfortunately

didn't come with a pocketbook on Microsoft Spreadsheet formulas.

Within my time at JMC(E) I also deployed to the Leicester COVID-19 outbreak as the MTU coordinator on the ground tasked with ensuring that 11 MTUs were sited and resourced correctly. This task was very fast moving and needed me to be one day ahead to ensure that all national and local agencies and departments were in sync. Once the local agencies were able to replicate what I had implemented, I was extracted to then prepare for the total hand over of all military MTU's to civilian contractors. This complex Relief in Place was carried out on the ground with no impact on testing activity and completed on time.

Clearly not your typical CSM's role within an Infantry battalion, but we find ourselves in atypical times. Since being mobilised I have witnessed AR commanders adapting their leadership within the current COVID-19 environment to better the overall effect being asked of them. For me, my small contribution has given me enormous satisfaction in helping the UK's fight against Coronavirus.

## An Extraordinary Training Year

*Maj Gav Rushmere, Battalion 21C*

In these challenging times, the Steelbacks have continued with their Socially Distanced training programmes and exercises are deployed on their Annual Deployment Exercise (ADX) in Penally Camp and Sennybridge Training Area at the start of September.

With so many of the Battalion having already qualified towards ADX through attending WESSEX STORM and having mobilised for Covid-19 duties, this year's event was reduced in numbers and focused on Adventure Training, Field Firing and a Signal Cadre.

Despite Covid-19. The Reserve Combat Infantrypersons Cadre (CIC) has continued to be run at Catterick. The Battalion did well on the most recent course and congratulation go to: Pte Thompson, 3 Company Champion Recruit; Pte Warner, 2 Company Best Shot and Ptes Chukwunyere, Knibb and Reilly all from 2 Company, for being part of the Champion Section.

In November we said a farewell to Capt Richard Hind who have been our Regimental Careers Management Officer for 7 years. He is embarking on a series of adventures, but hopefully will return as a reserve soldier sometime in the future.

Four Steelbacks continue to be mobilised as part of the UK Covid Response, UK Resilience and Brexit planning. Major Ian Robinson as Military Liaison for Suffolk, Major Mitch Pegg in Lincolnshire and Major Gavin Rushmere in Norfolk. WO2 Matt Waters is deployed as the Battle Captain at Joint Military Command (East).

### 1 Company – Food Donations

Soldiers from 1 Company have come together to answer a call for help from a Thetford Food bank coordinator Paul Gordon, Ex 3 R ANGLIAN (Pompadours). Paul initially had asked for donations from the community after the government's scheme had ended and food parcels had dried up.

Soldiers and recruits from Norwich, were asked if they could make donations and they responded in true R ANGLIAN



### 1 Coy Food Handover.

spirit. The donations were handed over to a surprised Paul by Cpl Wilkinson and Pte Quadling of 1 Company.

Paul Gordon served as a Pompadour in HQ Company's 3rd Battalion, and as part of the East of England Regiment, between 1989 and 1991. He has served



**Pte Chloe Wilkinson.**

a tour in Northern Ireland and also spent time in Gibraltar with 6 Volunteer Battalion of the Royal Anglian Regiment in 1988.

Paul noticed, that during the early days of lockdown the elderly were not receiving food parcels due to their slots being removed or cancelled by supermarkets. He volunteered to step in and make the deliveries himself and so he became a key member of the COVID support in the area. Paul started off with a few deliveries a week and is now up to over 200 a month. Along with his daughter, they now deliver food and help with odd jobs like gardening and running errands. They have been recognized as key community members by the Good Neighbourhood Scheme and are now affiliated with Community Action Norfolk.

Paul has shown great leadership and demonstrated the core values beyond his uniformed service, and he is a credit to the regiment and his community. He has displayed what it means to be a Royal Anglian and his legacy continues as his son has now joined HQ Company of the 3rd Battalion in Bury St Edmunds as a recruit.



# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)



2 Coy SD Training, Leicester.



2 Coy SD Training, Corby.



## 2 Company

The Company has seen some considerable changes in the past year with a new Permanent Staff Administrative Officer and Regular Permanent Staff adding a new vibrance to the Company. It continues to grow strongly at its Corby outstation thanks to the efforts of WO2 Pete Sweeney and his team.

## 3 Company

3 Company have evolved to become our best recruited Sub-Unit with the highest officer cohort in the Battalion. Their Hertfordshire outstation which had long been based at Hertford is currently on a trial move to Hitchin.

The Company Second in Command,

Captain Jason Murphy, also hosted a Virtual Employer Engagement in October which was resulted in a dynamic conversation on the challenges faced by reserve soldiers and also highlighted the concerns many employers had in the current Covid climate.

## 4 Company

As 4 (Lincolnshire) Company mobilised the largest element in support Covid Mobile Testing Units, whilst the remainder were subject to the communication challenges of online training, the Company hosted a visit of the Commanding Officer and Regimental Sergeant Major to Grimsby Army Reserve Centre.

The Commanding Officer presented

Private Steve Wall with his VRSM for 10 years Reserve Service. The Commanding Officer also presented Private Chloe Wilkinson with a CO's Coin to recognise her public-spirited action in going to the assistance of a man who had collapsed in Grimsby last year.

## 5 Company

5 Company have been busy recruiting and this year have attested more than any other Steelback Company. In November alone they have attested and welcomed into the Regimental Family five new soldiers.

Their growth is evident in Peterborough where they are rapidly outgrowing the Army Reserve Centre.

# VIKING Infantry Engagement Team

Over this testing time the Viking IET has not only seen a complete revamp within the team but has also had to move swiftly and successfully into a more digital plan moving forward. Of course getting back to "Face to Face" engagement is the ultimate goal, we needed to keep the wheel turning and engaging with the next crop of potential leaders that are outside of the green bubble and this meant embracing and taking advantage of various social media platforms.

Our first steps began by engaging with our digital expressions of interest with the help of Capt Forsythe (Regimental Adjt) filtering the real time queries and passing them onto Cpl Mark Steer, who has successfully engaged with many potential R ANGLIAN soldiers through digital means. A good deal of this engagement has been in the not so glamorous hours of the day and weekend but Cpl Steer has really excelled in giving many applicants sound advice throughout, which undoubtedly will set up the future generation of soldiers for success with his initial guidance.

Although digital has been the teams main source of engagement over this period covering everything from career's fairs, Digital Army cadet evenings

and even a slot on the Army website presenting the "One Infantry" message we have managed to get out a few times within what is known as the "Green bubble" by spending valuable time with our most local UOTCs.

We recently supported the EMUOTC with their planned range days at Lichfield. One half of the team assisted myself to deliver, revision of the marksmanship principles, grouping & Zeroing, followed by the ACMT at 100 and 200m to enable the officer cadets to be in a position to successfully participate in their planned March and shoot later in the ADX.

The other half under Cpl Mark Steer delivering GPMG familiarisation shoots, which proved a real hit going by the smiles, despite a few bruised shoulders left by "The General".

Also the team has been busy with CUOTC, an Urban Ops package was delivered at the Coldhams lane Army Reserve Centre with great success.

Off of the back of a recce the team headed to Cambridge with our teaching heads on but also with a competitive mindset.

The package delivered was an arduous but fun scenario which used an

old building within the boundaries of Coldhams lane, which in itself not only provided quite a challenging setting but also presented a realistic training environment which really highlighted the complexities of this type of close combat.

Our own enemy forces of LCpl Dan Waters, LCpl Ben Bedbrook and Pte Joshua Jones, proved to be quite a formidable force, as they tested the Officer cadets newly acquired skills. Using our airsoft wpns, the use of cover / mutual support became key to avoid the "Bee sting" feeling of being struck by successful shots which added to a great sense of realism. LCpl Dan Waters can attest to the feeling of a good strike after being neutralised at close range to the forehead by a young, enthusiastic female officer cadet and has since been working hard on the improving his knowledge on appropriate use of cover before a reshov to restore some pride.

All in all, a very successful event with the Officer cadets really giving 100%.

In the near future we are already tied in to support CSgt Ross Silvey at CUOTC on three more events in the coming months.



# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

## MTU 70

*Pte Clement*



“Do or do not, there is no try”. So said the tiny green man from Star Wars. With this in mind the men of MTU 70 embarked upon their great crusade for which they had waited these many months. When most of us volunteered, we had expected to be punting toilet roll looters back from whence they came.

When the MOD decided to be agenda benders and set us the task of testing the public we were, to quote Fozzy Bear, a bit nervous. Not to worry, as after a brief but thorough lesson from our cousins in the Poachers, we were ready and raring to rock and roll. Mere days later we found ourselves in the delightful town of Harlow taking over from a gaggle of exhausted Welshmen. From there it was straight into the deep end and testing the bods and bodettes of Cambridge.

As the late great Erwin Rommel predicted, the winner in the fight against Covid-19 is the MTU with one more test kit in their plastic box. Bearing this in mind we girded ourselves for battle in a manner that would give Sun Tzu an aneurysm and charged headlong into the testing fray where we remain for the foreseeable future. Coronavirus? Completed it mate.





*Cpl Tyron Fuller*

We have deployed around 40 soldiers from 1 Company based in Norwich and around 150 troops across the battalion to help strengthen the fight against Covid-19. Soldiers were keen to be part of the National response and formed into the 2 Steelback Task Forces.

In the first weeks of mobilisation we have been trained by our counterparts the Poachers to carry out the Mobile Testing Units (MTU) in support of the Regional Testing Centres (RTC) to deploy, specifically across the east of England, but possibly anywhere across the UK, to help the local public test for the virus. This was excellently run training which we all leaned into and could see the Task Force moving forwards towards tasks on the ground, allowing our commands to step in and run their own teams, soldiers who they have been training with across their Army Reserve career.

Working on the mobile testing units has been a great opportunity to help the local communities and support the NHS during this pandemic. Being in and around the areas our soldiers live and work has been a great opportunity to sell the local Reserves.





# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)



It has also given us the chance to practice our civilian, military and specialist skills to provide the support as part of a wider formation and a larger tasking.

Some of our soldiers are trained within their civilian jobs to speak to customers on a daily basis in either tough or sometimes upsetting situations, to empathise with, care for and calm the customers. This training is being rolled out by all within the task to engage helpfully with local people, who are often worried and concerned looking for a calming influence during this uncertain time.

This has also enabled us to bond and develop as soldiers within our own company's but also to have worked alongside our regular counterparts to trade training for the mobile testing units.

## Op RESCRIPT Task Force

*WO2 Stevens ROSWO 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment*

Op Rescript started out slowly, after the initial rush to mobilise there was the usual wait period experienced by soldiers throughout the ages. After this period, it started to become apparent that I was going to be working within one of the 2 sub units which had been formed to maintain a series of MTUs across various parts of the region.

Then the tasking came, due to my geographical location I was to be the CQMS for the northern company consisting of 5 MTUs based in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland. This was a new experience for me with my normal daily role being mainly recruiting and having never held a G4 post in my 24 years of regular service it was going to be a steep learning curve.

Firstly I had to attend the training, even though I would not be carrying out testing, for me to support the teams on the ground I had to understand the routine and rules in place so I could visit them on location safely, but also have an understanding of their role to better be able to support them. The AO was for a company strength very large with teams working in a wide variety of areas sometimes 2-3 hours travel from



there base location, which for them led to long days bringing challenges for both vehicles, drivers and support.

During the first few weeks it became quite apparent that this was an Operation from the military sense in name only, very quickly I started to hit various

frustrations, predominantly with the replacement of the equipment used on the MTU vehicles. These vehicles and the equipment were purchased at speed of the shelf in a short period of time as is what was needed due to the COVID crisis, however the subsequent follow up

hadn't yet come into place which led to issues for the MTUs in some cases even threatening their ability to carry out taskings and although thankfully this never happened it was close run.

So, what did I learn, I suppose the main thing was that any soldier be they regular or reserve, of whatever rank and experience when called upon can pull out blind for the task in hand. We had everything from Phase one trained soldiers who hadn't been in the Battalion more than a year all the way to veteran SNCOs and all worked tirelessly to make the MTUs work and while the rest of the world was staying at home doing their bit our men and women were on a front line delivering like all those have done before them even with it being a very different enemy. Personally my big take away was that even in the later years of my career and with little training I could still pick up a task and run, learning on the job, asking advice when needed but knowing I had the full support of the G4 higher to improvise and overcome issues at short notice to ensure our soldiers had what was needed.



On the whole the tasking was positive, and I was fortunate to have a very strong team both in the Coy HQ and the MTU commanders and also very dedicated young men and women who put themselves forward and where there

when needed. I would also like to thank the QM, RQMS and MTWO who's roles I knew little about before this role but I now have more respect for the hard unseen at times work they do to ensure the rest of us can do what we need to.





## 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)



Remembrance is time when the nation unites to make sure no-one is forgotten; Remembrance 2020 was a more toned-down affair due to Covid 19 restrictions. Even so we paid our respect with individuals representing the Regiment laying wreaths at cenotaphs across the Steelback AO the companies also held small socially distanced remembrance parades within their ARCs. Remembrance Sunday belongs to those who gave their lives, their health and their loved ones this year was no different. This year has also made us appreciate the freedoms which they fought for. As Lawrence Binyan's poem says so well...

*'at the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them'*



# REMEMBER



# BRANICE



# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)









# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

## Task Force 21 – Suffolk PPE Cell

*Cpl Hydet  
Pte Deeley*



On 13 April 2020 we were tasked with supporting the distribution of Personnel Protective Equipment from the PPE Cell at Endeavour House, Ipswich. The PPE cell is where items are sorted and organised ready for pick up or delivery to care homes, mobile carers as well as fire service and other agencies.

We got to work straight away and familiarised ourselves with the PPE and how the department was running to keep up with the constant influx of orders. We had to keep one step ahead due to the changing environment and levels of PPE required by each agency or individuals that arrived. On a number of occasions we had a queue of careers waiting so had

to ensure we met the demand head on.

The main store had hundreds of thousands of pieces of PPE ranging from small disposable gloves and hand gel to full face masks that all agencies required in the hundreds per day. It soon became apparent that we needed to change things to make delivery quicker and more efficient.

We completely reorganised both the way the PPE was stored and also the layout of the distribution cell. This included changes to the entrance area to ensure we complied with social distancing with a clear entrance, exit and waiting area as well as the way deliveries were processed.

Also, we learned that some care organisations used different names when ordering PPE that had led to confusion and constrained our ability to plan. It seemed like a simple fix but this was solved by giving each care organisation an order number to quote on arrival greatly speeding up the distribution.

Now we are 4 weeks in and the PPE cell is working very well. The shelves have the required stock and care organisations understand the order process. It has been a pleasure not only to mobilise as part of Op RESCRIPT, but also to be able to assist in our home county, getting PPE to the people that need it the most.

## Virtual Training for Mobilised Soldiers

Since mobilising in April 2020, we have been given the opportunity to support Front Line NHS and Care Staff in the fight against COVID -19 as well as develop our own Military knowledge, which I am thoroughly enjoying.

A Virtual Training Directive was created by Capt Blayney (our OC) to give baseline information to both the Task Forces as well as how to keep safe while waiting for tasks to be delegated. Within this, there are a variety of activities to be completed each week and alongside this, we have received a PT training programme and weekly assessments to ensure that our fitness continues to develop to a high standard.

The Virtual Training is easily accessed via a computer, tablet or mobile phone which allows us to keep up to date and continue our professional development wherever we may be. The Virtual Training subject is clearly outlined with a PowerPoint or video, which initially outlines the basics and then moves into more detail to maximise the learning as well as Google Meet calls where we have the opportunity to virtually parade as a Company and

have in-depth lessons so far on Section and Platoon Battle Drills. Once the online learning is complete, there is an independent task to follow.

So far, we have studied and completed an independent task on The Army Leadership Code, The Regimental History and Section Battle Drills and in the weeks to come we will study Harbour Drills, Duties of a Ground Sentry and further into Platoon Battle Drills which are all fundamental to continue the professional development of our trades,

whether that is continuing on to Phase 2 at Catterick or preparing for exercises.

I have enjoyed all of the tasks so far and have received great support to develop my knowledge on a topic if it was something that I have not covered before. However; I particularly enjoyed The Army Leadership Code and Section Battle Drills. It was interesting to be able to reflect on how I use The Army Leadership Code without realising sometimes, despite being a newly trained soldier. It also gave me time to



**TASK FORCE STEELBACK 2**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> BATTALION, THE ROYAL ANGLIAN REGIMENT**

VIRTUAL TRAINING DIRECTIVE, OP RESCRIPT (COVID-19 MOBILISATION)

CAPTAIN M. J. BLAYNEY, OC TASK FORCE STEELBACK 2



### Battle Drill 1: 'Prep for Battle'.



**Pneumonic - PAWPERSO**

- Protection**
- Ammunition**
- Weapons**
- Personal Camouflage**
- Equipment**
- Radios**
- Special equipment**
- Orders**



#### ORDERS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- ANTICIPATORY ORDERS
- REFERENCE POINTS FOR FIRE ORDERS
- POSITIONS FOR COVER
- FORMATIONS
- ACTIONS ON COMING UNDER CONTACT





# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

appreciate the Ptes, LCpls, Cpls, Sgts and CSgts that I have worked closely with as many of the attributions have come from their role model behaviour. The Section Battle Drills is something that was briefly touched upon during Basic Training, but I have been able to spend time learning about the importance of them which I can use in a pedagogical way of putting my theory into practice once field exercises resume.

Our CSgt will also send out a weekly platoon quiz which allows us to show our development from the Virtual Training sessions but also still keep the other areas which are fundamental to basic soldiering fresh in our minds. As some of the tasks have been independent, this also allows us to show our teamwork, despite at a distance, which is evident in the scores for each section.

Overall, I have really enjoyed the Virtual Training which has challenged me to think about areas I wouldn't normally have considered, as well as refine my existing areas of knowledge and skills. As we move towards our role of testing for COVID-19, I am very pleased to have had the chance to conduct some high-quality training beforehand.

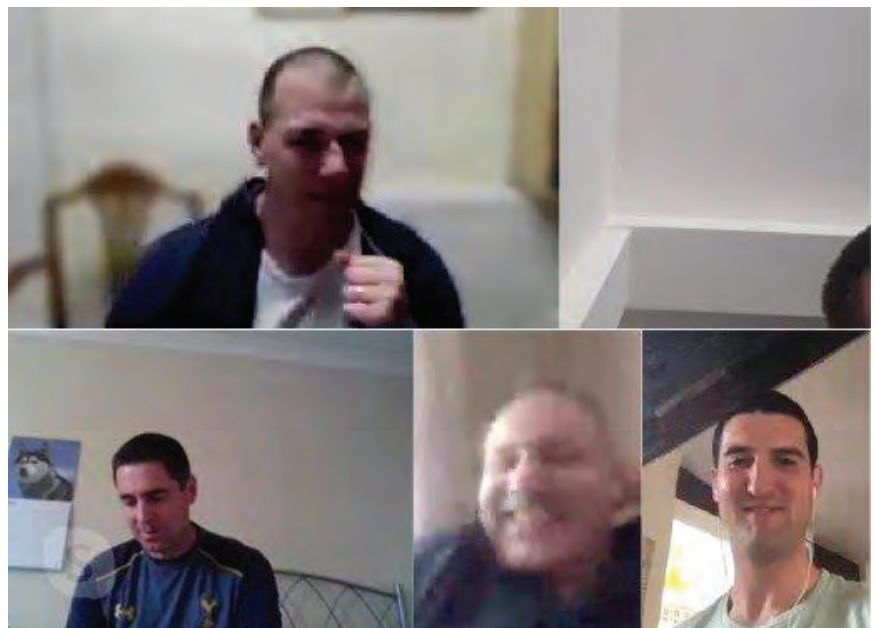
Initial		Hello 0 this is C/S....., CONTACT, Wait out.	
<b>S/W</b>	<b>Strength of En/Who is involved</b>		
<b>A</b>	<b>En Activity</b>	What happened? <i>e.g. Blast</i>	
<b>L</b>	<b>Location</b>	EF	<i>Use full GR</i>
		FF	<i>Use full GR</i>
<b>T</b>	<b>Time</b>	DTG of Contact / Sighting <i>e.g. 221500Mar 15</i>	
<b>A</b>	<b>Action of FF</b>	What have you done/intentions? <i>e.g. Clear &amp; Cordon</i>	
<b>Agencies Required</b>		QRF	Host Nation Forces
		AVN	Host Nation Police
		EOD	
		Search	
		Medevac	
		Recovery	
<b>ICP Loc</b>			
<b>ICP Safe Route</b>			
En <b>STRENGTH</b> , En <b>ACTIVITY</b> , <b>LOCATIONS</b> , <b>TIME</b> of Sighting, Friendly <b>ACTION</b>			

## Remote Working for 3 Platoon

With the effects of COVID-19, the global pandemic being felt globally, every opportunity has been taken to socially distance. Even the British Army, the bastion of tradition has had to move with the times.

