



06/13

ROYAL ANGLIAN NEWS

Aug 13

## **COLONEL OF THE REGIMENT**

The Regiment proudly congratulates Major General PD Jones CBE on his selection for promotion to Lt Gen, and his appointment as Chief of Staff Supreme Allied Command Transformation based in Norfolk Virginia in October 2013, which was announced on 10 Sep 13.

## **APPOINTMENTS**

The Regiment also congratulates Major Danny Mackness on selection for promotion to Lt Col and his appointment as OIC Corps Battle School Advisor Team Op HERRICK in Jan 14.

## **MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR MAJ GEN J B DYE CBE MC DL – FRAMLINGHAM COLLEGE FRI 27 SEP 13**

Details have been published separately. Those wishing to attend are requested to inform the Asst Regtl Sec, Maj Dick Gould. ([rhqranглиan-asstregsec@mod.uk](mailto:rhqranглиan-asstregsec@mod.uk) 01284 752394)

## **REGIMENTAL BENEVOLANCE FUNDRAISING – ALL THE 4s BIG DROP – 13 SEP 13**

Details are in the attached pdf file. Support is warmly encouraged. Further information from the Area Secretary Maj Bill O'Driscoll ([william.odriscoll564@mod.uk](mailto:william.odriscoll564@mod.uk) 01604 653412; 07594 307145)

## **1<sup>ST</sup> BATTALION**

August was a much quieter month for the Vikings, especially compared to the preceding month. With the Battalion on leave from 25 Jul to, in many cases, 27 Aug, much of the Battalion could be found on beaches and camp-sites around the world.

The month did however herald the handover of command to Lt Col Biddick MBE MC, returning to the Battalion from his previous job MA to CLF and after five years away from the Vikings since commanding A (Norfolk) Company on Op HERRICK 6. Much of the last week in August was spent with the new Commanding Officer meeting the different sections of the Battalion and delivering his Command Philosophy for the next two and a half years. With A (Norfolk) Company just deployed to BATUS as COEFOR, the journey for both the Battalion and the new CO had begun: from BATUS through to Kenya and the Unit Move in 2014, and then Kabul as part of Op TORAL in 2015. It promises to be another interesting chapter in the history of the Vikings.

## **2<sup>ND</sup> BATTALION**

The Battalion enjoyed summer leave during much of August but has now returned to work. The focus has been preparation for the MST Final Training Exercise known as Ex PASHTUN DAWN. This will be the culmination of MST before deployment and is a brigade-level exercise taking place on Salisbury Plain.

Whilst much of the Battalion was on summer leave a number of our soldiers deployed. 10 Platoon departed Cottesmore and has now arrived in Afghanistan. They will be working for the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards Battlegroup in Kabul. We wish them a successful tour.

Back in Kendrew Barracks the final preparations for deployment have begun. This has mainly consisted of ensuring that all the soldiers have completed the required Military Annual Training Tests (MATTs) and a plethora of G1 forms. Whilst time consuming, these forms hold essential information and are a necessity.

However, it has not been all work and the Officers' vs Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess Cricket Match took place on 22 August 2013 a date that will be remembered for some time. Despite a robust performance from the WO's and Sgts' Mess it was the Officers who convincingly carried the day with appropriate style and panache. The Commanding Officer (assisted by Lt Charlie Monk) captained the Officers' Mess Team and has been magnanimous in victory. The next mess sporting event should prove interesting if perhaps more kinetic.

On Saturday 24 August the Battalion conducted a Families Day to brief the relatives and spouses on the upcoming tour. The turnout was greater than anticipated, which was excellent in ensuring key information reached as wide an audience as possible.

September will be consumed by Ex PASHTUN DAWN and pre-deployment leave before the bulk of the Battalion begins to depart.

### **3<sup>RD</sup> BATTALION**

August saw the busiest month for the Battalion this year as two events dominated the programme. Firstly the Battalion conducted a full military funeral for LCpl Craig Roberts in his hometown of LLaundudno, North Wales. The funeral was supported by a bearer party from the Poachers led by CSM (WO2) Morgan who all did an excellent and highly professional job. The funeral brought the town to a standstill and a mix of LCpl Roberts colleagues, both from OTC and the Steelbacks along with close friends paid tribute to his character and life.

SAVA STAR was the Battalion's training event of the year conducted as an Overseas Training Exercise in the Slunj training area, Croatia. The Battalion was lucky enough to be the first British Unit to conduct an exercise in Croatia, these encouraged lots of attention by British and Croatian militaries alike.



Slunj training area is 100 kilometres south west of Zagreb very close to the beautiful Piltvice National park. The terrain is unique, very hilly and covered by thick (almost) impenetrable forest and has what only can be described as a “Maritime” climate, not unlike Brecon. This offered a unique challenge for the infanteer, operating in complex and almost jungle like terrain. The training area is one of the Biggest in Croatia and is used by Armour, Artillery and Infantry alike. The training area is also includes scattered legacy minefields and memorials from the “Homeland War” in the 1990s along with housing some Croatian regular Army units.

The exercise was set around a light role rifle company supported by a machine gun section. The Battalion was also delighted to welcome 12 soldiers from the Poachers who joined the exercise at the last minute to swell the numbers. Armed also with the DTES kit the Company was set to deploy. This composite company went through progressive stages of the exercise, starting with the RSOI phase consisting of acclimatisation PT and skills stands (including minefield awareness!) along with preparation for the first mission. In addition to the Company training the Cambrian patrol team formed up under the watchful eye of WO2 Browning – nearly posted in from the Vikings and under command of 2Lt David Morgan the team conducted their own skills and fitness to prepare them for the patrol exercise in November.

After build up training the exercise started properly; with deployment to the “jungle like harbour” areas the platoons learnt forest and jungle drills to try to make sense of how to operate in the complex terrain. Followed by an “attacks” day, giving the platoons a chance to work together the training phase was over and the Company prepared to deploy on the final phase – the test exercise. For the final phase the platoons enjoyed the presence of a regular Croatian platoon embedded as sections into the Company; armed with AK47s and RPKs they added another dimension to the company’s dismounted tactics. The Slunj training area has a number of facilities that could be recognised from any British training area, but all have a distinct Balkans feel to them. These complex targets were used for a succession of company group actions over the course of 4 days. From Yugoslavian checkpoint assaults to recce patrols onto bridge sites the exercise concentrated on the “narrow but deep” training for reserve infantry battalions. The exercise culminated with a final attack on a high side village, testing everything the company had learnt.

The exercise was highly successful from a training point of view but also with bilateral relations growing with the Croatian military. Along Brigadier Nickerson (Comd 49X) visiting the Battalion and meeting with

various Croatian VIPs, General Jones and HRH the Duke of Gloucester also visited and meet senior Croatian politicians and the Commander of Croatian land forces.



The exercise was a first step to continued partnering and training in the Balkans. The highlight of the deployment on Ex SAVA STAR, for most would be the Battalion's 2 day R&R period in Zadar, a beautiful, historic town on the Croatian west coast, on the Adriatic, a fitting end to an excellent exercise.