



THE REGIMENTAL JOURNAL OF 1ST THE QUEEN'S DRAGOON GUARDS



The Cavalry Regiment of
Wales and the Border Counties
'The Welsh Cavalry'





1ST THE QUEEN'S DRAGOON GUARDS

Colonel-in-Chief: HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES

Colonel of the Regiment: BRIGADIER A S RICHMOND OBE

Commanding Officer: LIEUTENANT COLONEL H T LLOYD

Allied Ship

HMS MONMOUTH

Allied Regiments

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S HORSE GUARDS (ROYAL CANADIAN ARMoured CORPS)

THE 11TH CAVALRY (FRONTIER FORCE) PAKISTAN ARMY

1ST/15TH ROYAL NEW SOUTH WALES LANCERS

PANZERGRENADIERBATAILLON 35 (AUSTRIAN ARMY)

1ST RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENT (SRI LANKAN ARMoured CORPS)

1ST SPECIAL SERVICE BATTALION (SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL DEFENCE FORCE)

Paired Army Reserve Regiment

THE ROYAL YEOMANRY

Twinned Regiment

1^{ER} REGIMENT ETRANGER DE CAVALERIE (FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION)

Allied Royal Air Force Squadron

IV SQUADRON THE ROYAL AIR FORCE

Affiliation

THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF THE LEATHERSELLERS



The Regimental Journal of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards



Editor: Major D C M Hoey

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Colonel of the Regiment's Foreword

It is with great pleasure and pride that I write as Colonel of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards – the Regiment that I had the enormous good fortune to commission into just over 30 years ago. I am filling big boots and I would like to pay tribute to my predecessor, Lt Gen Sir Simon Mayall KBE CB, who did so much over his 11 year Colonelcy to protect the interests of our Regiment and to oversee significant change as the governance and management of all components of the wider Regiment were reformed to comply with an ever evolving financial and charitable regulatory framework. He also helped see off the threat of amalgamation following the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review and we all owe him a great debt of gratitude for his selfless commitment, leadership and loyalty. It was great to see him leading the Cavalry Memorial Parade this year as we were the lead Regiment and also receive a Regimental Medal from our Colonel-in-Chief afterwards.

2019 dawned with the 60th anniversary of the amalgamation of 1st King's Dragoon Guards and The Queen's Bays on 1st January 1959 to form today's Regiment. The formal celebration of this significant event was held in the rather more sociable and warmer (in fact scorching as it turned out!) summer with a parade and families' day at Swanton Morley on 29th June. It was a moment to reflect on the success of an amalgamation and how the legacy of the KDG and Bays lives on in today's fine Regiment that has drawn its traditions, character and fighting spirit from its distinguished antecedents. Any



There has hardly been a major crisis or conflict in which QDG has not been at the forefront...



amalgamation is a tough experience for those who cherish the identity and traditions of their own regiment and yet the amalgamation of the KDG and Bays was by all accounts remarkably harmonious and so successful. We should, therefore, pay tribute to those who worked so hard before and after 1st January 1959 to give the new Regiment such a successful start in life.

And what a successful life it has had! There has hardly been a major crisis or conflict in which QDG has not been at the forefront and led the way for others to follow – from the Cold War, Borneo, Aden, Northern Ireland, Lebanon, Gulf War 1, Bosnia, Kosovo and Gulf War 2 to Afghanistan. More campaigns will be added to this list and as I write the Regiment is about to gear up for a potentially punchy deployment to Mali as part of a UN mission “with teeth”. Such operational success has also been matched on the sporting front and I suspect that no other small single cap-badge regiment has produced as many Olympians. I know for certain that no other regiment offers our unique tight-knit family



community with its distinctive Welsh character.

We cannot rest on our laurels as even great things can be improved! During my Colonelcy I want to better align all elements of the Regiment (Serving Regiment (RD & ERE), Regimental Comrades Association (RCA) and wider alumni, Home HQ, Trusts, Firing Line Museum and Cadets (ACF and CCF)) so that we are all striving towards a common vision:

A Regimental community that: fields a highly capable fighting force; reinforces QDG fighting power; is a well-connected community that benefits everyone, that people aspire to join and wish to remain an active part of; cares for its dead, injured and sick, serving and veterans; commemorates its past, celebrates the present and inspires the future and is an icon of the UK in Wales and of Wales in the UK.

The RCA is key to this as the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) make it harder for Home HQ to keep details of those who are not in the RCA. So, those not in the RCA are at risk of missing out on the full benefits that come with being part of the QDG community. I would like that community to be of benefit to members from cradle to grave: whilst serving, on transitioning to civilian life, in business, in retirement and, for some, when they need assistance. So we need to sell the benefits of



So we need to sell the benefits of RCA membership – and you can all play a part in this.



RCA membership – and you can all play a part in this.

To drive forward towards this vision we have adopted a campaign approach and I chaired my inaugural Regimental Council in November with those Trustees and other volunteers who will help deliver our lines of development (Capability, Branding, Alumni & RCA, Benevolence, Heritage, Profile, Cadets, Affiliates). The whole plan seeks to reinforce our centre of gravity, Wales's Cavalry Regiment, which has afforded us good protection over the years. Being based so far from our recruiting area brings new challenges as most youngsters joining the Army today wish to serve close to home. Each year that we remain based in Norfolk will erode our identity and I see the move of the Regiment much closer, or even into, its recruiting area as important to maintain its Welsh and Marches identity. The plan, therefore, includes work to shape the basing solution for the Regiment and will seek to emphasise that a key capability for basing decisions should be manning, placing units in recruitment and retention positive locations where its people wish to serve and where we

can keep the recruiting lifeblood flowing, drawing more of our badged cadets into our ranks.