As such all training and work, where possible, is now being done remotely. Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment (The Steelbacks) have been mobilised to help with the nationwide response. Currently kept on R2 (5 days notice to move), they have continued to train remotely using Skype and other new forms of communication.

Despite the limitations of working remotely, the soldiers have managed to work through a number of subjects, initially completing their MATTS (Military Annual Training Tests)



through Defence Learning Environment, they ticked off most of the standard annual training and completed a large proportion of their requirements for Certificate of Efficiency.

After completing the MATTs the soldiers moved on to more COVID-19 specific training such as Manual Handling, Working At Heights, Fire Safety and Infection Prevention and Control, which will all be invaluable when working in more conventional environments such as hospitals and warehouses.

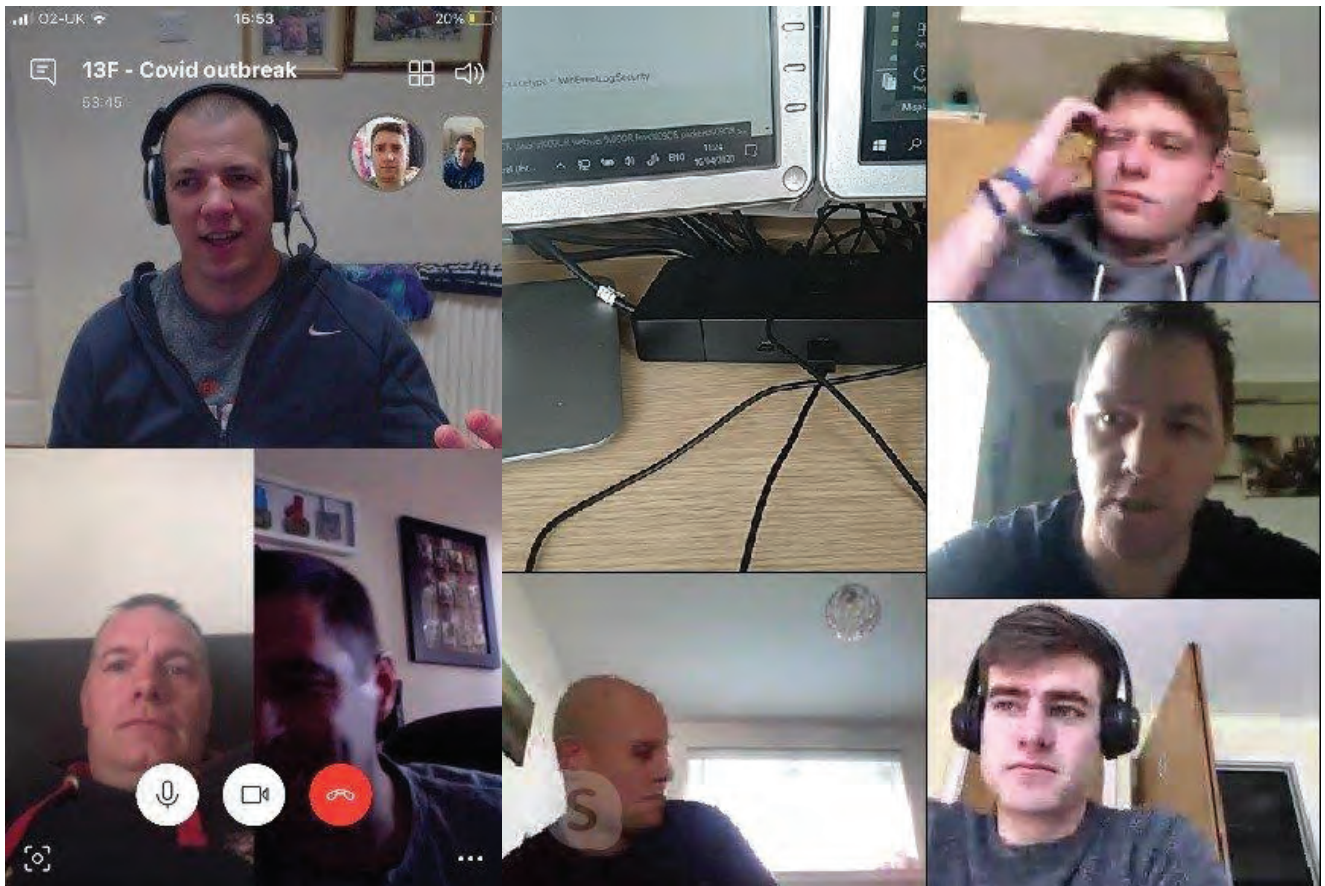
With deficits in knowledge being identified, the platoon moved on to a series of lectures run by the multiples which were held at the same time each day to provide a sense of routine. Each

Team Commander was given a subject and then told to present the lecture to the rest of the multiple. Subjects included “What is COVID-19”, “The COVID-19 Bill” and “Reducing COVID-19”. Results amongst the multiple varied. Some found working remotely and presenting to a screen to be off-putting, others had been doing it for years as part of their civilian jobs.

Despite the challenges of working remotely, the soldiers have adapted well and managed to achieve a lot since being mobilised. Skype seems to have become the go-to product due to the fact it’s free, a well known product and owned by the company that provides a large proportion of the current IT systems (Microsoft). Other potential ideas to

provide lessons are currently being investigated such as streaming computer games to demonstrate military concepts in a virtual world, with the soldiers familiarity with computer systems, potentially allowing for training in the field to be demonstrated, without the need for an actual field.

With the future plans and response to the COVID-19 pandemic being uncertain, nobody knows what the future will look like. In February placing the whole country on lockdown was unheard of, but whatever the future holds, the soldiers of 3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment will continue to refine their remote training to make the most of the time afforded to them.





# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

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# FIGHT TO WIN

## Army Reserve TF HANNIBAL BG

*Lt Col Adam Wolfe MBE, Commanding Officer*

Earlier this year, The Steelbacks led Army Reserve (AR) units delivering a TF Hannibal BG to go head to head with 2000 of their Regular counterparts on Ex Wessex Storm 1/20. The force was 400 strong with 300 reserves from Portsmouth to Grimsby deploying alongside 100 regular soldiers from the Vikings and Household Cavalry to add specialist weapons and armoured recon capabilities. 3 R ANGLIAN, The Steelbacks, took the lead, supported excellently by 3 and 4 PWRR, AR combat support and CSS personnel.

All of this was to represent the Limarian Armed Forces, insurgents and terrorists doing whatever

they could to disrupt NATO (2 R ANGLIAN, QDG and 6 Regt RLC) in Atropia. The exercise was tough: (actual) storms and snow combined with testing new ways and means of achieving more to raise the stakes of the event. Despite all of the resultant frictions, it was a great success. The AR contribution was remarkable and proved an excellent experience for the BG. The exercise challenged the BG, Coy Gp, Pl and Sect leadership in tough conditions, afforded great opportunities to experiment and a rare chance for the AR to train at this level within a Brigade context.

The exercise was both hugely challenging and rewarding, with the three big take-aways as follows:



# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

## Scale

With sufficient lead time, when equipped and supported, the AR can deploy at this level. The lead time will generally take longer than expected; it took a year of messaging to secure individuals' commitment and to organise time off from civilian employment at an 'unusual' time of year, i.e. not the norm of Jul-Sep for Annual Deployment Exercises. Delivering the troops into the field (within 48 hours of arrival) required a tremendous amount of detailed equipment force generation and fleet management over the preceding six months.

## Capability

It was imperative that the AR delivered a capable enemy that could operate in a realistic and demanding training environment. To do this required the development of a composite BGHQ, integration



TF Hannibal Commanders' Hasty Planning to Fight to Win.

of seven units including the support from Regular units to provide capabilities that are currently unachievable within a realistic

timeframe for the AR at BG scale.

## Demand

6 of 8 units in 7 Brigade were committed to operations or contingency resulting in the need for the Brigade to train units concurrently. These factors set a clear demand signal for an AR OPFOR and the wider AR's task lines. This type of 'demand driven' approach should guide future development of a usable and credible AR; providing a thinking enemy in combined arms training is just one example.

How could we have done better?

Three areas are very clear in the rear-view mirror:

## Patience

We were ready and keen to operate as a free-thinking enemy BG from the outset – Fight To Win. Getting the AR fired up to attend and deliver in spades led to very high expectations about the amount of freeplay that would be possible. In reality this would have got in the way of the early validation training objectives. In hindsight, we could have taken a more prescriptive approach to the early stages of the mission and delivered more serialised events that would have paced the troops better and provided time for concurrent



An AR soldier operating in the 'greyzone' and outside of the Geneva Convention.





TF Hannibal BG planning defence and preparing for battle

minimised wherever possible.

Is it a repeatable model? At a very fundamental level many AR soldiers wanted to contribute to 7 Brigade's force preparation, this was one reason soldiers turned up. This and a professional pride in answering the rallying cry and seizing the opportunity to demonstrate what we can do. That said, this should not be a default setting. The ever-present risk of falling short in generating or maintaining mass will not diminish unless there is a change in AR TACOS. The impact of coming up short would be acute, both to training delivery and reputation. Repeated demand at difficult times for employers is likely to erode support for our soldiers' commitment to serve in the AR.

In conclusion, the BG delivered a first-class performance and I couldn't have been prouder of The Steelbacks and what they achieved. Delivering the TF Hannibal BG for Ex Wessex Storm 1/20 has provided a very meaningful level of challenge that will go some way to reinforce the Relevance, Usability, Credibility and Flexibility of the Army Reserve.

training and a build-up of capability. Our troops are conditioned to give it their all and squeeze every bit of training value from exercises. Tactical patience was a new concept for us.

#### Feedback

AAR feedback should be more readily available to a TF Hannibal BG to help keep the troops focussed on delivering what is required and improve – this is usually achievable but not in this case due to stretched FTU resources on a very large exercise. The onus was therefore on

the chain of command to describe the tactical picture and how the troops fitted in and how they were contributing. Our one AAR at the end (led by one of our own in BGHQ) did result in some light bulb moments for many of the troops!

Training Value. TES dead or time deployed into the field to be found by Recce is a negative for AR soldiers eager for action. Any activity without immediate and tangible training benefit must be messaged more carefully than we did initially and



TF Hannibal BG form up for RSOI – 48 hours later they deployed into the field for Ex Archer and the BG run outs.



## 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)



Two thirds of TF Hannibal BG following the defence of Imber

# Exercise WESSEX STORM Salisbury Plain

3 Royal Anglian infantry soldiers found themselves under attack night and day on a two-week exercise on Salisbury Plain.

Exercise Wessex Storm was one of the biggest exercises of its kind in a decade involving more than 2,500 regular and reserve soldiers from 7th Infantry Brigade (the Desert Rats).

The 3rd Battalion 'The Steelbacks' part of a 450 strong contingent were taking part in Exercise Wessex Storm in the role of Opposing Forces (or enemy).

The Exercise formed an essential part of the 2nd Battalion's

preparations for operations and was designed to test their ability to live and fight for long periods of time under harsh conditions. And mother nature certainly helped test them with her own real-life 'weather bombs' as first Storm Ciara and then Storm Dennis battered the soldiers with torrential rain, gale force winds and freezing temperatures

The role of infantry units like the Royal Anglian Regiment is at the core of the Army; from peacekeeping to combat operations, anywhere in the world - the Infantry lead the way and train to be ready for any



challenge.

Equipped with the full range of Infantry weapons, communications and surveillance equipment, they are some of the Army's most adaptable soldiers, ready to deploy anywhere in the world at a moment's notice.

Grimsby Army Reservist Private Adam Snell (23) said: "We've done a bit of everything that is expected of an infantry soldier. The conditions have been tough, and we've had minimal sleep at times, but I've loved it. I've enjoyed playing the enemy. There was a bit of rivalry between us and them because we know a lot of

the guys from the Poachers. Playing the enemy meant we had to think outside the box. We couldn't use our normal tactics otherwise they would know what to expect and we wouldn't have made a great enemy! A couple of times we managed to catch them out, which was great for us, but they came back at us. We had some great fire fights."

The Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment Lieutenant Colonel Adam Wolfe MBE, said: "This was a great opportunity for our Reserve and Regular soldiers to test themselves

and each other in what was an especially austere and demanding environment. Knowledge has been shared by those being tested and their opponents and the collective experience has been of benefit to the regular and reserve soldiers of both Battalions.

Specialists from across the entire army, including signallers and communications specialists, gunners, engineers, intelligence analysts, medics, military dogs, explosives experts and the Military Police also made vital contributors to the success of the exercise.



# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

## Command Cadre in Pictures







# 3rd Battalion (The Steelbacks)

## ADX in Pictures







# Regimental Band



**Freedom of Gibraltar 2016 with the 1st Battalion.**

The impact of the 2020 pandemic has meant the band has had to draw on its reserves of stoicism, resilience and ingenuity to navigate its way through the many barriers Covid 19 has erected across the spectrum of musical endeavour.

The good news is that we have emerged well trained and fighting fit, ready to resume engagements as soon as it is deemed safe. The year began with only the distant rumblings of what was to come. We trained as normal in January and February, working hard for our first engagement, a concert in Chatteris, at the end of March. Alas, in the middle of March, along with the rest of the country, we went into lockdown. Initially lockdown saw us training individually at home with a weekly Zoom meeting, led by the Director of Music, to consolidate musical training.

This went a long way to ward off skill fade and left us in good shape to begin musical training together again in July. We perfected socially distanced rehearsing on our week's ADX at RAF Henlow at the end of July and have continued this successfully at the ARC Peterborough. The lack of engagements has made us reflect on the Band's achievements in the previous couple of years.

We have regular engagements that punctuate the yearly engagement



**Regimental Day, Duxford 2019.**

calendar. Every year, the Band helps new Army Reserve soldiers on their first steps (literally) as trained soldiers, playing for passing out parades at the Prince William of Gloucester Barracks in Grantham. In our full ceremonial uniform, we work hard to give these brand-new soldiers, from across the Army Reserve, the most

rousing parade possible. Another regular engagement to look forward to is Armed Forces Day in Peterborough. We lead a parade of Regular, Reserve and Cadet personnel through the streets of our 'home' city to a commemoration service in the heart of Peterborough in front of thousands of people honouring our



## Sgt N Carey, Royal Anglian Regiment Band



**National Arboretum 2018.**

armed forces. Following our ADX in the summer, we always look forward to the family atmosphere of Royal Anglian Day at IWM Duxford in early September. It is always a privilege and pleasure to entertain the veterans and provide musical support for the march past and drum head service. November always sees us back at Duxford to play for the Royal Anglian act of Remembrance and also to provide support for the later IWM Duxford's own service. The Band have played for every remembrance service at Duxford since the unveiling of the Royal Anglian memorial in 2010. We are very disappointed not to be playing this year, which is the tenth anniversary of Royal Anglian Services at Duxford. Our final regular public engagement of the year has quickly become a firm favourite; the Royal Anglian carol service in Bury St Edmunds (in fact, our last public engagement before the pandemic). Other regimental based regular engagements include a carol service for 3 Royal Anglian on the STANTA training area and the STANTA community carol service in West Tofts church on the training area.

In between our regular calendar events, the Band has performed at many high prestige events over the last couple



**National Arboretum - Land of Hope and Glory.**

of years. In no particular order, here is a review of the highlights. Along with 1 and 2 Royal Anglian, the Band helped to dominate Gibraltar a couple of years ago, leading a parade of our Regular colleagues through Gibraltar city, where the regiment exercised its freedom by marching with bayonets fixed, colours flying to the regimental march. While

our infantry colleagues trained with their new weapon systems, we undertook musical training with the Band of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment. This culminated with the freedom parade at the end of the week. The band returned to Gibraltar a couple of years later to perform concerts across the Rock and further cement relationships with the



# Regimental Band



## Armed Forces Day, Peterborough 2019.

Royal Gibraltar Regimental Band. Since the first Gibraltar trip, the band has developed a close relationship with 1 Royal Anglian, travelling to Woolwich for a number of years to play at the Battalion's Minden Day celebrations. The Band really values contributing to the wider regimental family and working closely with our Regular Army colleagues. The band has represented the regiment by twice playing for the Glorious Goodwood Festival. This gave our very own 'groupie', Lance Corporal Hobson, chance to pursue his hobby

of getting celebrity selfies. His victims over a couple of years included Sir Alex Ferguson, Harry Redknapp, Darcey Bussell and Sir Chris Hoy.

We have performed in a number of high-profile concerts over the same time frame. The highlight was playing for the Last Night of the Proms at the National Memorial Arboretum in front of some 5000 people.

Initially, the Band was tasked to support the Queen's Division Regular Army Band at the engagement. However, that band was put into suspended

animation only three weeks before the date of the concert. This meant that we had to step up to the plate and present the concert ourselves.

We had a fantastic time, playing all of the old 'Last Night' favourites as well as a poignant tribute to our RAF colleagues. The Band also accompanied the world-famous duet Classical Reflection.

This brief sojourn in the past steels us to look forward to next year, when we can resume supporting and representing the Royal Anglian family.



Minden Day with the Vikings in Woolwich.



# ITC Catterick



**Viking soldiers pass out of ITC. Amongst them, awards for shooting, PT and top student.**

Like the rest of the world, COVID-19 has been the main focus of this year at Infantry Training Centre (ITC) Catterick. Whilst face-to-face training paused for several weeks, instructors were still working hard over lockdown to deliver a distance learning package to recruits.

Lessons were conducted daily via Zoom conference calls; recruits were then allowed time to revise using content from the Defence Learning Environment before being assessed using a quiz designed on Kahoot. While delivering training remotely proved challenging at times, it allowed instructors to test out several online learning platforms and improve the way technology enhanced learning is implemented.

Training is now back in full swing, with a few extra measures in place, and ITC is once again welcoming monthly

intakes of approximately 190 recruits. Recruits are confined to camp so Permanent Staff are working hard to keep training fresh, interesting and relevant.

This includes visiting new training areas such as Copehill Down and Cellini Village, as well as incorporating other arms and services into training, such as



**'Civilian to Soldier' YouTube series created by Capt Dan Russell.**



# ITC Catterick

insertions by Chinook helicopters and the use of RMP for CPERS serials.

Thanks to the large number of recruits coming through the door, ITC has also been able to implement divisional aligned sections. This means that recruits are taught by a Corporal from their own Division, as they were in years gone by. This has proved helpful for retention and enables recruits to develop a great sense of regimental/divisional pride.

As we move forward to 2021, the new year will bring with it a new iteration of the Combat Infantry Course, CIC 21. This course will see the introduction of three 'Golden Threads' that will be found throughout the activities in the CIC: Values & Standards, Mental Resilience Training and Leadership. The intent is to source an uplift of various weapon systems, including SA80 A4 and Sharpshooter as well as increasing ITC's holding of HMNVS and LLM. Work continues to update the programme, focussing on better synchronisation and



**An aspiring Royal Anglian soldier conducts his Individual Fire and Manoeuvre assessment.**



**Cpl Hallworth teaches 'duties of a sentry' lesson during INTRO Ex 2.**



**An aspiring Royal Anglian soldier abseils during Adventurous Training in the Yorkshire Dales.**

smarter placement of PT sessions. These changes should see recruits arrive at their Battalions better prepared to face modern challenges

For those interested in seeing the training being conducted at ITC, a 'Civilian to Soldier' YouTube series has been created by Capt Dan Russell, 1 R Anglian. It documents the training week-by-week throughout the course. The YouTube channel has been a great

way for potential soldiers, family and friends to have an insight into what the training entails. The channel has proved very popular with some videos having over 120,000 views. Search DJRXP on YouTube.

There are 32 Royal Anglian Permanent Staff working across the three battalions at ITC, employed across various roles from CO's driver to Cpl instructor to G7 WO. They include:

Capt Deed, Capt Russell, Lt Darby, Lt Thompson, Lt Wynn, WO1 Towe, WO2 Green, WO2 Newark, Sgt Dawe, Sgt Gordon, Sgt Herron, Cpl Adcock, Cpl Baxter, Cpl Bayliss, Cpl Condon, Cpl Eccott, Cpl Evans, Cpl Foley, Cpl Hallworth, Cpl Leadley, Cpl May, Cpl Mayes, Cpl McConkey, Cpl Ridgeway, Cpl Schurch, Cpl Taylor, Cpl Walshe, Cpl Wolfe, LCpl Cotgrave, LCpl Garrard, Pte Gardner and Pte Heath.



Special  
Features



# VE-Day Commemorations



The Regiment focussed most of its VE-Day commemorations at home and via social media to our community. These posts were well received online on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Maj Ken Mayhew reflecting at home from the Association, a Private soldier and a subaltern from the Vikings outside the bombed out chapel in Woolwich which marked the start of the two minute silence and (top facing page) a salute from an SNCO with the Poachers to end the two minutes and salute those who served during the conflict.



# VJ-Day Commemorations

*August saw commemorations across our counties to remember the historic efforts of our forebear Regiments, although we couldn't all come together as we would have wished, a series of smaller events and online memorials were held and well supported by the local association members.*

*The article that follows was written as part of the Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk's commemoration of VJ-75 in Bury St Edmunds. The article appears with kind permission of its author, Maj Gen John Sutherell.*

## Reflections on Victory over Japan

On 15 August 1945 Japan announced its surrender and this day was designated 'Victory over Japan' or VJ-Day. For the United Kingdom this marked the official end of the Second World War.

Imperial Japan, which then included Korea and Taiwan, had a constitution and parliamentary system. It had been an effective British ally in the First World War. Becoming more authoritarian and militarized, Japan occupied Manchuria in 1931, left the League of Nations in 1933, signed a pact with Nazi Germany

in 1936 and invaded China in 1937, waging a brutal war there for the next eight years.

Britain was pre-occupied with the German threat, and through a combination of ignorance, cultural prejudice, complacency and delusional thinking, seriously underestimated Japan's ambitions and warlike capabilities.

On 8 December 1941 Japan took control of French Indo-China and invaded Malaya, Thailand, Burma and

the Philippines.

*HMS Prince of Wales* and *HMS Repulse*, sent to the Far East as a deterrent, against naval advice, were sunk by Japanese aircraft on 10 December.

'Fortress Singapore' fell on 15 February and by May Burma had been captured, India threatened, Australia bombed and Japanese troops were pushing through New Guinea towards Queensland. The British had been out-generated and out-fought by smaller



# Special Features

numbers but operationally experienced and fanatically brave Japanese.

It took nearly four years of intensely bitter fighting in gruelling physical conditions to achieve 'Victory over Japan': the Australians, with no assistance from Britain, recaptured New Guinea to secure their homeland; the Anglo-Indian 14th Army under General 'Bill' Slim, with Chinese help, recaptured Burma; the United States Navy, Army and Marines fought their way across the Pacific to the Japanese perimeter; the Soviet Union invaded Manchuria on 8 August 1945; and a devastating bombing campaign culminated with the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima (6 August) and Nagasaki (9 August). Only then did Japan surrender.

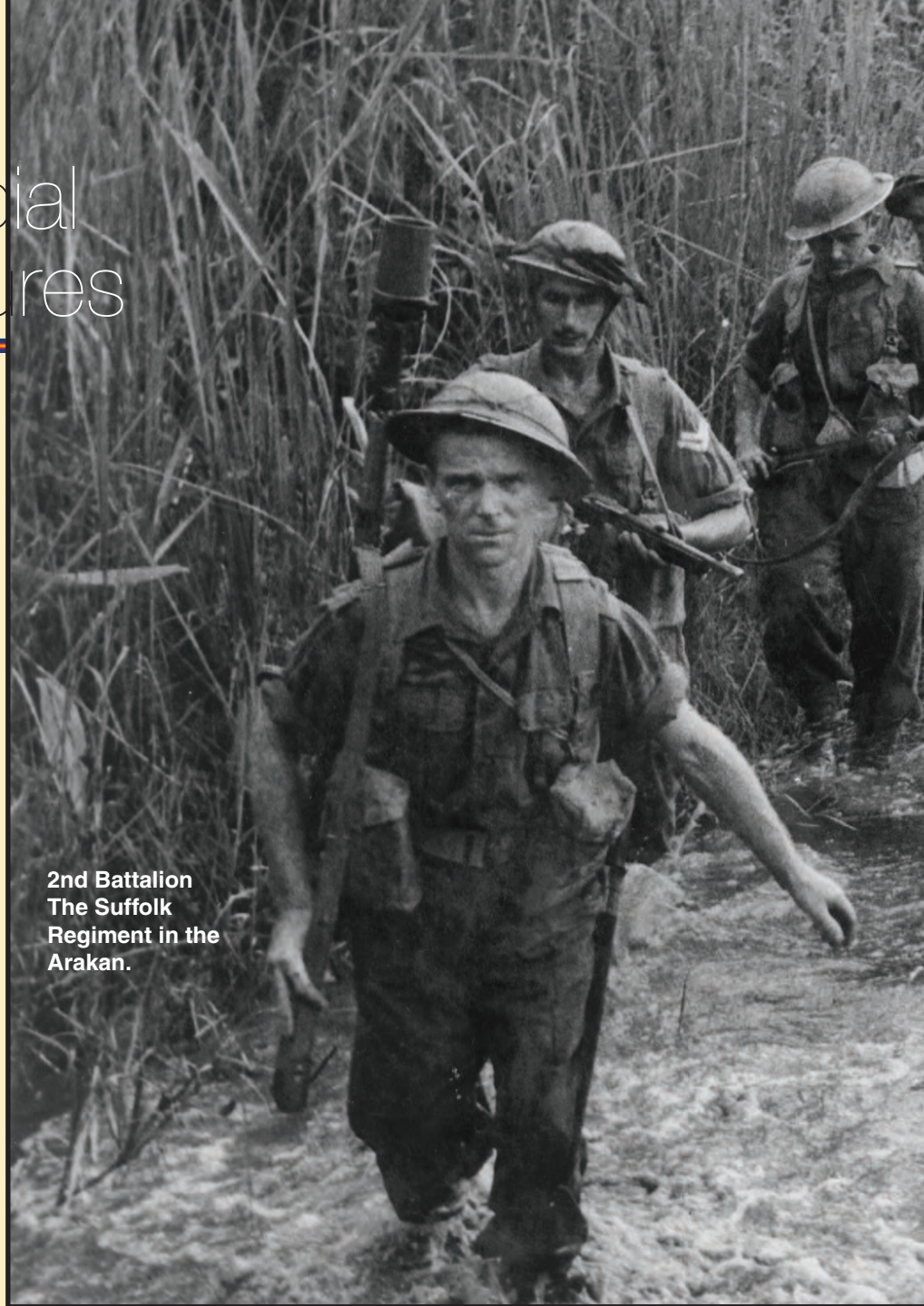
## Slave labour

The human cost of this conflict was horrific. The Japanese regime was brutal, and its forces were responsible for terrible war crimes against civilian populations throughout China and South East Asia as well as Allied servicemen. Prisoners of war taken in Singapore, the Philippines and elsewhere were used as slave labour in Japan and on the 'Burma Railway' in Thailand, as were tens of thousands of Asian civilians. The cost to the Japanese was also high. Their servicemen tended to fight, with suicidal bravery 'to the death'; Japanese civilians suffered severe privation from naval blockade and aerial bombing.

## Scarred

Many who fought were scarred by their experience. It was not just terrible physical conditions of jungle and mountain, harsh treatment, loss of friends and injuries, but how they were regarded at home. 14th Army in Burma called itself 'The Forgotten Army', as attention, resources and press coverage always focused on Europe. For many who had fought for years or had been captured in the Far East, their return home did not happen until late 1945, and 'life had moved on'.

Those at home had little comprehension of what they had experienced; those returning were disinclined to share their stories. Many



2nd Battalion  
The Suffolk  
Regiment in the  
Arakan.

captured at Singapore felt the bitterness of defeat and rancour at having been let down and abandoned. And no-one in a victorious but exhausted Britain

wanted to think about 'Britain's Greatest Defeat'.

The initial Japanese triumph over Europeans had not been lost on colonial

*“The Japanese regime was brutal, and its forces were responsible for terrible war crimes against civilian populations throughout China and South East Asia as well as Allied servicemen. Prisoners of war*





countries and in 1945 Britain and others were already grappling with the consequences. For Australians, who had spilt much blood for Britain in the First World War, and in the Western Desert, Greece and Malaya/Singapore in the Second, it was the United States, not Britain, who had saved them from invasion.

VJ has a particular meaning for many in East Anglia. In October 1941 18th British Division, of which most units were Territorials from East Anglia, sailed from UK equipped to fight in the Middle East. On 11 December, whilst at sea, the Division was diverted, by order of the War Cabinet, to Singapore, landing on 13 January.

4th and 5th Battalions of the Suffolk Regiment were involved in the fighting on Singapore Island in the 10 days before the surrender. Like all the many

other British, Australian and Indian soldiers involved, the Suffolks spent the next three and a half years in Japanese hands. After nine months in Changi Jail on Singapore Island, they were moved to Thailand to build the Burma-Thailand Railway. When it was completed in August 1944 most survivors were taken to Japan to be employed as slave labour.

### **Casualty**

The casualty returns for 4th Battalion Suffolk Regiment are striking: 955 all ranks landed in Singapore. Of these 90 were killed in action or died of wounds; 375 died while prisoners of war; 490 survived, but of these 90 died within one year. Figures for the 5th Battalion, and other units, are comparable.

Princess of Wales RAF Hospital Ely specialized for many years in the care of Far East Prisoners of War (FEPoWs).

From 1982 to 1991 2,000 FEPoWs attended checks for tropical diseases. 70 per cent were suffering from conditions attributed to war service, suggesting only 120 men (12 per cent) of the 4th Battalion survived without long term problems.

The figures take no account of mental issues – this was before PTSD was diagnosed. As an example, a hospital medical account of survivor Pte Ernest Warwick, 4th Suffolks stated in 1987...

‘He is haunted still by his years in captivity and today walks slowly and with painful difficulty as a direct result of his brutal torture and ill-treatment at the hands of the Japanese.

‘In no way does he glorify war, but feels that as a proud nation we should always remember and honour our dead, who gave so much that we might live’.



# Special Features

## Mum supports daughter in training

Private Charlotte Hayler (Charlie) is currently training at Catterick and soon to join the Regiment. Charlie originally joined as a medic completing her training in Winchester, all but her placement. She always wanted to be in the infantry, deciding to follow her heart, she made the brave change, instead of going into placement as a Medic she was able to change to Infantry training, after a short delay in a holding platoon found herself at Catterick. By time of publication she will have joined the Poachers.

The change in training became a very long journey, a full year since passing out at Winchester. With the added pressure of being in a constant gated environment because of Covid19 all recruits were finding it an incredibly tough journey. Not being able during down time to go to the local shop, or go for a run outside camp, very confining physically and mentally. She drew on the great friendships and support from all the recruits around her, supporting each other through the tough time they were experiencing .

Step forward Charlie's Mum Angie. Angie, like many was walking regularly and whilst doing so came up with an idea to support her daughter through the challenges she was facing to show Charlie that being confined at home during Covid19 has been mentally challenging too, they could get through it together, stronger, tougher and more resilient. Charlie always talked about heavy Bergens and day sacks, Angie decided she would walk 3 miles and day with a 10kg day sack, for 37 days, that being the number of days Charlie had left in training.

This was all about support to Charlie, however Angie decided to set up a Just Giving fundraising page for the Royal Anglian Benevolent Fund. Angie says 'the wonderful thing about it is, the money was never the important bit, I decided that I could get some



Pte Charlie Hayler at ITC.



Mum ready for another march.

donations for the regiment so set a £200 Just Giving target, I was astounded at the response and kindness of everyone who has donated, some of them soldiers training alongside Charlie, hence I have completely smashed through the original target. They are all followed my story each day on Just Giving and Facebook and it seems to have given them all something to cheer on. While we are cheering them on from home'.

Angie has walked for at total time 37.53 hours completing 114 miles with an average pace of 20.03 mins per mile and raising a total £1120.00 for the Royal Anglian Benevolent Fund.

The Regiment congratulates Angie on her immense effort in support of her daughter and the Regimental Charity, and wish Charlotte good luck in her career.

## Royal Anglians from ATR Winchester pay their respects at Brookwood Cemetery

On Thursday 15 November, members of The Royal Anglian Regiment currently serving at ATR Winchester came together to visit Brookwood Cemetery and pay their respects to those that fell in the Great War and in the Second World War.

In this beautifully kept cemetery, there are graves of members of all our forebear Regiments and of two Regimental heroes in particular: Brigadier John (Jack) Sherwood-Kelly VC CMG DSO of the Norfolk Regiment and Captain David Hicks MC of the Royal Anglian Regiment.

The visit was an opportunity for all to reflect on the sacrifice made by our forbears and saw LCpl Kohking of the 2nd Battalion (The Poachers) lay a wreath and Capt Josh Beale of the 1st Battalion (The Vikings) lead The Act of Remembrance.





# Special Features

## A Memorial to Commemorate the Massacre at Le Paradis, France, 27 May 1940

by Brigadier SJM Marriner CBE

Patron, *The Le Paradis Commemoration Memorial Appeal*

In September 1939 2nd Battalion The Royal Norfolk Regiment, with nearly 1,000 men under command, arrived in France as part of the BEF. Ten months later only five Officers and 134 Other Ranks remained to be evacuated back to England.

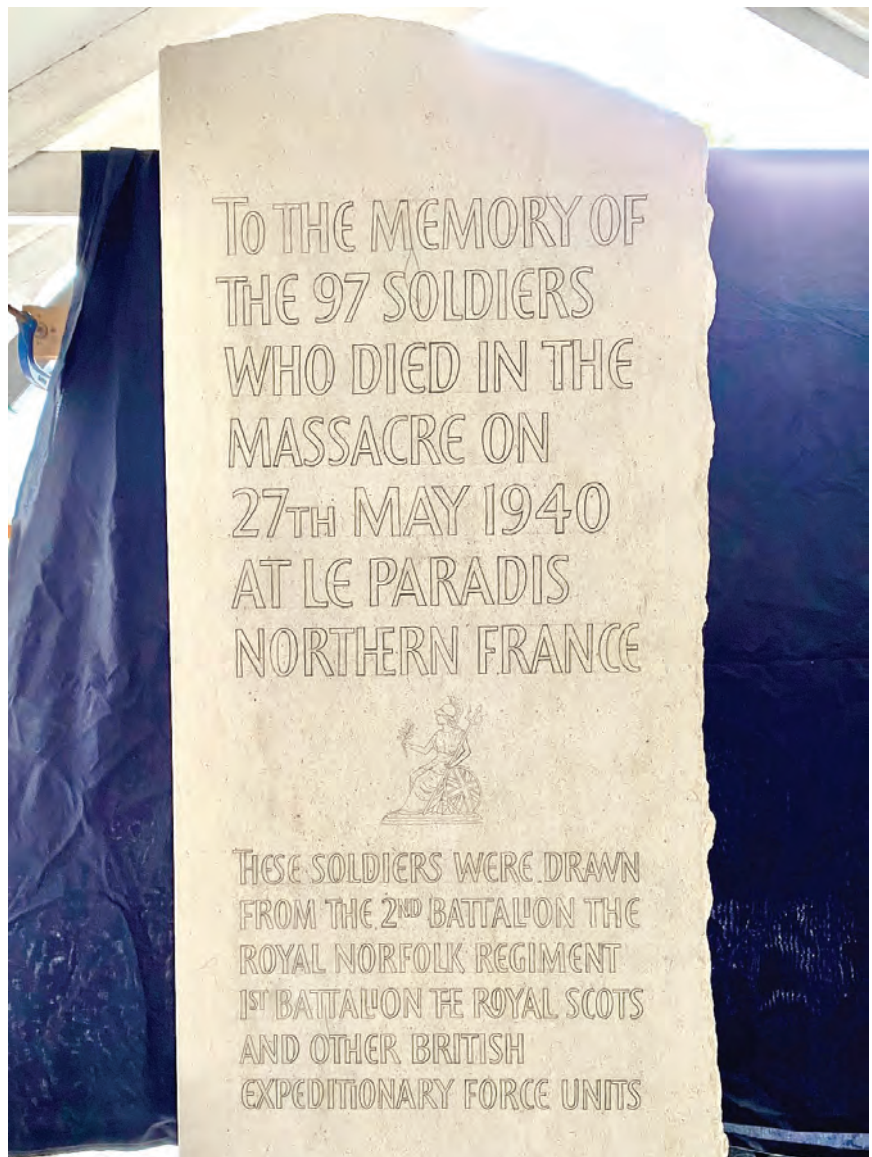
It is dawn on Monday 27th May 1940 – the Battle of France is 17 days old and the British Expeditionary Force is in full flight for the beaches of Le Havre and Dunkirk. At the small commune of Le Paradis, British soldiers of the 2nd Battalion The Royal Norfolk Regiment are creating a hasty defensive position with orders to hold “to the last man, last bullet”.

Their task; to delay the inexorable advance of the Wehrmacht and buy time for the evacuation of British Forces. As those soldiers looked out upon that grey dawn none could have known that in less than 10 hours, 97 of their number would have been murdered in cold blood by German soldiers of the SS Totenkopf Division.

Only two British soldiers survived the massacre and it is through their testament that we know what happened on that benighted day.

Whilst there are several memorials to immortalise the bravery and actions of those killed by the SS that day in 1940, there are none whatsoever in the United Kingdom.

A little over two years ago a small group of friends, determined to correct this omission, formed a charity here in Norfolk to raise the necessary funds and gain the permissions required to establish a suitable memorial outside St Saviour’s Chapel at Norwich Cathedral. In a record breaking and rather challenging 18 months we have raised the money, achieved all the permissions required by the Government and Cathedral authorities and commissioned a World leading stonemason to create the memorial.



### The Le Paradis Memorial at the Cardozo Workshop.

The memorial, cut from Portland Stone, stands some five feet above ground and weighs just under a ton.

The left-hand straight edge rises from the ground, reflecting the sharp brutality of the act – lives cut off suddenly and completely. It also provides visual clarity, standing the memorial up straight to create a greater impact but

also harmonising with the Cathedral behind it. The riven, rough edge echoes the open, raw wounds that were felt by the two survivors, and are still felt by the Regimental colleagues, families and friends of those who were massacred. It will be installed and dedicated outside St Saviour’s Chapel, Norwich Cathedral, in 2021.



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## Dunkirk letters delivered 80 years late!

In Regimental history, the part the 1st Bn The Suffolk Regiment played in the evacuation of Dunkirk is well known, not least because we are told the Minden Flash was introduced there as a tactical recognition flash.

The Regimental family may also have heard about the letters written by members of the Regiment from Dunkirk, which were recently delivered, 80 years late. The full story was told in the Times of 23 May 20, which can be found at this link <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-suffolk-52812539>. The article cites Harry Cole writing to his mother in a village near Ipswich, while he was waiting to be evacuated by the navy. He never made it off the beach, but the letter has recently been delivered to the joy of his family. Harry Cole's

letter was among many in a postal van thought to have been lost, but a bundle of letters were found by a passing German officer and taken home as a souvenir. After 30 years in his attic he took the letters the British Embassy, from where they were passed to the Suffolk Regiment Museum in Bury St Edmunds.

The Museum's wonderful volunteer staff were eventually able to identify Harry Cole's family and passed on his letter to his surviving brothers, Derek and Clement. The Regimental family is hugely grateful to the staff of our museums for all the wonderful work they do, which is such an important part of our Regimental Commemoration, particularly during these WW2 commemorations.

To mark the 80th anniversary of

the evacuation from Dunkirk, staff at Suffolk Archives have put extracts from this and other letters together in an online display. Clare Wallace, the Curator told the Times, "The Dunkirk letters hold an important place within the Suffolk Regiment archive. These men had been through great hardships during the war and unfortunately some never made it home from Dunkirk. It is striking however that their personalities and humour still shine through these letters. I am delighted that Suffolk Archives have been able to reunite one of the letters with the soldier's family."

Suffolk Archives' fascinating online display is well worth viewing and can be seen at: <https://www.suffolkarchives.co.uk/displays-online/with-love-from-dunkirk/>



# Special Features

## Sobraon Battlefield Tour - India

March 2020

*Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) David Baylis OBE*

With my late father (Lt Col (QM) Ron Baylis MBE) and myself experiencing a cumulative total of 78 years celebrating Sobraon Day annually on the 10th February during our years of service (50 and 28 respectively) with the R Lincolns/R Anglians, it has always been an ambition of mine to visit the actual battlefield.

I wanted to see the ground over which it was fought and the Sutlej river (then the Punjabi/East India Company border) which played such a vital role in the conduct of the encounter.

I had the opportunity this March. Five of us military enthusiasts landed in Delhi on 13 March just 15 minutes before the Covid19 ban on flights into India came into operation. It was a close call and we were always aware of the 'noose' of travel restrictions closing round us as we moved up country. We met up with our Sikh guide and an eminent historian (Patrick Mercer) to tour the Punjab and visit the battlefield sites of the 1st Anglo-Sikh war (1845/6) at Mukdi, Aliwal and Ferozshah, culminating the tour at Sobraon and views of the Sutlej river.

Each day was devoted to a particular battlefield interspersed with visits to museums, places of cultural interest, cemeteries and a considerable amount of travel through the very flat, hot and incredibly fertile Punjabi landscape. Punjab means 'land of 5 rivers' and huge rivers (including the Sutlej) flow down from the Himalayas into the Indus and out to sea. Careful use of this resource has reduced the size of the rivers but provide wonderful irrigation for crops.

Each battlefield we visited was marked by a 40-foot brick memorial of similar design erected some 20 years after the campaign and from that memorial, with the help of the Sikh guide and Patrick Mercer, we were able to identify villages, nullahs and tracks that were relevant to each stage of the battle. We then walked the ground with



**Tour group in front of Indian War memorial in Delhi.**

sketch maps, binoculars and compasses having the unfolding tempo of the battle explained to us in detail. Mudki was a vicious encounter battle followed hard by Ferozshah, a full scale battle where the outcome was so much in the balance that Lord Hardinge (the Governor General) ordered all papers and official documents to be destroyed for fear they would fall into Sikh hands. Aliwal was a brilliant tactical success for General

Smith known as 'The Battle without a Mistake' which pushed a large part of the Sikh Army back over the border of the Sutlej River.

Sobraon was the final battle of the campaign and the only one in which the 10th foot was involved. It was brutal - with huge casualties and much bravery on both sides. The Sutlej river at that point is 100 to 150 metres wide and was in full flow. We could make out

remains of the Sikh ramparts and could identify where they had tried to escape over the Sutlej on a bridge of boats once the earthworks had been breached by the 10th and other British and Native Bengali regiments. It was a very close run affair and there is no doubt that the duplicitous Sikh leadership let down their wonderful soldiers at key moments.

Patrick Mercer had registered my personal interest and the highlight of the tour for me was when he took us to the exact spot of the 10th Foot advance. I was able to read aloud the special 'Order of the Day' we see annually that describe the specific action of the 10th Foot to the others of the group. It was a surprisingly emotional moment.

At this stage we were due to go further north for 6 days to visit the Hill Stations of the Raj in Simla and Deyrah Dhoon in the foothills of the Himalayas. Listening to the news it was clear that international travel restrictions were about to come into effect so we made the group decision to get out of India rather than wait for our return flight from Delhi.

British Airways would not let us change our flight without charging 400% extra for the flight (a disgraceful profiteering exercise) so we made our own arrangements and flew back from Amritsar to Mumbai then to Dubai and back to London. We took off from Mumbai 24 hours before India banned all International flights. Very exciting!



**Baylis in front of Sutlej river.**



**Sikh Gurdwara built next to War memorial.**



**A Sikh welcoming party from the village of Sobraon with the tour group.**



# Book Reviews

## Fighting Through to Hitler's Germany

Personal Accounts of the Men of the Suffolk Regiment 1944-45

by Mark Fosdike

This recent release from Pen and Sword Ltd has been presented in a fairly standard format, a fixed number of photograph pages, maps and the normal page count for this kind of history. What makes this book stand out from the crowd though, is the obvious passion of Mark Fosdike coupled with his forensic knowledge of this battalion at war.

Military historians who track an individual regiment or unit often reference their passion for their chosen subject. It has to be said that not all can convert that passion into a credible and coherent narrative. Not so, Mr Fosdike, this really is a quality piece of work on the Suffolks and the British infantrymen that fought their way across North West Europe against skilled and determined opposition.

The narrative is very well balanced, with just the right ratio of personal anecdotes, primary source reference and biographic knowledge of the men whose memories he is interpreting and recounting. All carefully threaded together with a good, engaging storyline that carefully captures the character of the battalion and the men who soldiered in it.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this, I felt as if I was inside the Suffolks looking out, not just an interested spectator. Although written in a well-trying modern style, it has the feel of one of classic post-war accounts written in the aftermath of what for the infantry battalions was a costly campaign.

Published by Pen & Sword Ltd  
Hardback, pp294, RRP £25.00

Review by Mike Peters



## ONE SMALL SOLDIER

The author charts his life from an unfortunate childhood through juvenile delinquency before joining the Army in WW2 and serving as a soldier and later as an officer for 33 years (26 years abroad) and 10 years as a Retired Officer.

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## BY EXAMPLE WE LEAD

Memories of a Military Policeman 1958-1980

BY BRIAN F SAMWAYS



The book follows the author's twenty two year career from a young uniformed military policeman to a warrant officer class 1 of the Special Investigation Branch, going behind the scenes of cases and enquiries carried out in many exotic destinations around the globe, as well the European theatre of operations. The author also sets out to portray forces family life during that era from courtship to retirement, illustrating the trials and tribulations couples have to endure by being constantly on the move and separation during active service.

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## Once a Viking always a Viking

It has never been more important to look at the values and standards of the Military and all the organisations affiliated to it such as the Army Cadet Force.

We interviewed Lord Lt Cadet Tucker who is also the 4 Company Sergeant Major and Sergeant Instructor Mayer who also served in the 1 Royal Anglian Regiment between 2001 and 2008. During this time SI Mayer was promoted to Lance Corporal within C Company. Both Gentleman shared a common goal which was to follow in the footsteps of their grandfathers who also served in the army.

### *Why did you join the Cadets?*

SI Mayer was a cadet based in Romford as a teenager and this led him to a career within the Army. Once he left the Army he realised he had all the knowledge and experience from serving which he felt was going to waste. He remembers being taught in his cadet days by an instructor from the Green Jackets and understood that he could do the same for the next generation of cadets. In 2018 he decided to join the ACF and become an instructor on the understanding that he could be posted to a Royal Anglian affiliated detachment.

CSM Tucker Joined the ACF in 2015 as a cadet and was given the choice of detachments but his Dad insisted that he should be based at 47 because of the family history. This meant a longer journey to the unit but worth going that extra mile especially for his Grandad Dave.

### *What does it mean to be a Viking?*

SI Mayer said "It's hard to describe what it means to be a Viking, it's a brotherhood, a family, a sense of belonging to something far bigger than you. Even though I am now a Veteran I am still a Viking to my very core and something that makes me feel extremely proud each and every day.

CSM Tucker already new from a young age the importance of the military



**Generations of family tradition and loyalty and integrity run through the veins of cadets and instructors at 47 Detachment based in Rainham, Essex. Lord Lt Cadet Alfie Tucker (left) and SI Ben Mayer (right).**

family and how it would shape him for the future. From the moment he put on the uniform he felt proud.

His new confidence gave him the ability to stand just that little bit taller. To be a Viking within the ACF has given him opportunity and experiences most could only dream. CSM Tucker simply said, "The Cadets has made me the person I am today, and I am immensely proud of the achievements."

### **What is your proudest moment?**

My three tours in Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan" SI Mayer said this with no hesitation.

CSM Tucker had a very special experience when he was asked to lay a cross at the Field of Remembrance in 2017 with Prince Harry at Westminster Abbey. He laid the cross on the Regimental plot along the footpath.

### **What have you been doing during the Pandemic?**

SI Mayer is currently a key worker and

has had to face some challenging times as a funeral director. He has supported families at their saddest time and has used his respect and integrity to show compassion and care. Even with this challenging job he has still been able to support both Cadets and new appointed probationary instructors. Working with the Training Officer he has delivered online zoom classes for cadets in subjects such as marksman principles, Target Indication and fire control orders. For the adults he has been teaching them at a social distance with subjects such as drill, fieldcraft and navigation.

CSM Tucker confessed that most of his lockdown was preparing his university applications. He is planning to study French and secure a place at Oxford. Alongside adult Instructors CSM has been helping to run the online lessons, he has been checking on his NCO's welfare and mentoring younger cadets through basic training. He has also been supporting the Corps of Drums.

### What are your plans in the future?

Once CSM has finished University his next plan is to go onto Sandhurst and train as an Officer for the Regiment. Eventually he would like to work for the Foreign Office or something along those lines.

When asked what he wanted to see for the future of cadets he said, "All I wish is for new cadets to have the fantastic experience that I have had". He recently attended the senior cadet conference and was told about all the new and

exciting things being implemented and he is keen to tell other cadets about the new syllabus, new platforms and new projects on the horizon. When asked what he missed the most he said being on the parade square shouting out drill commands and seeing cadets grow and develop into outstanding citizens.

SI Mayer continues to train Cadets at 47 and is looking to support the adult training team helping to bring more adult volunteers into the ACF. He wants to keep the flame burning for future

generations and urges anyone with the military knowledge to consider the ACF as an option. He wants to continue to strengthen the bonds with the regiment and welcomes its continued support.

As a unit, 47 cadets have visited the Duxford Regimental Museum and had a tour with two serving soldiers. They have held a Minden Day parade each year and received visits from Captain Clancy. They are planning a trip to Woolwich once the restrictions have lifted and we can go back to face to face training.



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# Regimental Association

Norfolk

## Remembering Capt John Barratt – Far East Prisoner of War

One event that we have been able to do this year is to remember amongst others Captain John Barratt who was a Far East Prisoner of War between 1942 and 1945. Capt Barratt, who died in 2002, had commissioned into the 4th Battalion the Royal Norfolk Regiment in 1938.

Previously, he had been educated at Gresham's School in Norfolk and had been a partner in the family firm of Stockbrokers in Norwich. With the 4th Battalion Capt Barratt deployed to Singapore arriving just before the island was lost to the Japanese in February 1942. At that point, the 4th Norfolks with the rest of 18th Division were taken into captivity.

Capt Barratt was forced to work on the Death Railway where almost 100,000 Allied prisoners died. He was eventually liberated in 1945. In 1983



Capt John Barratt in 1940.



Capt John Barratt in later life.



Members of the Barratt family and members of the County Committee attend the dedication of the memorial to Capt John Barratt in the Regiments Chapel, Norwich Cathedral.



John Barratt wrote his memoirs, *His Majesty's Service 1939 to 1945*, where he writes of beatings, rock-holding endurance tests and cruel physical conditions: 'We had a very strenuous march through squelching mud, which went on and on like one long nightmare. Just before we arrived at Tha Sao Camp on the first evening we saw close by a Jap truck stuck in the mud and I pretended not to hear their yelling for us to help them get out.'

'At that time our men were exhausted and very close to collapse. The Japs caught us up and got me out. They were yelling and beating us with rifle butts,

and I thought my time had come. One just had to take it and hope, for they are such sadists, that any flinching or cowardice would only increase their delight in their torture.'

It was this recollection of events that persuaded John's son, Charlie Barratt, to return to Thailand and follow his father's story. When Charlie and his wife Caroline visited in January this year, the anniversary of Victory in Japan day on August 15 2020 was just months away: 75 years ago at the time of his visit, his father John had been a prisoner of the Japanese. As Charlie recorded in his own version of his father's experience,

'Revisiting the Railway', written in 2020, 'In order to understand the facts of life and indeed chaos, one has to study history, geography, economics, politics, philosophy and human nature - and in this case why the Japanese had invaded Singapore.'

On Sunday 27 September 2020, under Covid conditions, members of the Barratt family were able to join members of the Royal Norfolk Regiment County Committee in Norwich Cathedral to dedicate the panel memorial to Capt John Barratt. The event was particularly poignant as Charlie Barratt is now the High Steward of Norwich Cathedral.



# Regimental Association

Suffolk

## The Hillman Objective

The main objective for 1st Battalion The Suffolk Regiment on D-Day was a bunker complex some three miles inland from the Normandy beaches, code-named "Hillman".

This was the Headquarters of the German 736th Regiment. It proved to be bigger and more strongly held than had been predicted, surrounded by intact barbed wire and minefields. The objective had by chance escaped any damage from pre-D Day bombing raids. 1 Suffolk managed to capture the objective by late afternoon on the 6th June, in a second attack on the position. Both attacks included several individual heroic actions and were not without casualties.

The turning point of the battle occurred when Pte "Titch" Hunter stood up and charged a German machine gun that was holding up the attack, an action for which he was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal. It was the start of 11 months hard fighting for the Battalion in France and then subsequently through Belgium and Holland into Germany. The Battalion gained a reputation for professionalism, reliability, and steady courage throughout the campaign, maintaining once again the Regiment's proud motto of "Stabilis".

In 1989 the owner of the site of the action, Mme Lenaud, gave a bunker at the centre of the objective with a small parcel of land to The Suffolk Regiment. This was in recognition of the role that the Battalion had played in the liberation of Colleville-Montgomery, the village just below the Hillman feature which the Battalion had cleared prior to the attack on Hillman.

As a young girl she had nursed a wounded British soldier in the main



street of the village on the 6th June. Since 1989 a group of local families "Les Amis", along with the Commune have looked after the site and the area round it to preserve it as a Memorial, a small

Museum and a place where individuals and groups can come to study the battle and pay their respects to the bravery of the Suffolk Regiment men who took part in the battle and the liberation of France.



It is a site protected in French law as a site of “Historical value” and therefore cannot be developed. Hillman is one of the increasingly few remaining sites near the Normandy beaches preserved as far as possible as it was in 1944. The approaches to the site and the views from it have changed little. Over the years it has featured as a stand on numerous battlefield tours.

The site is now owned by The Suffolk

Regiment Museum. The Trustees have decided that the time has come to give the site to the Colleville-Montgomery Commune, to ensure that it remains a Memorial to the deeds of our former Regiment and continues to be looked after properly.

The contract to hand over the site was signed on 3 November 2020. We hope post-COVID to be able to join Les Amis to commemorate D Day on the Hillman

site in 2021 and to continue for many years the close bonds of friendship with our French Allies in Normandy.

For more information on the Suffolk Regiment and the battle to capture Hillman please contact The Suffolk Regiment Museum, The Keep, Bury St Edmunds.

**Tel:** 01284 749317.

**Email:**

*suffolkregimentmuseum@gmail.com*



## Remembrance Day in Chelmsford









# Regimental Association

## Cambridgeshire

### New Year Gathering

We hosted our flagship New Year Gathering on Sunday, 26th January at COUTC Coldhams Lane, Cambridge. 40 guests attended, and our guest speaker was Kev Francis, who gave a presentation about his personalised scooter, decorated with images relating to his family connections with the Cambridgeshire Regiment. This was supplemented by a display of related objects and artefacts. Prior to the talk we held our AGM which was well attended and the buffet lunch was of the accustomed high standard.

Among subjects discussed at the AGM were the proposed Barbecue and Clay Shoot, to be held in co-operation with Cambridgeshire ACF, a visit to the Great War Huts (Bury St. Edmunds), as well as the Association's plans for VJ75 commemorations. Sadly all have had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Monthly Meetings

In 2019 we began to host monthly social gatherings at the Histon & Impington Royal British Legion (our thanks to the RBL), held on the last Friday of each month. These have proved to be highly successful and have enticed several of our old comrades to meet on that regular basis in a relaxed atmosphere of friendship, however, on account of Covid-19 the last gathering was held in February 2020. Purely out of spontaneity, a bottle of port was produced on that night and auctioned, raising £50.00 for



the Branch funds, so who knows what could have been generated had it not been for prevailing circumstances! We will re-instate the gatherings once a clearer health perspective is reached.

### VJ75 Events

The Chairman has been active in supporting two events in neighbouring Suffolk that had a Cambridgeshire Regiment angle of interest. A Mr. Ernie Brett, believed to be the last survivor of the Regiment's 2nd Battalion, lives in Haverhill, and the local history group were in need of assistance with their research to enable them to record the names and service details of the 89 residents who were POWs or casualties in the Far East during the Second World War (six local men served with the 1st Battalion, and seven with the 2nd alone). Mr. Brett fought in Malaya, and his platoon commander (a native of Ipswich)

was killed by his side at Sengerang on 26th January, 1941, during the retreat to Singapore. It was Brett's wish to lay a personal wreath to honour this man, so the Chairman, together with Standard Bearer John Linkin, attended a social-distancing aware event to honour 2nd Lt. Basil Groom at the Ipswich Cenotaph, on 8th August. The Chairmen carried out a brief presentation of the key events to set the historical context, followed by the reading of the FEPOW prayer in the presence of the Mayor of Haverhill and representatives of the RBL, CWGC, Friends of the Suffolk Regiment, and Ipswich War Memorial.

On 15th August, Haverhill hosted its own event at the local War Memorial, with Chairman, Standard Bearer, Steve Harris, and Martin Bessell in attendance. The event followed a similar format as the one in Ipswich, but was greatly enhanced by some 30 local attendees.



**Membership**

127 On books...(468 members on Facebook)

**The Future**

With no ability to conduct physical meetings and the obvious disadvantage of not knowing when the pandemic will become less of a problem, we can neither predict nor plan for the immediate or short-term future. We have taken the decision not to invest too much effort into laying plans for our January New Year Gathering, but should things improve we remain confident that we can launch the event at reasonable notice, the format and processes being a well-practised procedure.

**Martin Boswell, Chairman**



**Cambridgeshire VJ-Day**

**Right: Lt Col David Denson TD, County Colonel, Laying the wreath on behalf of The Royal Anglian Regiment Association Cambridgeshire.**



**Below right: His Honour Neil McKittrick Deputy Lieutenant Laying a wreath in memory of the Cambridgeshire Regiment.**

**Below: Whittlesey VJ-Day... The Mayor, Cllr David Mason, headed proceedings at the commemoration in Whittlesey for VJ-Day. Around 80 people attended.**

*(Photos courtesy Rui Chamberlain and Robert Windle).*





# Regimental Association

## Cambridgeshire

### A Family Heritage

*Martin Boswell, Chairman, Cambridge Branch*

Last year Kev Francis brought along his Lambretta Li 125 scooter to the Regimental Gathering at Duxford, it being personalised with artwork relating to not just his own service with the Vikings (1979 – 1989) but also his family members who had served under the Cambridgeshire Regiment cap badge. This amazing tribute is a fine memorial to a family that has given so much service, including in the two World Wars. The writer was so impressed that Kev was invited to come along to the Cambridge Branch of the Regimental Association as guest speaker for our annual New Year event at COUTC, Coldhams Lane.

In January he brought along many family-related objects and photographs as well as the scooter, and outlined the histories of Great Grandfather Horace Adams, and Grandfather Percy Francis. Artist, Gary Brown, who created the artwork, also attended and completed the double-act by adding the technical details to the presentation, which was well received.

We had hoped that the scooter would make a further appearance this summer at Ely but as readers are painfully aware, the effects of the Covid19 virus pandemic has led to all sorts of sacrifices, including all plans for our County Association in 2020.

The scooter is finished in Cambridge Blue, and features the vertical black stripe, emulating the cloth battle patch first worn from 1917 by all ranks



(and the basis of the Cambridgeshire regimental tie colours). Emblazoned with the 27 Battle Honours to the front, each side features a tribute to the two very courageous relatives, and on the front mudguard is Kev's own portrait, together with his dates of service (Kev served in Northern Ireland, Germany, Belize and Canada).

A truly impressive project in its own

right, the background stories are worth retelling to this wider audience, as I am sure you will agree:

#### Private Horace Adams

Great-grandfather Horace Adams was born in Histon and lived in Cambridge, enlisting in The Cambridgeshire Regiment in January, 1914. Being a Territorial Regiment their Annual Camp



Above, the tribute to Pte. Horace Adams of 1/1st Cambridgeshire.

was held at Ashridge Park that July, when all companies of the “Cambridgeshires” gathered for intensive training. No sooner had they returned to their civilian lives when war was declared and they were back in uniform and on a war footing.

On 15th February 1915, 1/1st Battalion, The Cambridgeshire Regiment landed at Le Havre, destined for the Western Front. Serving in ‘A’ Company, Pte. Adams was in action in Belgium at St. Elois, their first taste of battle (March 16th), then to Ypres, where the Battalion manned the defence line east of that city at Sanctuary Wood, with German trenches only yards away.

Later in 1915 they moved to France, to Armentieres, and then Festubert; their war experience common to many at that time being one of manning defences for a few days (normally four), a similar spell in close support, then rotated to reserve trenches. Needless to say in all locations they were exposed to artillery, rifle grenades, sniping, and later, gas (the only respite was the occasional night time raid on enemy trenches for which Cambridgeshires gained a fine reputation). The last element of front line service was the move to a place of ‘rest’ – a euphemism for road repairs, digging trenches, and providing manual labour for countless necessary tasks. This doesn’t mean they were out of the danger area for they were continually within German artillery range, as the many graves in remote cemeteries testify today.

Apart from a brief spell out of the line working as the Infantry Demonstration Battalion at the Third Army School at Flixecourt, in August 1916 they were later posted to the Somme sector, where the Allies hoped to break the deadlock of trench warfare. For the Cambridgeshires their moment of taking the war to the enemy would at last come in October, when on the 14th - 15th they earned eternal fame in the celebrated taking of the Schwaben Redoubt, gaining an unprecedented 36 gallantry awards for that one action (Adams’ ‘A’ Company were in the centre of that fight, losing 57 out of Battalion’s



**Horace Adams at home on leave with his family.** *Photo courtesy Kev Francis.*



**The identification bracelet worn by Adams on the Western Front.** *Photo courtesy Kev Francis.*

total of 227 casualties). Weeks’ later 1/1st Cambs were in the thick of again, attacking German defences at nearby St. Pierre-Divion, on 13th November.

1917 saw them back in action in Belgium, this time during the opening phase of the Battle of Passchendaele (‘Third Ypres’) where they sustained severe losses at St. Julien (16 of the 19 officers were killed or wounded, among the total of 312 casualties).

1918 may have been the year of victory but those that witnessed the German Spring Offensive the situation was dire to the extreme. Beginning on the 21st March, the Germans swept some 50 miles into British lines until the situation was restored and eventually



# Regimental Association

reversed. 1/1 Cambridgeshire lost 13 officers and 370 men in just eight days, and their story like many others was one of fighting on all sides, retiring to the next obstacle only to find the enemy there too, then rallying with smaller mixed units to continue the fight until a sense of order was resumed.

Pte. Horace Adams survived all of these actions, and indeed later those at Morlancourt, Bapaume, and Nurlu, but on 18th September, as the Battalion participated in an attack on Bavarian troops that had dug in deep in the ruins of Epehy village, he was killed in a hail of machine gun fire. That battle lasted twelve further days but at a cost - 12 Cambridgeshire officers and 188 soldiers; Pte. Adams being one of the 36 men killed outright.

## Corporal Percy Francis

Born in Cambridge, he volunteered to serve with the Cambridgeshires in April, 1938. The Regiment had expanded two-fold by this time as the threat of war was becoming evident. Serving with the 1st Battalion ('D' Company) he attended Annual Camp in August, 1939, where at Dibgate all 1500 troops of both battalions mustered for the first time. Days' later war was declared against Hitler's Germany and on mobilisation the two battalions were incorporated into the 18th Division. Initially men from the 1st Battalion were assigned to guard various RAF stations such as Duxford, Newmarket, and Stradishall but as the unfit and under 19s were weeded out fresh recruits replaced them and their training began in earnest.

By the summer of 1940, Percy's battalion had moved to Norfolk where they were guarding the coast, the threat of invasion a very real proposition. In November they were moved inland for Company training, and in January, 1941, this was followed by a move to Galashiels, and then to Scotland. Further training intensified, focused on range work in the Midlands, then weapons and tactics activity in both Wales and the Yorkshire moors. From September until 27th October they were quartered at Lichfield Barracks, later setting sail



**Percy Francis and his wife, Irene.** *Photo courtesy Kev Francis .*

from Liverpool for what was believed to the Middle East (Basra), and suitably dressed for desert warfare.

Their convoy docked briefly at Halifax, Nova Scotia, before Trinidad, and then to Capetown (it was here that all learned of the Japanese attacks on Hong Kong, Malaya and the US 6th Fleet's base a Pearl Harbor, as well as the sinking of HMS Repulse and HMS Prince of Wales off Malaya). That stay in South Africa was brief, as they were then shipped to Bombay: - arriving on 29th December before being entrained for Ahmednagar for more training. Three weeks later on 17th January, they again re-embarked on the same troopships, and headed for the Indian Ocean, reaching Singapore on the 29th.

Their convoy had been attacked by air, and by the time they arrived at Keppel Harbour Japanese ground forces had already swept down the entire length of the Malay Peninsula, some 500 miles (the 2nd Battalion had landed earlier on 13th January and had been defending Batu Pahat, a town situated at a critical junction. Outflanked, they were obliged to withdraw to Singapore). The 1st Battalion's arrival could not have been at a worse time; ships were burning in the docks, the area had been

plastered by dive bombers, anti-aircraft guns were firing, buildings were on fire, and the sight and smell of dead littering the ground were equally all bad omens.

Billeted briefly in requisitioned houses in the Katong area, they were deployed south of Seletar airfield on 1st February, located to the north east of the Island. From here they would get a clear view of the Johore Straits where the enemy were believed to be gathering for an imminent attack. This position had been previously held by Indian troops who had been severely battered up country, and to the surprise of 1st Battalion's recce troops, they found that no defensive preparations had been prepared; no wire, no trenches; equally weapons, ammunition and stores littered the area. Throughout that night the Battalion dug in, their firepower being increased by the additional reclaimed firepower now in their hands. Worryingly, large numbers of enemy dive bombers were repeatedly flying overhead, attacking pre-arranged targets with little if any RAF intervention (British bombers had already been evacuated to Sumatra out of range of the enemy, and of the 51 Hurricanes sent out in January there were but a handful left), therefore there was little to stop

them. Now being shelled by Japanese artillery from across the Straits things were becoming very serious.

On the night of the 7th February heavy and continuous artillery fire was coming from the west, and with that 1st Cambridgeshire were moved north to occupy the entire airdrome, the men digging in again, and extending their front to 4000 metres.

The next day on the 8th, a massive landing by the enemy in the west of the Island confirmed Japanese intentions, penetrating deeply and sweeping aside Australian resistance. Orders were received on the 10th to move the Battalion south, taking up positions in the centre of the Island as part of a revised arc of defence west of Singapore town.

Enemy forces were now known

to be working close to Bukit Timah village, to the west, and close to the two highly important reservoirs in the area. Two Cambridgeshire rifle companies were detached on 12th February to secure the over-ground water pipelines that connected Pierce and MacRitchie Reservoirs, the threat of enemy infiltration being very real.

On 12 February some 500 enemy together with some renegade Indian Army troops that had swapped sides were seen bathing in the waters at their leisure. With no sentries posted, they were rudely awakened by seven Cambridgeshire LMGs and several 2-inch mortars. Casualties among the enemy were severe, and the patrols returned unscathed but flushed with success. At this time the remainder of the Battalion had been ordered to take

up battle positions at the large housing complex of the Adam Park Estate, a pivotal position in the western perimeter defences of Singapore. The raiding parties re-joined the next day, adding to that garrison.

Over the next three days the 1st Battalion were caught in the full fury of Japanese attacks, being bombed from the air, facing artillery and mortar strikes, continually sniped, and fighting back infiltration attempts, often hand-to-hand. Singapore was all this time burning bright behind them, with formations of 27 dive bombers passing overhead unmolested with monotonous regularity.

Some neighbouring troops who had neglected to dig in were consequently overrun, and although the situation seemed perilous Adam Park remained in



**A wooden bridge was once built here by prisoners of war at Sonkurai. Of the 1,600 British workforce, 1,200 perished. Author's photo.**



# Regimental Association

Cambridgeshire hands. The men had not slept for a week, the water supply was gone after two days, but the remaining men, many being wounded, stood firm. Even six enemy tanks had been destroyed by Cambridgeshire mortars before they too were put out of action.

On 15th February the order to lay down weapons was passed via Staff Officers whose task it was locate those in the firing line (communications had been erratic to say the least), and with great resentment and incredulous anger, 1st Cambridgeshire finally complied, it being accepted that they were last to obey the instruction.

When the enemy nervously arrived the Officers were separated from the troops, and the men confined into the area of a tennis court where they languished for three days. Once the Japanese had formed a plan of what to do with so many captives, all were marched the 15

miles to the civilian prison in Changi where 60,000 British and Empire troops would be concentrated.

The campaign was a disaster, and, rightly so the men of the 18th Division felt betrayed, their being deployed at a time when they were collectively doomed. For the 16,000 of the Division, the period of action was brief, and for some more than others. A Japanese commander had spoken of the cost to his regiment alone was 500 casualties at Adam Park. Around 600 actually lay outside of the Battalion's positions, and it is suggested that as much as 1,500 were sustained over all.

1st Cambridgeshire lost 47 men killed (17 later died of wounds), 21 were missing, and over 80 wounded.

Later, parties of PoWs would be moved back into Singapore to repair war damage, bury the dead, and supply manual work as the Japanese ordered.

In June 1942, the first of many groups were moved to Thailand to construct huts along the route of a proposed railway, following the Kwai Noi River, and soon thereafter to begin work on the line itself. On the promise of better accommodation and improved food (men were starving in Changi), more groups followed, and over the next 14 months the railway would progress 258 miles across plains, through rock, and cut into deep jungles. It cost the lives of 16,000 prisoners as well as over 100,000 Asians impressed into service.

Percy Francis was moved to Thailand on 25th April, 1943, and slaved for six months before contracting Beri-Beri in one of the more remote work camps, and not far from the end of the railway. In his weakened state he died on 26th October that same year, being buried by friends at Kami Sonkurai, just short of his 27th birthday.

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# Regimental Association

Lincolnshire

Due to the C-19 Virus the Branch has been very limited as to what it has been able to do this year. However, the

Chairman Mr Allan Carlile and Standard Bearer Mr Charlie Long along with member Mr Mike Stewart, who is one

of the Councillors for Great Coates, attended The Great Coates Village 75th Anniversary of VJ Day.





# Regimental Association

Lincolnshire



Chairman Allan Carlile, Standard Bearer Charlie Long and Mike Stewart at Great Coates Village, VJ Day. Along with some of the villagers.



Great Grimsby Branch Standard Bearer Mr Charles Long who has been doing the job for 20 years. He also served in the Territorial Army for 25 years mostly in the 7th Battalion, Royal Anglian Regiment.



Men of the 2nd Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment and 7th Volunteer Battalion Royal Anglian Regiment exercising the Freedom of Grimsby and Cleethorpes in 1985.

## The Steinkjer Memorial



In April this year the Norwegian people erected a statue at Hustad Church to honour those members of the British Forces who fought at Krogs Farm on the 21-22 April 1940.

This was the culmination of many years fundraising and research by the local people who were determined to honour the fallen and to demonstrate their eternal gratitude. Of note is the statue of the soldier erected at Hustad Church, which was modelled on the Spalding veteran Tom Fowler who not



only fought in the first action against German ground forces of WW2 but also took part in D Day.

Tom was honoured in 2016 with the French Légion D' Honneur and in 2019 with a medal from the Norwegian government. Sadly, Tom had passed away before the opening this year but had been able to visit the sites where he fought along with his son in 2010.

The Regiment was invited to attend the unveiling ceremony in April. It was planned that the Spalding Branch



Chairman Ken Willows and his wife Audrey, (long-time friends of Tom and his family) along with representatives of the 2nd Battalion would attend. However, COVID 19 restrictions lead to the regrettable cancellation of this trip. On the 8th November poppy wreaths were laid at the Steinkjer Memorial and at Krogs Farm. The memorial lists the 8 members of the 4th Battalion The Lincolnshire Regiment and 3 members of the KOYLI who died during this action.



# Regimental Association

Lincolnshire

## Memories from recent years

### Branch trip to France and Belgium 2016

Left: Laying the Branch Wreath at the Menin Gate Last Post Ceremony. Michael Venn, Wayne Okopskyj and Pat Kissane.



Below: Guests at the 2019 Christmas Lunch.





Above: Armed Forces Day  
July 2017.

Right: Trip to the Royal  
Hospital Chelsea 2019.  
Wayne Okopskyj in the  
Hospital Chapel with  
Royal Anglian Cushion.





# Regimental Association

Leicestershire

## Green Plaque for Colonel John Cridlan Barrett VC

*Capt Bob Allen*

For several years Leicestershire County Council (LCC) has conducted a scheme to recognise notable individuals, with County connections, by commemorating them with a Green Plaque bearing details of their achievements, to be located in a place of relevance.

The Regiment's submission for such a Plaque to recognise Colonel John Cridlan Barrett VC was approved. In preparation for its unveiling, it had been installed at the old Glen Parva Barracks, on the outer wall adjacent to the original entrance.

Prior to the unveiling and in the presence of the LCC Chairman, Pam Posnett MBE, the Vice Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire, Colonel Murray Colville DL, the Mayor of

Oadby and Wigston, Councillor (Cllr) Lynda Eaton, members of the Royal Tigers' Association, Mr Jonathan Goddard and Colonel (Rtd) Ian Crowe, representing the Leicestershire Hospitals'

Authority, and a group of pupils from the local School. Cllr Louise Richardson, LCC Leader's Representative, spoke of the young Lieutenant Barrett's bravery on 24 September 1918. Captain R J Allen MBE who had nominated Colonel Barrett for the recognition, then read the citation for the award of the Victoria Cross.

Cllr Richardson had also spoken of Colonel Barrett's post-war medical career in Leicestershire; the region represented by the attendance of Mr Jonathan Goddard and Colonel (Rtd) Ian Crowe.

The Plaque was then jointly unveiled by Cllr Richardson and Captain Allen.

Refreshments generously





provided by LCC, were offered at 'The Guard House', by kind permission of Messrs Keith and Chris Brown of Draper Property Ltd. As a token of our appreciation, Captain Allen presented them with a framed photograph of the Terence Cuneo painting depicting Lieutenant Barrett's brave action, the original of which hangs in the Regimental Museum.

Two Green Plaques had previously been awarded to members of the Regiment: on 29 September 2015 at Countesthorpe to honour another winner of the Victoria Cross, Private William Buckingham VC 2nd Bn (GT Autumn 2015); and on 29 August 2019 at Hugglescote to honour the WW1 war poet Lieutenant Arthur Newberry Choyce 9th Bn (GT Autumn 2019).

We are indebted to Leicestershire County Council for the recognition shown by them to past members of The Leicestershire Regiment, and to Karen Wilde for her leading and thoughtful role in the administration of the scheme.





# Regimental Association

Leicestershire

## The Leicestershire Regiment on VE Day - 8 May 1945

*by the Late Colonel Michael Goldschmidt*

As the 75th Anniversary of VE Day approaches, it is apposite to contemplate what the various elements of the Regiment were engaged in at that momentous time, and where. It is equally important to recognise that VE Day only applied to 'Victory in Europe'.

In the Far East, Allied Forces (including two Leicestershire Battalions and a number of its individuals) remained at war against the Imperial Japanese Forces (IJF) for a further three months until Victory over Japan on 15 Aug 1945: VJ Day. This article also includes some details of gallantry decorations awarded to members of the Regiment's units which were gazetted in the Spring of 1945.

In 1945, of its active units the Regiment comprised the Depot and seven other units. That number excludes the 6th and 7th Battalions which had ceased to exist on 13 Oct 1941 and 31 Dec 1944 respectively, and the Home Defence battalions which had been 'stood down' on 3 Dec 1944.

The original 1st Battalion had fought in Malaya from early Dec 1941, on 20 Dec had amalgamated with 2nd Bn The East Surrey Regiment to form The British Battalion (TBB), and its survivors became prisoners of war in Singapore on 15 Feb 1942. It earned for the Regiment the Battle Honours Malaya 1941-42\* and Kampar 1-3 Jan 1942 [Note that those with astericks \*, here and below, are borne on the Queen's Colour, along with ten from the First World War]. Three years later, on 8 May 1945 men of 1st Bn/TBB remained POWs and were viciously employed by the IJF on various challenging tasks in Singapore, Malaya, Thailand and further East.

As a consequence of 1st Bn effectively ceasing to exist as a fighting unit in Feb 1942 and in order to resuscitate its name

in the Army's fighting Order of Battle, on 29 May 1942 8th Bn, which itself had been formed from 50th Holding Bn on 2 Jun 1940, was renamed 1st Bn. This new 1st Battalion had entered France on 4 Jul 1944, had fought through France, Belgium and into The Netherlands, earning for the Regiment the Battle Honours North-West Europe 1944-45\*, Sheldt\* 21 Oct 1944, Antwerp/Tournout Canal 24-29 Sep 1944, and Zetten 18-20 Jan 1945.

On 7 May 1945 1st Bn moved off from Lunteren and prepared itself for peace-time soldiering. On 8 May organized trips were laid on to take troops to Nijmegen, where many looked up old Dutch friends, who were overjoyed. The Bn moved off again on 9 May, northwest through villages lined with cheering crowds, and 20 miles later finally arrived at Hilversum. "The scene on arrival was fantastic and unforgettable. At the entrance to the town the roads were lined with the remnants of the Germans whom the Bn had been up against in Holland. A more motley crowd would be difficult to imagine.

Some were sullen and others arrogant and typical Huns. It seemed strange indeed to see so many Jerries without having to put up a scrap! Their transport consisted mainly of horse-drawn vehicles, and the whole outfit wore a dilapidated look against ours, which had been brought up to scratch. On our arrival in the town we were literally mobbed by an almost delirious people.

Very quickly their hospitality was in evidence and in a short time the Battalion were all comfortably housed once more. But now we saw the worst privation and suffering we had yet encountered. Jerry had robbed them of almost everything and they were starving.

Apart from what they could

scrounge, almost all they had was one small loaf per week. It can be imagined how they clamoured for food. Hardened as we were by battle, this was too much, and to the credit of the Battalion the Dutch came in for a share of our rations. Support Company gathered in all surplus food, and in the evening served supper as far as it would go. The enemy were now being rounded up and sent to a concentration area, where they surrendered their arms and were searched, to the delight of the civilians.

In the happy circumstances tragedy now overtook the Battalion. As the Germans came on the field in the concentration area, they first of all dumped their arms and then came to us for final searching. We had orders to make Jerry do all the work and we ourselves not to touch a thing. As a number of them were the paratroops who had been up against us at Zetten and belonged to the Herman Goering outfit, we carried out our orders with great relish.

Then suddenly the dump of arms exploded and when we had got over the shock, our men, who were drawn from all companies, dashed to the blaze and worked heroically to extricate the injured. Finally it was found that thirteen of our men (all from Support Company) had been killed and eight wounded. A number of Germans were also killed." The 75th anniversary of this tragedy will be commemorated by the citizens of Hilversum on 10 May 2020.

2nd Battalion's war had started while on an unaccompanied tour in Palestine from Autumn 1938. It had fought in Egypt and Libya, Crete, Palestine, Syria, and (after a year recuperating in Ceylon and training in India) in Burma as part of the Chindit Force. Along the way it had earned for the Regiment the Battle Honours North Africa 1940-41\*,



Sidi Barrani\* 8-10 Dec 1940 , Crete\* 20 May-1 Jun 1941, Heraklion 20-29 May 1941, Syria 7 Jun-12 Jul 1941, Jebel Mazar 10-12 Jul 1941, Tobruk 1941, and Chindits\* 1944. At the end of its Chindit escapades in May 1944 2nd Bn had been withdrawn to India to recuperate, be reinforced and retrain. 7th Bn, which had been disease-ravaged and decimated in the same Chindit operations, was amalgamated with 2nd Bn on the former's disbandment on 31 Dec 1944. By March 1945 it was obvious that long-range penetration operations would no longer be required. On 8 May 1945 2nd Bn was en route from Shargarh in the Central Provinces to Poona (modern day Pune). By late May its training was about to begin for amphibious operations against the Japanese Army on the Malayan littoral – which was never required.

On 8 May 1945 1/5th Battalion was at Wrotham in Kent. It had fought gallantly in the ill-fated Norwegian campaign in Northern Norway in April/May 1940, earning for the Regiment the Battle Honour 'Norway 1940-41' [On 18 April 2020 in a special ceremony the Norwegian Defence Forces are commemorating the 80th anniversary of this campaign]. 1/5th Bn re-formed in Scotland in mid-1940 and trained in Northern Ireland in 1941. In mid-1942 it was posted to Wrotham in Kent for the next four years until March 1946. There it was employed running 'C' Wing of 148th Pre-OCTU training establishment, a unit which during that whole period trained over 25,000 OCTU candidates for All Arms, except the Royal Armoured Corps, Anti-Aircraft Artillery and Pay Corps.

The warfighting of 2/5th Battalion had begun in France in 1940, and that phase ended on 29 May with withdrawal through Dunkirk – eighty years ago. It was next on active service from Jan 1943 through Algeria, into Tunisia, and Italy. Feb-Jun 1944 was spent retraining in Syria and Palestine, back to Italy in

Jul, thence in Dec 1944 to Greece, and in Apr 1945 it returned to Italy. On 8 May 1945 it was stationed at Forli (25 miles SW of Ravenna on Italy's NE Coastline) awaiting a call forward to the front line, a call which mercifully never came. In the Bn's two years in the Mediterranean Theatre it earned for the Regiment the Battle Honours North Africa\* 1943, Montaigne Farm 28 Feb-2 Mar 1943, Italy 1943-45\*, Salerno\* 9-13 Sep 1943, Calabritto 2-6 Dec 1943, Gothic Line 25 Aug-22 Sep 1944, Monte Gridolfo 30 Aug-2 Sep 1944, and Monte Colombo (Romini Line) 14 Sep 1944.

4th Battalion – a TA unit formed in the City of Leicester and recruiting from that area – in 1936 had become 44th (The Leicestershire Regiment) Anti-Aircraft Battalion Royal Engineers (TA), equipped with searchlights. In 1940 it retitled and rebadged to 44th Searchlight Regiment Royal Artillery (RA), and in 1942 it changed its role and title to 121st Light Anti-Aircraft (LAA) Regiment RA, equipped with Bofors guns. In June 1944 it landed in Normandy on D+19, supporting 8th Corps in the battles through France, Belgium, The Netherlands and Germany. On 8 May 1945 it was at Lübeck on the Baltic Sea. (Footnote 1)

50th Holding Battalion was established at Hinckley in 1940 to administer members of the Regiment who had been trained and mobilised, were recovering from injury, or otherwise awaiting posting. Specifically it enabled All Ranks coming home or at home to join a unit of the Regiment and not be sent off to be 'held' by other Regiments. In Jun 1940 it massively supplied 8th Bn on its formation in June 1940. Thereafter it continued in its role, later being renamed 22nd Holding Battalion and moving to Moreton Paddocks, near Leamington, where it was on 8 May 1945.

From August 1941 the erstwhile Glen Parva Barracks in South Wigston had been taken over by the Auxiliary

Transport Service – the women's branch of the British Army. However, a small Depot The Leicestershire Regiment was maintained there to guard The Leicesters' regimental interests (and house the Regimental Band), and so it continued there through to VE Day, and beyond.

During the seven-week period 1 ar-10 May 1945, 69 gallantry awards were gazetted for men serving in units of the Regiment or Extra-Regimentally-Employed (ERE): fours DSOs, one MBE, 16 MCs, six DCMs, ten MMs, and 33 Mentions in Despatches. The vast majority of these covered 1st Bn in Belgium and The Netherlands, 2nd and 7th Bns in Burma, and 2/5th Bn in Italy and Greece.

Many other awards for service in the war preceded these (the first was gazetted on 11 Jul 1940) and many more were to follow (the last – for men of the old 1st Bn in the Far East – being gazetted on 12 Sep 1946). All can be found listed on the Regimental website, and citations where available are included in individuals' web pages.

In recognition that a battalion of the Regiment had fought with distinction in every major theatre of the war, in November 1946 HM King George VI paid the Regiment the great honour of making it a Royal Regiment.

In 1946 this LAA Regiment was placed in suspended animation and, on the re-formation of the TA in 1947, was reconstituted as 579th (The Royal Leicestershire Regiment) LAA Regiment RA (TA). In 1955 that unit was reconstituted as 'Q' (The Royal Leicestershire Regiment) LAA Battery (TA), part of 438th LAA Regiment RA (TA). In 1961 'Q' Battery joined 5th Bn The Royal Leicestershire Regiment (TA), forming the retitled 4/5th Bn The Royal Leicestershire Regiment (TA), thus completing a full circle.



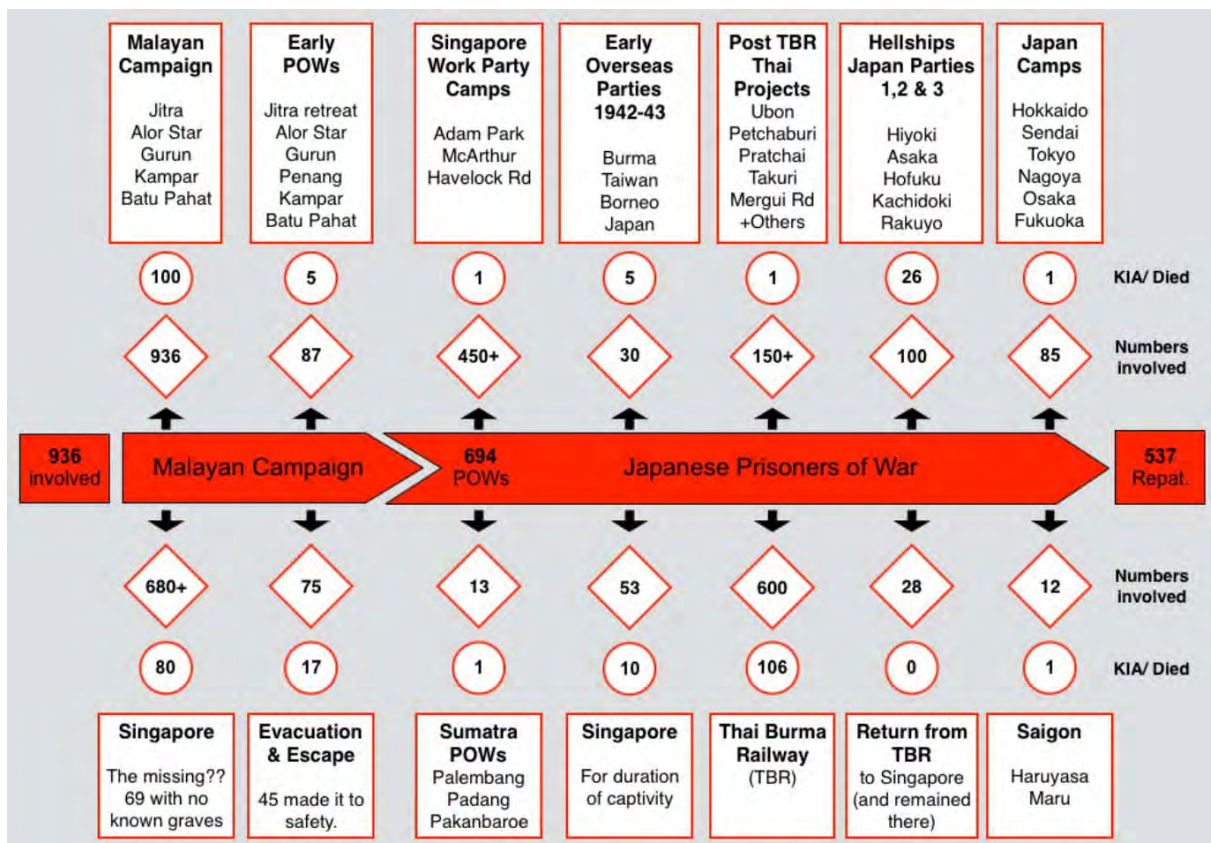
# Regimental Association



## The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of WWII In memory of the men of the 1<sup>st</sup> Btn Leicestershire Regiment By Ken Hewitt

On 15<sup>th</sup> August 2020 the nation commemorated VJ Day which marks the official surrender of the Japanese Imperial Army and the end of WWII.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion Leicestershire Regiment fought in the Malaya Campaign and most of the men became prisoners of war with the fall of Singapore in February 1942. My father, C/Sgt John (Jerry) Hewitt, (right) was one of them. After 3½ years of captivity he was in Thailand when he learnt of his freedom on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1945 - his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was one of the fortunate to return home, but many did not. Following my research into his military career I developed an interest in the fate and movements of all of the 1<sup>st</sup> Btn men during this period and my book detailing the results of my research and the movements of these men during captivity is nearing completion. In the meantime, to commemorate VJDay75, I summarise below the Malaya Campaign and Captivity (Dec 1941- Aug 1945) in numbers.





### **The Post 1945 Service, Towcester Road 2020**

*Mr Richard York, Branch Chairman*

A small number of socially distanced veterans attended this Remembrance Service now in its ninth year. The RBL Northampton Branch had wanted for some time to collate the names of those from the county who had died in service. It is a small annual service for families, friends and comrades held at the quiet Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Towcester Road Cemetery in Northampton.

Aside from a few names they were aware of, there was no central database that held all of the names and despite the RBL Branch having tried a number of appeals in the local press and media, this met with little success.

However, this changed following the unveiling of the National Armed Forces

Memorial by Her Majesty the Queen in 2007, and the RBL wrote to the Trustees asking for a list of those registered as having Northampton as their place of birth or town of residence.

In 2013, the new Post 45 memorial plaque listing 23 names from the Borough of Northampton was unveiled at Abington Square to stand alongside those who had died during the two World Wars. They were able to add the missing names to the Korean War Memorial, which was rededicated in the presence of South Korean dignitaries.

Since the inception of the Remembrance Service members of the Northampton Branch of the Association have played a key role by enthusiastically

attending the event and despite the challenging times attended once again this year.

The Branch Vice-Chairman (Joe Heffernan) had the honour of reading a few of the 140 names including the many Royal Anglians from Northamptonshire who were lost on Operations or to terrorism since 1945.

We remembered those from Palestine, Egypt, Cyprus, Korea, Borneo, Malaya, Aden, Oman, Northern Ireland, The Falklands, Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan, UK and Germany.

A wreath was also laid by the Branch in remembrance of all the Regiment's fallen Post 1945.

**We Will Remember Them.**



**The Post 1945 Remembrance Service at Towcester Road CWGC Cemetery.**



# Regimental Association

Northamptonshire

## VE-DAY 75

### A Special Day of Celebration in Northampton

*Joe Heffernan*

I contacted a 99-year-old World War II veteran friend of mine, Harold Guant, who served in the Western Front Campaign.

The Government had recommended that due to the Covid-19 crisis the Country should " Raise a Glass " at 3pm on VE Day marking the 75th Anniversary. I asked Harold if he would like my son and myself to visit him, to stand outside his house with the Royal Anglian Regiment Association Standard, and to raise a glass to him and all his comrades. Naturally, Harold was delighted.

Harold mentioned this plan to the Warden in the complex where he lives, and it snowballed from there. The complex has a beautiful oval lawn and the Warden's husband carefully measured out the 2-metre distance for tables and chairs for the residents to be safe.

At the appointed hour I raised the Standard and we marked the moment with a 2 minutes silence. One of the



**The VE-Day 75 celebration.**

residents is a vicar so he conducted a short service. The Warden had arranged a DJ, who played the Last Post. We gave

3 cheers for the Queen followed by a few glasses of wine and a sing song. Dame Vera had pride of place.

All in all it was a very enjoyable and unexpected few hours for the 20 people involved. Harold is now hanging on for Remembrance Sunday. He will be celebrating his 100th birthday on the 15th of November 2020. It is only right that he should hold pride of place, with others of his era, to lay wreaths on the day at the local war memorial.

In collaboration with one of the Royal British Legion branches, Duston, Northampton, I have arranged for Harold to do this duty. He will be driven in style in a WWII ambulance to St Luke's church, where he will meet up with the other three war veterans to lay the wreaths.

Unfortunately, due to Covid 19 restrictions none of them will be able to recount their war stories and memories to very many people. We will all be missing out on a piece of first-hand history. Fortunately, however the local press will be attending to record the event.



**Harold Guant RAOC with our own Joe Heffernan.**

## Meeting the Duchess of Sussex at the Opening of the Field of Remembrance

Pat (Satch) Parker

Over the last five years I (accompanied by my wife) have been privileged to attend the opening of the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey. The last occasion was 7 November 2019 when I was asked to be the Plot Holder for the Northamptonshire Regiment Plot. (My father had served in the Regiment in the Second World War). I myself served as a Poacher from 1962 to 1975.

The Garden is always officially opened by a member of the Royal Family, The Duke of Edinburgh accompanied by Prince Harry until the Duke retired from public duties, then Prince Harry alone. Last year as Duke of Sussex he was accompanied by his wife, Meghan. After a brief 'hello' from Prince Harry I was greeted by the Duchess of Sussex who stopped to say a few words. I responded to her greeting and then asked if she would let the wives standing behind the



Pat Parker with the Duchess of Sussex.

plot have a photo, she agreed and posed for several photos with me, and a wave to the wives. We passed a few remarks and she continued along the remaining plots. She was utterly charming, and quite radiant. After the ceremony veterans from all our former Regiments who attended the event retired to the Farmers Club where we enjoyed refreshments and much reminiscing.

*Afternote by the Area 2 Regimental Secretary: Sadly, this year's Ceremony was considerably scaled back as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions, therefore, no veterans were able to attend. This year the ten former Regimental plots of our forebear regiments were combined into a single large Royal Anglian Plot, with each antecedent regiment represented by its own Badge Cross bearing the regimental insignia.*



### Can we help you?

The Royal British Legion provides financial, social and emotional support to millions who have served or are currently serving in the Armed Forces, and their dependants.

We offer a range of welfare services, including: independent pensions and compensation advice and representation; assistance with claiming state benefits; advice about re-training and employment.

Contact us for more information:  
Visit [www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)  
or call Legionline: 08457 725 725





# Regimental Association

## Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire

*Basil Hirniak (Branch Secretary)*

This year, if indeed we have had a year, has been the most challenging for most of our lives outside of a military theatre.

The Bedford Branch committee was elected in March 2020 and since that election, it has not been able to meet together since.

The venue for our meetings is the Keep in Kempston near Bedford and it is owned by the Provincial Grand Lodge of Bedfordshire who also operate from within the building.

Freemasonry activity has been 'closed' due to the Pandemic which meant that our Branch had to also be 'closed' due to this and the government restrictions.

I usually have many photographs and reports to share with the readers of this journal but alas, no trips, no lunches and no gatherings means that my report is an empty basket of wishful thinking.

The Bedfordshire Branch has a very strong link with D (Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire) Company, 2 Royal Anglian and as Secretary, I reached out and received the following report from Major Sam Thomas, OC D Company, who kindly provided me with something tangible to include in the Bedford Branch Report.

D (Beds and Herts) Company is amidst the turmoil of pre-deployment training for Poland in March 2021 and frantic does not cover it. However, earlier this year the Company was at the forefront of the incredible national effort to increase COVID-19 testing and edge it towards the well published threshold of 100,000 tests per day. As presented by the CDS, the Army is supporting this effort through the deployment of Mobile Testing Units (MTUs). The training for these units has been conceived and delivered by eight of our young Cpl's from across Recce, Snipers and Anti-Tank Pls, and this team has now trained over thirty such MTUs. Five of these small twelve-man units are D Company's own, and all five have now deployed across the East of England, from Harwich in Essex, to Skegness in Lincolnshire and all the way down to Watford in Hertfordshire. This weekend we shall also be delivering testing in Leicester at the King Power Stadium, so as you can see it is a truly regional deployment that is keeping the CSM and CQMS fully employed.

You may well have seen the Hertfordshire Press coverage, where a MTU from the Anti-Tank Platoon have been doing hundreds of tests a

day in Hemel Hempstead, Watford and Stevenage. In addition, the rest of the Anti-Tank Pl and a team from Recce have been working hard to deliver similar numbers in Boston and Skegness, despite the depressing change in the weather. With a second team from Recce Pl now in Harwich and the Signals Pl's manned MTU off to Leicester tomorrow, the Company is likely to soon be administering up to 1000 tests per day, which feels like something to be proud of.

While this is not a war of national survival as previous generations have had to endure, and to which I am sure many of your members will be able to testify. It is with a certain degree of pride that I watch the soldiers of D (Bedfordshire and Herefordshire) Company jump at the chance to get out amongst this latest threat to our nation and fight it head on.

The men of D (Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire) Company send their regards and we hope all of you are faring well.

Finally, we are very proud of our own Cpl Hemmings of D (Beds and Herts) Company who was recently awarded the MBE for his leadership and dedication during the COVID-19 response during Op RESCRIPT.

## Commemoration Service VJ-DAY 75

*Honorary Chaplain for the Royal Anglian Regiment, the Rev Stephen Smith*

In Bedford an extensive programme of events had been planned to mark VJ Day 75 on 15th of August. This was particularly so in and around Elstow Abbey Church and would have included a drumhead service on the green, outside entertainments in the afternoon and a military concert in the evening. Sadly, due to Covid-19, the commemorative events could not go ahead as planned.

From its foundation in 1058 the Abbey Church has a long and varied history and the village is perhaps best known as the birth place of John Bunyan, writer of "Pilgrims' Progress" in 1628 where he is recorded as being baptised.

In more recent times the Vicar of Elstow, from 1953 to 1976, was one



Canon Peter Hartley. As Sergeant Hartley of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment, he was caught by the Japanese in a sampan in 1941 escaping from Singapore towards Sumatra and was interned for three and a half years. Experiences he retold in a book "Escape to Captivity".

Peter took holy orders after the war and, following a curacy, came to Elstow to replace his father as Vicar. He turned the south chapel into a FEPOW Chapel (Far East Prisoners of War Association). Under the great Bunyan window is the altar dedicated to the Far East Prisoners of War.

The dedication reads: "In memory of those who died in prison camps in the Far East 1941-1945 and in thanksgiving for those who returned...".

To the left, we read: "My marks and scars I carry with me to be a witness for me that I have fought his battle who now will be my rewarder".

To the right, we read: "*So he passed over and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side.*"

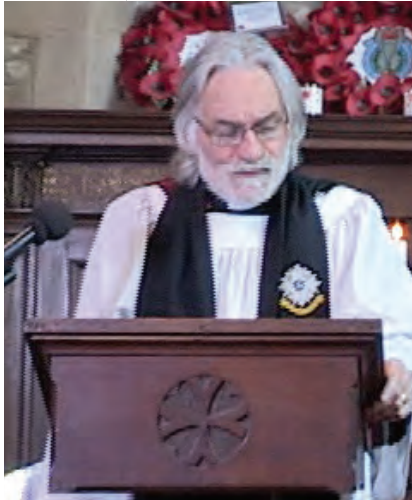
Members of our association attend an annual service in their memory. It was therefore very appropriate that HM Lord- Lieutenant of Bedfordshire, Helen Nellis should use it as the venue for her virtual commemoration of the 75th Anniversary.





# Regimental Association

## Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire



**The Rev Stephen Smith,**

The Lord-Lieutenant's introduction to the service concluded with the words: "Let us dedicate ourselves anew to the pursuit of fair and just societies where all have the opportunity to flourish and prosper."

Father Paul Messam, the vicar of Elstow, who designed the liturgy then

gave further insight into the history of the chapel. Bible readings were to follow read by Private Joseph Lionetti of 158 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps and Isbell Ashmead of COFEPOW (Child Of a Far East Prisoner Of War).

In his sermon, Rt. Revd. Richard Atkinson the Bishop of Bedford, identified through three individuals, ways in which we may respond to the horror of what happened. "Firstly, in sorrow for lives lost and damaged. In thankfulness for the lives of those who served and brought peace, and in gratitude for lives centred on the love of God and the ministry of reconciliation to which we are all called. Only then will all things be made new."

Prayers were said, including a collect from Susan Lousada, the High Sheriff of Bedford, and a final blessing from the Bishop. The 25-minute service was filmed alongside archive footage of the time. The last hymn "He who would valiant be", known by many as "the Bedford hymn" was of course written by



John Bunyan himself.

It was indeed an honour to have taken part in this historic occasion, as well as witnessing the process of filming and watching the final result, which can still be found on Elstow Abbey's Youtube site...[www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3Ps4-WnnUA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3Ps4-WnnUA)







Terry Waite, the former Church envoy who was held captive in the Lebanon 1987-1991, visited Bedfordshire.



# Regimental Association

## The Regimental Association : Subscription rate changes - and how to become a member

A review of the Regimental Association was conducted last year, discussed at the County Colonel's meeting and Regimental Council.

Amendments to the current subscription rates were agreed, having not changed for many years. Many older veterans will remember the Blue Card, which gave lifetime membership, this still stands, all veterans are entitled to benevolence, whether they are in the Association or not, This has always been the case.

The cost of laying on events, all of which are free at the point of entry,

producing the *Castle* Regimental Journal, running the website and providing benevolence is expensive and increasing. The new subscription rates to be applied are

- Retired Officers - £25 per annum.
- Retired Other Ranks - £20 per annum

If you already have a standing order set up you are asked to amend it to the new rate applicable and make it payable on the 1st June annually .

The form gives full details of membership benefits and provided

service history. All information is held with data protection rules and will not be divulged to a third party.

New members and existing members are requested to complete the form and post it to RHQ, or send a scanned copy to: INFHQ-QUEENS-RANG-groupmailbox@mod.gov.uk

If easier an electronic copy can be requested via the same email address.

By being a full member of the Association, you are helping to support all events and assisting those veterans who find themselves in need of assistance.

### Subscription to the Regimental Association (Updated 13 July 2020)

All retired members of the Regiment are encouraged to become subscribing members of the Regimental Association. The cost of subscription is:

- Officers - £25
- Soldiers - £20

Benefits in doing so are:

Benefits	Officers	Soldiers	Remarks
An association Membership Card	☺	☺	Entry to all Regt Events.
Copy of the Castle Magazine	☺	☺	Posted to your home. (optional)
Receive Monthly Newsletter.	☺	☺	By email. (Optional)
Receive Regimental Bulletins	☺	☺	By email. (Optional)
Small donation to Benevolence	☺	☺	
Membership of the Officers Club	☺		

#### Regimental Association

I wish to subscribe to the Regimental Association with all benefits above. In doing so you agree to your information being held, which will not be passed on to a third party without your permission, and will only be used for Regimental matters. Please:

- Complete and return the membership information form to Joanna Laidlaw at the above address or email to: [INFHQ-QUEENS-RANG-groupmailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:INFHQ-QUEENS-RANG-groupmailbox@mod.gov.uk)
- Please instruct your bank to provide a Standing Order for the required amount payable on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of next month and thereon each year after. **On receipt of your first payment your association card will be dispatched.**

Association Bank details: Name: Royal Anglian Regiment Association  
Code: 20 16 12.

Bank: Barclays. Account No: 30657336. Sort

Please use the Reference as follows: Last four of Regt No, Surname, ints., (i.e. 1234 Bonnalack KR)

**Regimental Bulletins.** Gives information on Regimental matters, announcements, newsletters, notification of deaths, job opportunities and significant Regimental business.

I wish to receive Regimental Bulletins by email.

Yes / No

I wish to receive Castle Magazine by post.

Yes / No

Please treat as a Gift Aid donations all qualifying gifts of money made today, in the past 4 years and in the future I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim will reclaim 25p of tax on every £.

Yes / No





# Obituaries

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## Deaths

*Regimental Headquarters have been notified of the passing of the following members of the Regimental Family since the last edition.*

Major Malcolm Dawe	on 27 December 2019
Clive Rook	on 30 December 2019
Bernard Whitwell	on 4 January 2020
Charlie Shropshire	on 4 January 2020
Wally Rookes	on 4 January 2020
Lieutenant Colonel the Reverend Tom Hiney MC	on 16 January 2020
Captain Nicholas R Ayton	on 29 January 2020
Andrew Devine (McGowan)	January 2020
Michael Lawton	on 14 February 2020
Peter Denny	on 29 February 2020
Michael E G Welsford	on 2 Apr 2020
James (Bomber) Brown	on 4 April 2020
Raymond (Waff) Yates	on 8 April 2020
Major James Milward MBE	on 10 April 2020
Colonel Michael Goldschimdt	on 22 April 2020
Major Adrian Gilmore MC	on 3 May 2020
Frank Thompson	on 9 May 2020
Alec Larham	on 28 May 2020
Thomas Wysocki	on 1 June 2020
Henry Hilliary	on 25 June 2020
Matthew Lodge	on 25 June 2020
Derek Hocking	on 16 August 2020
Captain Henry Lucas	on 27 August 2020
Denis Haslam	on 20 September 2020
David Gridley BEM	on 6 October 2020
Tom Day	on 11 October 2020
Lieutenant Colonel David Greenfield MBE	on 26 October 2020
Russell Hadaway	on 7 November 2020
Graham Smith	on 9 November 2020
Leonard Oliver	December 2020
Reverend Canon Peter Moseley	on 30 December 2020
Major Dennis (Taff) Pryce	on 05 January 2021
Colonel Mark Adkin	on 06 January 2021
Kenneth Clarke	on 06 January 2021

## Eric Sharpe



Eric joined the Army aged 18 and served with the Sherwood Foresters in the Suez Canal Zone at Camp Tel-el-Kebir in 1952/53. Anecdotally, he was reported to have spent time on duty in neighbouring Libya where he helped organise a local Scout Group for boys. He never received his GSM until years later when to his complete surprise he was awarded it by the Lady Lord Lieutenant for Lincolnshire, Mrs. Bridget Cracroft-Eley during a Cadet exercise at Longmoor.

On leaving the regular Army, Eric joined the 4/6th Royal Lincolnshire Regiment Territorial Army, later becoming a Warrant Officer in the Royal Anglian Regiment (TA). Eric's civilian employment was as a Civil Servant Administrative Officer working with the MOD. Always a good administrator, he became Chief Clerk in what was then the Lincolnshire County Territorial Army HQ in Stonefield House, Lincoln.



**Eric's medals will be displayed in the Regimental Museum.**

He also served in the TA Parachute Regiment qualifying for his Red Beret and Parachute Wings. It was while still in the TA he attended his first Army Cadet Force (ACF) camp at Ripon in 1965. In June 1968 he enrolled into Lincolnshire ACF rising through the ranks of Adult Instructor. In keeping with his First Aid interest, he attended the inaugural First Aid Instructors course at the ACF HQ at Frimley Park in 1978. He was promoted to Regimental Sergeant Major Instructor in 1983, a post he filled till January 1987. Over many years he was involved in the planning and organising of Spring and Autumn Camps in Wales, in North and East Yorkshire.

In 1984 he was appointed County First Aid Training Officer and in 1987 he became the County Public Relations Officer (PRO), but still maintained his commitment to the county's First Aid training. Eric was perhaps the most diligent of PROs in engaging with local media, in print and radio. Indeed, such was his dedication to publicising the ACF there was almost always a weekly article or diary entry concerning the ACF's activities in the Lincolnshire Echo newspaper. After many years dedicated service Eric was awarded a second bar to his Army Cadet Force Medal.

Eric was one of those rare people who commit themselves almost totally to the service of others. His dedication to the Army Cadet Force was exemplary in his selfless efforts to give young adults the absolute best in training and education during their time in the Cadet Force. Thousands of cadets, as well as Adult Instructors and Officers, will remember him with deep affection for his sound advice, guidance and his steadying paternal influence which makes the Cadet Force the success it is. Indeed, it was his family.

Eric was a very private man to the end, so it was a great surprise for the executors of his will to discover that he had left over £400,000 to various charities, including an immensely generous legacy to the Royal Anglian Regimental Museum. Colonel Nick Kelsey, who was himself a cadet under Eric's supervision, with his fellow museum trustees will design a suitable memorial to Eric, whose hard-won medals will also go on display.

## Lieutenant Colonel the Rev Tom Hiney MC



Army chaplain with a cool head and a notable smile who won an MC in Congo and let off an explosive at Darlington station

When Tom Hiney was born in a Dublin Catholic orphanage one of the nuns described him as: "A little Napoleon; yet always with a wonderful smile." She spoke prophetically because Hiney grew up to be a resourceful soldier and a popular army chaplain.

Unusually for a future man of the cloth, he also appeared twice in a court of law: once for causing an explosion at Darlington railway station and a second time for breaking and entering.

Far more significant, however, was his Military Cross. He won it in 1961 while serving in Congo during one of the most distressing insurrections since the Second World War.

In the early 1960s the murder, rape and pillage that marked the civil war in the former Belgian Congo shocked a generation. Hastily granted independence with only superficial preparation by the Belgian government, the rule of law had collapsed in the



# Obituaries

country. A quickly assembled UN force was mandated to safeguard civilians of all nationalities and to restore order. The blue berets, alas, could not ensure protection. An early and unwisely small UN patrol was ambushed and shot or bludgeoned to death, leaving only three survivors.

The British army was not involved directly, but two West African brigades of infantry contributing to the UN force contained seconded British officers, including Hiney, then an acting captain in the Royal Leicestershire Regiment. He was sent to the central Kasai province, where areas had fallen under control of the Armée Nationale Congolaise (ANC), which was in revolt and trying to seize political power.

A company from his regiment had been sent to Port Francqui (now Ilebo) 215 miles to the northwest to rescue a group of Swedish UN officers abducted by ANC rebels, but the company's two British officers had been tricked while negotiating and taken prisoner. Hiney was instructed to form a composite rifle company from his technicians and administrators and rescue the officers and the Swedes. His small convoy was ambushed some 50 miles short of Port Francqui on a narrow stretch of road surrounded by thick undergrowth.

He quickly got his men out of their trucks and returned the rebels' fire, but the usual tactic of defeating an ambush, by circling behind it and attacking from the rear, was impossible due to the density of the bush. Shouting encouragement and orders to his men, Hiney systematically rolled up the ambush from south to north, killing or routing each pocket of rebels in turn, until only a Bren gun position at a roadblock across the road continued to fire. Accompanied by his orderly, Hiney crawled forward and silenced it with a couple of hand grenades. With the roadblocks now cleared, the convoy moved on to reach Port Francqui, only to discover that the two British officers and all but one of the Swedes had been shot by the rebels.

Thomas Bernard Felix Hiney was born in 1935 and adopted two years later by Lieutenant-Colonel Felix Hiney

and his sister Margaret. Growing up he was told that his mother had died and learnt of his adoption only during a rare but heated argument with his adoptive father when he was 18. He was educated at Ratcliffe College near Leicester and Sandhurst, from where he was commissioned in 1956.

Initially stationed at Darlington, his high spirits led to him planning to throw a thunderflash among his fellow subalterns gathered on a detachment at the railway station. After igniting the fuse he was unable to open the carriage window and so threw the grenade into the nearby lavatory. The explosion blew off the door and wrecked the facilities. He was charged with causing an explosion in a public place and fined £40 (about £1,000 in today's money). He would have been court-martialled as well, had the army district commander not had a sturdy sense of humour.

More seriously, after joining the 1st Leicesters in Cyprus engaged in fighting the EOKA (Greek Cypriot nationalist) terrorist campaign, he was charged with forcing entry into a Greek Orthodox monastery. He and his platoon had been searching for an EOKA arms cache but the expertise of a London barrister was required to have the maliciously drawn charge dismissed.

He subsequently served with his regiment in Germany and Hong Kong before secondment to the Sultan of Oman's armed forces in 1964. Before long an attack of jaundice brought about his medical evacuation. Command of a company with his regiment in Libya and Malta followed before he left the army at the age of 32 in 1967 and embarked on training for the Anglican priesthood at Ridley Hall and Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. He was ordained in 1970 and served his curacy at Edgbaston before returning to the army as a chaplain.

Friends were surprised that he chose the Anglican priesthood. His explanation was that, after visiting a fellow Royal Leicester officer and his family in their married quarters, he wished to marry and have a family of his own. This was borne out when he married Muriel Vowles, whom he had met at a church function in 1969. She survives him along with

their two sons: Thomas, who followed his father into the Anglican priesthood but is preparing to attend a seminar in Rome for his conversion to Catholicism; and Robin, who is the administrator of a home for sufferers of dementia. A daughter, Louise, predeceased him.

Hiney's army chaplaincy gave him immense pleasure and eventually he became chaplain of the Royal Hospital Chelsea from 1991 to 2001. It is not known how many of the pensioners he encountered there were aware of his colourful past.

Thomas Hiney, MC, soldier and army chaplain, was born on December 12, 1935. He died after a stroke on January 16, 2020, aged 84

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## Peter William Denny



Ex Warrant Officer Class 2 Peter William Denny passed away in hospital on the 29th May 2020 after a brave fight against cancer.

Peter William Denny was born in Southwold Suffolk on the 19th May 1947. Pete was the youngest of three brothers and they all served with the Regiment and their service covered nearly 150 years of service to the Regiment, Queen and country. Following in his brothers footsteps Peter enlisted in Ipswich on the 7th August 1962 and started his career as a Junior Leader in Oswestry. During his time at the Junior Leaders he was selected for the Shooting Team and thus began a long and distinguished shooting

career.

On completion of his Junior Leader service and after training he joined C Company of the 1st Bn The Royal Anglian Regiment in Aden on an operational tour. On completion of that tour Pete moved with the Vikings to Celle in West Germany where they become a mechanised Infantry unit.

In 1966 Pete applied for Parachute training and was seconded to The 1st Bn Parachute Regiment until returning to the Vikings in 1969. During his time with 1 Para he completed another operational tour when his unit were posted to Aden to cover the withdrawal. During his time with 1 Para Pete was selected for their shooting team and gained valuable Bisley experience. This proved to be a bonus when he re-joined the Vikings as their team was very much in the fledgling stage and Pete's knowledge and experience provided a benchmark for us to work on.

The Vikings were stationed in Catterick when Pete re-joined them and he joined Support Company with the Anti-Tank Platoon. In early 1970 the Battalion were deployed to Londonderry for a 2 year Operational tour and Pete went with them.

During the NI Tour the Battalion Shooting Team competed in the Northern Ireland Meeting which provided some interesting competition between us and 1 Para. The Vikings won the Rifle match and gained considerable experience at shooting in the rain!

Following on from NI the Vikings were posted to Cyprus for 2 years, the unit was split between Episcopa and Dhekelia, with Support Company securing the Dhekelia end of the Island. A sunshine reward after NI one could think, however training in Sharjah and Kenya kept us from getting bored. Sport was a big part of life in Cyprus and Pete was very much a team player; it didn't matter if it was football or darts and many other games in between he always gave his best effort on the pitch and at the social event to follow.

During his time in Cyprus Pete met and courted Sue and they were eventually married in Dhekelia.

After Northern Ireland the Battalion

was able to get stuck into various competitions with a vengeance, and the Shooting Team was sent to Bisley; unfortunately the team was unable to form up for training until ten days before the Army Championships and this cost us. However Pete was in the team that won the Royal Ulster Rifles Cup and we were now bringing silver back from Bisley.

Pete was an excellent shot on all weapons and got into the Army Hundred for the Rifle on several occasions, also the SMG 30 and the Machine Gun 30. He was an excellent team player and was always one of the first names on the list when the squad was put together. Pete represented the Battalion Team over two decades.

After Cyprus the Vikings became the AMLF Battalion and 4 years in Tidworth with numerous trips to Norway for Arctic Warfare training was on the cards. In the first half of 1974 the Vikings along with Pete were again deployed to NI for yet another Operational tour.

During the 70's Pete was promoted to Sergeant and took over a Platoon in B Company before moving to 6 R Anglian as a PSI; during his time with the unit he trained and coached their team for Bisley. He returned to the Vikings in time to take up as the Support Team with the Close Observation Platoon for the Belfast tour. When the Vikings returned to Germany Pete was posted to D Company as the CQMS, before being posted to the Depot at Basingborne as a Platoon Commander and promotion to WO2.

Pete had a full career of many years exemplary service; along the way he collected many skills and saw active service in a number of overseas Theatres. He took great pleasure in passing on his vast knowledge and was a Master Coach, and Sniper Instructor amongst other disciplines.

On completion of his 22 years' service he was selected for the Long Service List and moved to Cyprus for five years. This was followed by a tour as RQMS at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst with Victory College. Pete's final posting was as an Estate Manager in Paderborn, Germany.

Here he used his tact and discretion to deal with the myriad of problems that had to be resolved daily. He was liked and respected by all those that he came into contact with and maintained an excellent rapport with the families that he was responsible for.

The Regimental Ethos states that 'We are a county based Regiment bound together by a closely-knit family spirit. Our approach is classless, based on mutual respect and trust, where developing and believing in our soldiers is paramount. We are a forward looking, self-starting and welcoming team for whom the mission remains key'.

I can think of no man that epitomises that ethos more than Pete along with his brothers.

During his military career Pete was an asset to all of the units that he served with, he was respected by his peers and contemporaries alike and he always maintained the very highest standards of military professionalism and tradition.

After leaving the service Pete was employed with Norfolk Army Cadet Force before eventually retiring for good, and dedicating his life to visiting his children and grandchildren around the world; his son Mark was in the forces and Joanne married a US Marine.

Pete was a regular attendee at Regimental re-unions and maintained his immaculate dress code even in civilian attire and he always made you feel welcome with his well-established smile and always a joke or two.

Due to the Covid restrictions attendance at his funeral was restricted to immediate family only; however 17 former Vikings just happened to be in the cemetery at the time of his funeral. Many of us will have our own memories of Pete;

As a soldier; totally professional at all times

As a Viking and a Paratrooper; a true legend

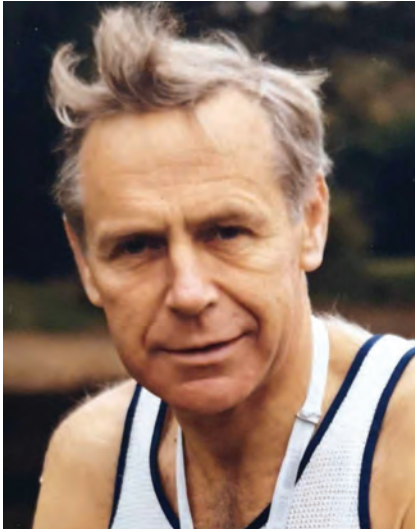
And as a person; a real gentleman, a lovely man and a true friend.

Pete was very much a family man and our thoughts are very much with his wife Sue, his son Mark, his daughter Joanne and his grandchildren at this difficult time.



# Obituaries

## Lieutenant MEG Welsford



Michael Eric Giles Welsford was born in 1935 in Romford where his father was a successful shopkeeper.

After attending Brentwood School and some further education he was called up for National Service with the Essex Regiment, being commissioned on 14 January 1956 and serving at the Depot at Warley. On completion of his full-time service on 30 December of that year he transferred to the Army Emergency Reserve (known as 'The Ever-Readies', a category of reserve willing to be deployed overseas at short notice), remaining there until June 1960.

In civilian life he became a lecturer in English at South-East Essex Technical College and School of Art in Dagenham. There he took up running as a hobby, competing in a number of marathons. He was also a loyal supporter of and player for his old school's cricket club. On retirement he moved to Bristol to be near a cousin (his only sister having died in 1990), but subsequently returned to live in Brentwood. He loved travelling, visiting Canada, America, Australia and South Africa in later life.

Michael remained intensely proud of his brief period of military service, joining the Pompadour Officers' Dinner Club and attending the annual cocktail parties for many years. These were held at the Army & Navy Club, of which he became a member, often utilising the Club's reciprocal facilities on his

travels. He is remembered as always being immaculately turned out, never without a tie or cravat in public, and was described as an absolute gentleman.

Sadly he was diagnosed with dementia and had to move into a care home in Basildon, where he died peacefully on 2 April 2020. He was laid to rest in Woodman Road Cemetery, Warley, on 13 May. With coronavirus restrictions in place and having no family other than his elderly cousin who was unable to travel, attendance was limited to some previous neighbours but the Regiment was pleased to be represented by Lieutenant Colonel Simon Bacon, and suitable purple flowers were arranged.

## Colonel Michael Kenneth Goldschmidt



Colonel Michael Goldschmidt was a son of the Royal Leicestershire Regiment (The Tigers). His father, Colonel Kenneth Goldschmidt had a long and distinguished career in the Regiment, notably with the 2nd Battalion in the North African and Far Eastern campaigns of World War Two and with the 1st Battalion in Korea, as well as commanding the Depot at Glen Parva. Adding further to his deep seated Regimental connections, Michael's great-grandfather, uncle and godfather all had eminent service with the Regiment.

It was whilst his father was away serving in Scotland during the closing stages of World War II that Michael

was born in London. He followed the Regiment and his father's career with postings in India, Hong Kong, Cyprus and the UK. His Catholic faith remained a constant and important part of his entire life, so it was perhaps inevitable that he should attend Ampleforth College, before leaving in 1963 and entering RMA Sandhurst. Michael had developed an interest in rifle shooting and it was whilst with both these institutions that he successfully honed his skill. He was Captain of the Shooting VIII at Ampleforth and a member of the British Cadet Rifle Shooting Team that competed in Canada in 1963. In 1969 he was a member of the Old Amplefordian shooting team that won the Public Schools Veterans Match at Bisley. In addition, he was Captain of the Sandhurst Shooting Team in 1965 when they won the Regular Army Major Units Small-Bore Championship. Alongside this he competed in athletics on a regular basis, captaining the Ampleforth team.

When Michael enlisted The Royal Leicestershire Regiment still formed part of the regular Army order of battle and he might reasonably have expected to wear the same cap badge as his father. However, whilst he was training the Regiment rebadged and so it was that he graduated from Sandhurst commissioned into the Royal Anglian Regiment.

What was assured was that he be posted to the 4th (Leicestershire) Battalion. The next five years were spent in happy Regimental duty, with stints in Malta, Libya, Bahrain and the UK, as well as a tour of duty in Aden. His sporting prowess continued and he represented the Battalion in cross-country, athletics, cricket, rugby, tennis, squash and shooting, with stints representing Army teams in cricket and athletics in Malta.

In 1970 Michael was chosen to be ADC to Major General Sir Douglas Kendrew (sometime Colonel The Royal Leicestershire Regiment), who was the Governor of Western Australia, stationed in Perth. This was an interesting and enjoyable time for him, with many visits from royalty, politicians and statesmen. By the time Michael returned to Regimental duty in 1972, defence



cuts had taken their toll and 4th Royal Anglian had been reduced to company strength, with attendant abridged officer career prospects.

After stints in Gibraltar and Kent, Michael was posted to Cyprus to join the 1st Battalion, just in time for their return to the UK in the NATO AMF(L) role, guarding that organisation's flanks, which entailed winter warfare in Norway and summer exercises in Turkey or Sardinia. Thrown in for good measure was a tour of duty in Armagh, Michael being forced to adopt long hair as the Battalion Intelligence Officer.

Michael demonstrated excellent leadership skills, being popular with his men and fellow officers, alongside his legendary particular staff duties and attention to detail. After a tour as adjutant he was picked up for Staff College at Shrivenham and Camberley, on the successful completion of which he was selected as Military Assistant to the Deputy Commander-in-Chief UK Land Forces. Michael always kept his cricket kit in the boot of his car, ready for any opportunity to play the game. He was elected a member of the MCC in 1977 and he was ready to discuss England's test prospects with anyone at any time.

In 1983 Michael returned to Regimental duty with the 1st Battalion to command a mechanised company in BAOR, another Northern Ireland tour, this time in Fermanagh, followed by a return to the UK as Battalion Second in Command and a tour in Belize. There then followed a more settled period in Michael's life, as he attended the Joint Service Defence College before being posted to the MoD. This happily allowed him time to marry Margaret Wilkinson in 1984. They had two daughters by her previous marriage and a son, Henry, who is a London based sports lawyer. They established a happy family home in Somerset.

In the mid-1980s regular army command posts were hard fought for. Michael followed similar footsteps to his father's by being appointed commanding officer of Depot The Queen's Division, training recruits for not only the Royal Anglian Regiment, but also the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and the Queen's Regiment. This settled period allowed

another of Michael's passions to flourish. Since 1968 he had been on the Ampleforth Lourdes Pilgrimage, managing to fit in twenty seven pilgrimages around his military and later career. In another demonstration of his charitable humanity, he also attended many Remembrance Day parades at the Cenotaph in London, usually guiding one of the St Dunstan's (now Blind Veterans UK) veteran pupils.

Michael's final eight years in the army were a series of the inevitable staff appointments in the UK and Europe, the most enjoyable of which was at HQ Allied Forces Central Europe in Brunssum, The Netherlands as Chief of Personal Staff to the Deputy Commander-in-Chief, at the time Air Chief Marshal Sir Anthony Skingsley. A particular highlight was a career best innings of 98 not out for Afcnt Knights club against a Luxembourg team.

During two of these years he was Chairman Infantry Cricket, setting the pace for his continuing and abiding love of the game. In addition to spectating at many Lords Tests, he remained an active player of the game to the last, achieving another career high of four wickets in four balls for Port Rejects club against the Stours club in Dorset. Michael was eagerly waiting the start of the 2020 season and he ran his own team, The Colonel Goldschmidt's XI, which had been established by his late father.

Having retired from the army Michael was not one to lose his military connections and in 1996 he joined SSAFA Forces Help in London as Director Housing, later adding Welfare to his portfolio, before retiring in 2004. He also found time during this period to be an effective board member and chairman of the London building in which he lodged, as well as a Trustee of St David's Nursing Home for veterans in Ealing.

As an historian with a keen eye for accuracy, he was a natural choice to be invited to write the final volume of the Royal Leicestershire Regimental history. This task he attacked with gusto and enthusiasm, the result of which, 'Marching with The Tigers' was very well received, the diligent research and lively read reflecting admirably upon the author. His depth of knowledge

was impressive and the Trustees of the Regiment were delighted and grateful that, a year after publication in 2009, Michael agreed to become a Trustee himself.

He immersed himself in the role and gave of his time and company freely, making huge contributions to the Regimental family of which he was so proud to belong. He subsequently researched and wrote about the wider history of the Regiment, as well as the decorated military Old Boys of Ampleforth College.

With his tall, lanky frame, upright bearing and gentlemanly demeanour, Michael was a distinctive presence. His friendliness and ready humour quickly relaxed and set at ease all who met him. His military knowledge, historical ability and authorship meant that his conversation was interesting, often witty and sharply observed. His contributions in diverse areas as trustee, committee member or chairman were thoughtful, considered and insightful, delivered delightfully and received respectfully. His faith was unshakeable, his Christian commitment absolute and his morals firm. Above all, he enjoyed abiding love for and from his family which, allied to his deep interest in others and his great kindness, gave him a warmth of personality, the loss of which remains with us all.

TRW

## Sergeant TR Day



Thomas Richard Day was born on 10 October 1919 in Brentwood, where his father was a timber maker. After working on a farm, he joined the 5th Battalion Essex Regiment (TA) in 1939, serving with the 1/5th on home defence



# Obituaries

duties from the outbreak of World War 2 until June 1941.

That month the Battalion sailed for Egypt, via Sierra Leone and Durban. After service in the rear areas of the Western Desert the Battalion was sent to Iraq to join 19th Indian Infantry Brigade of 8th Indian Division which was engaged in securing the country against a pro-Nazi rebellion.

In mid-1943 the Division moved to Syria for intensive training, then was deployed to Italy with the 1/5th landing at Taranto on 24 September, following up the allied advance on the east side of the country. In the early hours of 2 November the Battalion took part in its first major action of the war, a brigade operation to cross the fast-flowing River Trigno.

The operation was hampered by appalling weather and lack of intelligence regarding the enemy. 5th Essex nevertheless secured their bridgehead, but their success could not be exploited and they were ordered to withdraw, with 139 casualties. Private Day was one of those casualties, being taken prisoner. He spent 18 months in Stalag IV-D at Torgau on the River Elbe, before being released when the war in Europe ended.

Staying on in the Army post-war, Private Day joined the 2nd Battalion of the Essex Regiment and served in Germany, Trieste and Italy before the two battalions of the Regiment were amalgamated back in the UK. By this time he was a Lance Corporal with the Regimental Police.

In the early 1950s he served a spell with the 1st Battalion Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment in the Canal Zone of Egypt, becoming entitled to the General Service Medal 1918 with clasp 'Canal Zone' when the latter was approved nearly 50 years later! Promoted to Corporal he was awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal in 1958, then after the formation of the 3rd East Anglian Regiment became a Sergeant with the Royal Military Police before retiring in 1961.

Tom then went to work as a safety officer with British Celanese in Derby, eventually settling in Beeston on the

outskirts of Nottingham. He became a well-known local veteran and very much part of the community, and he took much pride in laying an Essex Regiment wreath at the Beeston war memorial at the age of 99 in 2018. The Regiment was represented at his 100th birthday party in 2019. He was then still managing to live on his own, albeit with some help, but later after a fall and a spell in hospital his daughter Carol and son-in-law Glenn moved in to care for him.

Tom passed away peacefully on 11 October 2020, the day after his 101st birthday. His funeral took place on Armistice Day, with a large crowd turning out onto the streets to remember him, and his son Richard later laying an Essex Regiment wreath on the local war memorial in his memory.

## Lieutenant Colonel David Greenfield MBE



David Greenfield was born in Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire, on the 25th January 1938. His father was a Colour Sergeant in the Royal Artillery who had served in India and was at Dunkirk, his mother was a housewife. He had two younger sisters and attended the local Grammar School, attaining 3 A Levels, none of which, sadly as things turned out, were in Spanish.

He joined the Army on the 7th January 1957 because, like many a lad from that fertile Poacher recruiting

area, he wanted more from life than was on offer in Cleethorpes. With his educational qualifications he had applied to go to RMA Sandhurst but, more fool them, was failed at the interview stage. So he joined as a National Serviceman in the Royal Lincolnshire Regiment. He gained his first stripe within 3 months and his second 5 months later. He served at the Depot in Lincoln until May 1959 when he joined the 1st Battalion in Minden. He returned to England with the Battalion in April 1960 for the amalgamation with the 1st Battalion The Northamptonshire Regiment at Watchet in Somerset. Then followed a short spell at Depot The Royal West Kent Regiment and another in Lincoln with the Regimental Recruiting Team. He was promoted Sergeant and in September 1961 he rejoined what was by then the 2nd East Anglian Regiment in Osnabruck and a year later in June 1962 was posted to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst as an instructor. He remained there until September 1965 when he rejoined the Battalion, by then the 2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment, in Cyprus. Thereafter he served with the Battalion in Libya, England, Kenya, Malaya, BAOR and Northern Ireland, becoming a Colour Sergeant in 1968 and a Company Sergeant Major in June 1970.

As a weapon training instructor at RMA Sandhurst in the early 1960s, he had a huge input into the development of many young officer cadets and is remembered affectionately for making the training as interesting and enjoyable as possible and, when involved in tactical training, for being a fine example of leadership to which the cadets could aspire.

In Cyprus in 1965 he was a platoon sergeant in C Company and well known as a disciplinarian, for being the smartest soldier in the Battalion and for always putting his soldiers first. He was a hard trainer too and was nicknamed 'No Vehicles' for keeping his platoon fit by marching them everywhere around the Dhekelia Garrison, which was no doubt the reason he won an extremely challenging Inter Platoon March and Shoot Competition later that same year.



**During the 1975 tour of West Belfast, he was presented with his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal by Brigadier Dick Gerrard-Wright. The Brigadier had previously been his Company Commander, his Commanding Officer and at this time, as Commander 39 Infantry Brigade in Belfast, was his Brigadier – one of those unique regimental occasions that occur from time to time.**

He led his soldiers to levels which many did not consider themselves capable, but they also learnt that if he told you to do something then it was best not to delay in getting it done. He is also remembered for being an outstanding mentor to his young platoon commanders, never usurping their authority, and always causing them to feel that they were actually in command, even though that was probably debatable.

By 1970 David was Company Quartermaster Sergeant C Company with the Poachers in Colchester. He fully understood this role and brought to it his ability to plan well ahead and to anticipate what the Company was likely to do and what would be needed, developing his role far beyond the normal tasks of a CQMS. That year the Battalion carried out two major overseas exercises in Kenya and Malaya. In Kenya he is remembered for producing, in the jungle, a Sunday Lunch of roast beef

with all the trimmings for the soldiers who had just climbed Mount Kenya; and also for a chance encounter with a large bull elephant which eventually saw sense and stepped aside rather than tangle with CQMS Greenfield on his supply run; whilst in Northern Malaya, in mountainous and very dense jungle, he excelled in the constant resupply of all that was needed, mostly by helicopter and only after jungle landing sites had been cut.

Later in 1970 he took over as Company Sergeant Major A Company for the Poachers' first tour of Northern Ireland. He understood the mind and character of the soldier perfectly and was greatly respected by all ranks. His advice was invaluable and his hands on the tiller so firm that company orders before the Company Commander were infrequent. David continued as Company Sergeant Major until the end of May 1972 when he was appointed the Battalion Weapon Training Warrant Officer and Senior Search Advisor for the Poachers' second tour of West Belfast. Whilst accompanying the CO on a large search operation in the Lower Falls he was slightly wounded in the hand by, what most would say, the IRA, although in the chaos of the moment, David directed an alternative accusation, in the fruitiest of language, to a poor, unfortunate A Company soldier.

In March 1973 he was appointed Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant of Depot The Queen's Division, a post he held until returning to the Poachers in Munster as Regimental Sergeant Major in May 1974. His time as RSM, which included his third tour of West Belfast in 1975, was perhaps the defining period of David's career. His impact was instant and phenomenal and his high standards legendary. Nobody, soldier or officer, survived his scrutiny and it was impossible to get past him without being pulled up and savaged, sometimes with added emphasis from his pace stick, for cap badge not over left eye, hair too long or too short, walking across his square, wearing elastics, being at the NAAFI too early or too late, or for not complying with every last detail of Part One or Part Two or Battalion Standing Orders.

He had a particular dislike for briefcases and once ran over a platoon sergeant's with an APC, answering the subsequent protestations with '..... platoon records should be carried in your head, not in a briefcase'. As a result of this he became the only RSM who cleared the barracks of officers and soldiers whenever he went on his daily walkabout.

The barber had never been so busy and on one occasion, soldiers who had just returned from a long exercise and were tired, hungry and filthy, all climbed back into their equally filthy Armoured Personnel Carriers and followed the RSM's menacing approach through periscopes rather than face the inevitable confrontation which they would most certainly have lost..... badly; and on another, a soldier in the guardroom under close arrest for something or other, decided to follow a current fad of 'refusing to soldier' and thus sat naked in his cell refusing to comply with any order from anyone.

That was until RSM Greenfield arrived and, armed with his pace stick, engaged with the hapless soldier who, shortly afterwards and fully clothed, emerged to announce that he was now indeed very keen to continue soldiering for Queen and Country.

But David was more than just a disciplinarian, he was a first class professional soldier who, as RSM, demanded in turn a huge degree of professionalism from all of his warrant officers and sergeants, including those in the supporting arms; and with him it was always the soldiers first; it was right or wrong and black or white, with no grey areas. You knew where you stood with David and he would support anyone to the hilt if convinced of their cause.

As a result, he became a towering personality to a generation of Poacher NCOs and soldiers; and for inexperienced young officers, although he was a fearsome individual, behind the veneer they found an engaging character who gave sound advice when asked. He was never one to exploit his experience and status by sounding off his opinions and criticising others, instead he was quietly efficient in all he



# Obituaries

did and provided wise counsel to those who sought it.

The Battalion responded to David and, on their regular parades, his greeting bellow of 'Good Morning Poachers' would be answered with a thunderous roar of 'Good Morning Sir' by the soldiers who held him in such high esteem and with a respect that bordered on awe.

In July 1976, at the end of his tenure as RSM, he was granted a Short Service Commission in the rank of Lieutenant and, most unusually, was retained by the Battalion as Training Officer after the move to Gillingham. For the officers it seemed a little surreal having coffee with Lieutenant David Greenfield as a fellow subaltern, but of course he had the character to put both himself and his younger comrades at ease.

He quickly proved to be an outstanding Training Officer and the young potential NCOs that went through his cadres were among the best trained Poachers of those times; he set high standards for his students, subordinates and himself and this set the tone for an exceptionally successful career as a commissioned officer.

He was to remain with the Poachers until March 1985 having been promoted to Captain (QM) in April 1978 and Major (QM) in July 1984 and having served with them in Gillingham, West Berlin, Londonderry, Colchester, Cyprus and the US.

As Quartermaster, David Greenfield was every Commanding Officer's dream. A top soldier in every sense of the phrase, he reflected to his very core the distinctive and unique qualities of the counties from where the Battalion drew its soldiers. He assumed with ease the considerable skills and responsibilities needed in such a senior appointment and was imbued with a tenacious loyalty and steely determination. Above all he had impeccable judgement and wise counsel, always delivered with a dry sense of humour.

His responsibilities during his time as Quartermaster spanned Northern Ireland, England, Germany and

Cyprus, in 3 different roles – Internal Security, BAOR reinforcement and United Nations peacekeeping. His philosophy was simple - he wanted the Poachers to have the best equipment, the smartest uniforms and the best support, using any means at his disposal. The BAOR reinforcement role was particularly testing and involved many exercise rehearsals in the UK and then deployment to BAOR, during which he had an innate ability to command the respect of the many different cap badges placed under his tactical control.

He let none of these additional responsibilities weigh him down and was throughout a source of solid dependability to everyone. Once, when asked where his 'B Echelon' was located on the battlefield, David responded - 'We're so far back we can see the French'.

For seven years his contribution extended well beyond the normal duties of Quartermaster, for at considerable expense to his free time, he also instructed and supervised the training of the Battalion's Bisley Shooting Team. Combining his good humour, patience and the professional skills gained during operational duty throughout his service, he consistently improved the Team's shooting standards until they stood amongst the top three teams in the Army and in 1984 collected 5 major individual trophies (using, by the way, one fifth of the Battalion's annual ammo allocation in the process!).

He was awarded an MBE in June 1985 for his work as Quartermaster with the Citation stating: 'During his service Major Greenfield has earned himself a position of unique regard. Never failing in courtesy and good humour, he has set an example which others seek to emulate.'

His total dedication to the soldiers of the Battalion that he has served so long, his personal courage on operations and his many positive achievements, have marked him out as a man of exceptional character'. It was a popular award amongst the Poachers.

From 1985 to 1987, David completed

a tour as Quartermaster of 7/10 UDR in Belfast after which, in April 1987, he was Mentioned in Despatches for gallantry. This was followed by a third tour as Quartermaster from 1987 to 1989, this time with 7(V) R ANGLIAN in Leicester, where he is remembered as an outstanding administrator who could be relied upon implicitly for sound advice; and also as a soldier's soldier, equally admired and respected by all ranks.

The final phase of David's regular service came in April 1989 when, having been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in December 1988, he assumed the prestigious post of Staff Quartermaster at the Army Staff College in Camberley. David found himself surrounded by young Directing Staff and students all feverishly thrusting away in the hothouse environment that existed at the time. He provided a calm and authoritative presence where one was sorely needed and was full of common sense.

The Staff College building was a place that needed constant works maintenance. That fell to the Staff Quartermaster and David had an extraordinary talent at getting complicated major and minor works services done in his own ingenious way, in a fraction of the time it would have taken the formal G4 system, and without disrupting the College programme or bothering either his Chief of Staff or the Commandant. He retired from the Army on the 24th January 1993, but still stares out from many photos of the Staff College Directing Staff, taken at those times, as the Staff Quartermaster, standing centre front just behind the Commandant, his place in that august pecking order rightfully earned.

After retirement from the Army, David spent the next 10 years as a Retired Officer, working for the MOD Civil Service as an SO2 Plans in the G4 Branch in Colchester, where he was heavily involved with the rebuild of the Garrison. He retired from working life at the age of 65 and then kept himself busy gardening, holidaying in Spain, eating out and keeping in touch with regimental chums.

David Greenfield was also a loyal

family man. Throughout his career, and despite not having that Spanish A Level, he was staunchly supported by his wonderfully Spanish wife, the incomparable Isabel, who he had met in Felixstowe where she was working in a hotel. Never completely mastering the English language, she was the daughter of a Captain in the army during the Spanish Civil War, fighting against General Franco's fascists, who had been captured and imprisoned for two years. They married on 12th July 1969 and their sons were born in 1970 and 1974; and for over 15 years David and Isabel were an indivisible pairing at the heart of both the Poachers' Sergeants' and Officers' messes.

David always wanted the best for his family and was a responsible, generous and devoted father, always picking up and dropping off his sons to and from their boarding school in Ipswich for holidays. In 2002, and well into his 60s, he was to camp out for a week to reserve an ex-Army married quarter for one of his sons, with Isabel cycling to see him every day to deliver rations and to stay with him for a few hours. Needless to say, he got the house.

David will be remembered by so many whom he helped in life, not just in our great Regimental family, but in the many different military and civilian lives he touched. He was that rarest of soldiers, professional to his fingertips, yet fun to be with, generous, amusing and liked and respected by everyone. As a senior NCO, he set the highest standards and expected them of everyone else, both senior and junior to himself. He adjusted easily to commissioning and proved to be the most wonderful ambassador for the Regiment in the various postings he filled before retirement, when he did not disappear, but continued to keep in close touch with his many friends, being a regular attender with the lovely and sparkling Isabel, at the various Regimental gatherings throughout the year. General Patrick Stone, a former Commanding Officer, sums him up nicely - 'David Greenfield was more than a safe pair of hands. He was certainly that, but with humour and a depth of

professional ability and loyalty which time and again caused a generation of Poachers to pause and say, 'we had better ask David'.

David was immensely proud to be a Poacher, but in turn they considered him to be a truly great soldier, a truly great Poacher and a truly great man. He died in Colchester Hospital on the 26th October 2020 at the age of 82. He is survived by Isabel and his two sons to whom we send not only our deepest sympathy, but also our gratitude for David's service in our Regiment.

**KH**

## Colonel Mark Adkin



Mark Adkin died on 6 January 2021 after a short illness aged 84. Born and raised in Bedford where his family were gunsmiths he attended Bedford School before going to RMA Sandhurst. He was commissioned into The Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment in July 1956 and posted to the 1st Battalion in Goslar in BAOR.

In August 1957 he carried The Queen's Colour on the Regiment's last Blenheim Day Parade before the Battalion moved to Dortmund in 1958 to amalgamate with 1st Battalion The Essex Regiment to become 1st Battalion The 3rd East Anglian Regiment. Following the Battalion's return from Malaya in early 1962 he was posted to The Depot at Bury St Edmunds. From there he was seconded to the Special

Mobile Force Mauritius in early 1964, returning to the UK where he served briefly with 4/5 Essex (TA) before re-joining the Battalion (now 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment) for their 1966-67 tour in Aden.

In November 1967 Mark left the Army and joined The Overseas Civil Service, formerly the Colonial Office where he became one of Britain's last serving District Officers, firstly in the Solomon Islands and then the Gilbert and Ellice Islands. At the end of his contract with the Civil Service he joined the Barbados Defence Force in the rank of Major and while there he took part in the US Invasion of Grenada in 1983. This was the catalyst for his first book, *Urgent Fury* which was published in 1989.

Mark had always had a deep interest in military history and in retirement he became an acclaimed and respected military historian writing a total of some 20 books. In particular his Companion Series which covered both individual battles and campaigns such as Waterloo, Trafalgar, Gettysburg and The Western Front are regarded as the definitive authorities on these events.

Regimentally he remained active as a member of the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regiment Association and The Pompadour Officers' Dinner Club. He was Deputy Honorary Colonel TA for Bedfordshire from 1997-99 and a member of the Regimental History Committee which published *Aden to Afghanistan* in 2014 where his knowledge of the intricacies and pitfalls of writing and publishing proved invaluable. He was also an active member of his local church.

Mark first marriage in 1959 to Ann Jones ended sadly with her untimely death in 1963. There was a daughter, Diana from this marriage; her son, Ben served with 3rd Battalion The Rifles.

In 1972 Mark married Sandhira Caulee who survives him. Their son, Robert, born in 1983 took a Short Service Commission in The King's Royal Hussars before starting his career in business. He is married with two children.

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