Some parts of the plan have already been delivered. We now have our own spiritual home in Llandaff Cathedral, where our memorial was dedicated by our Colonel-in-Chief and a Standard laid up on 1st July. We have a new RCA website. We also have our first badged Combined Cadet Force (CCF) in Rydal Penrhos School in Colwyn Bay, North Wales and our network of badged Army Cadet Force (ACF) is growing too. More RCA regional branches are emerging and, judging by my experiences of an excellent Waterloo Dinner with the South Wales Branch in Cardiff and a hugely enjoyable reunion with the Powys and Border Counties Branch in Oswestry, they are increasingly vibrant and well supported.

I would like to thank all our Trustees and other volunteers who do so much, often unseen, for the benefit of our Regiment. Some of them put in a significant amount of time, on top of busy day jobs and for no remuneration, and we should all be grateful for their efforts. I would also like to thank the Regimental Secretary, our Curator and the Home HQ team for all they do day in and day out. Ultimately, we all want to preserve what is so special about QDG and ensure we continue to be First and Foremost for the next 60 years and beyond.



Colonel Commandant's Foreword

The 80th anniversary of the formation of the Royal Armoured Corps is a time and an opportunity for us to reflect on our history, our traditions, our legacy and, with a little humility, our achievements as a Corps – whilst simultaneously looking to the future and what that might hold.

When I joined the Life Guards in 1983, there were 19 regular armoured regiments. The Cold War was at its height, and we were mostly stationed in Germany as part of the British Army of the Rhine. It would have been impossible to conceive of a US president describing NATO as obsolete, or equally his French counterpart describing it as 'brain dead'. But those certainties have vanished: we have largely withdrawn from Germany and have only nine regular Royal Armoured Corps regiments. The complacent assumption that the fall of communism would mean that Russia would become a European nation, much like the others, has been shattered by its military resurgence and adventurism, in Georgia, Estonia and Ukraine, above all in the annexation of Crimea. China too has decided to assert herself to the degree that it is now also a concern for NATO.

Moreover, our recent operational experience on Operations Telic and Herrick saw us out of role, supporting rather than leading. Our training, equipment and our very *raison d'être* suffered as a result. But we have started to regain the place at the heart of the Army that we last held at around the time of Operation Granby, the first Gulf War. And we should make every effort to do so, because although sage pundits regularly pronounce that the tank is dead, this continues not to be the case. Certainly not for either the Russians or the Chinese, who continue to invest heavily and on a large scale in armour, via the Armata programme and the medium mechanized brigades respectively. Hybrid warfare, despite modern taxonomy, is as old as the hills. You only have to look at Hezbollah in the Lebanon or the Boers in South Africa. It is about pitting strength against weakness. In Eastern Europe you need conventional capability to defend and, by that token, deter with resilient command and control, armour, Long Range Fires, Air Defence and the like alongside the ability to compete in an era of information, false news, cyber, subversion and sabotage. For both blue and red forces

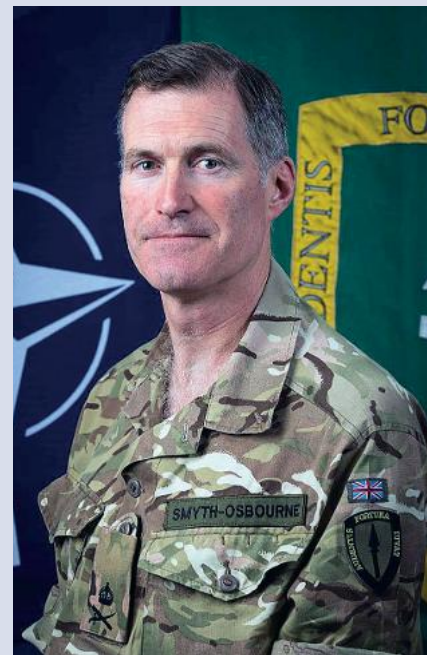
it is a case of 'both-and', not 'either-or'. That conventional threat is the catalyst for us to consider our future.

Indeed, while Russia's incursions into Ukraine popularized theories of hybrid warfare, it is often overlooked that the annexation was made possible by the direct threat, and eventual application, of firepower. Thus, we must avoid the mistake of prioritizing operations below the perceived threshold of armed conflict; we need balanced deterrence, and by that token defence, based on military capability for use throughout the spectrum of conflict.

So, given our 80th anniversary, and a 'back to the future' moment, albeit with a difference, where do we stand? It is good to note that Defence will spend £7bn in the next 10 years on equipment for the RAC – the equivalent of two new aircraft carriers. Ajax is entering service now with the HCR in Bulford. It has an impressive array of cutting-edge technology – though given its size and weight it brings with it a necessary re-thinking of our *recce* doctrine and tactics. Ajax represents a huge leap forward in capability and broadens our utility, but we need to be clear that it is not a Main Battle Tank.

Which brings me to Challenger 2. Compared to the threat it is almost certain that our heavy armour force is out sensed, out acquired, out reached and under protected. The Life Enhancement Program (LEP) is essential and must be enhanced given Russian and Chinese technical advances. LEP will not cover as many CR2 as we would like, but we shall continue to push for more heavy armour. At the other end of the spectrum, the Light Cavalry Regiments, equipped with Jackal, continued to prove their utility with operational demand stretching from the Baltics to the Maghreb, despite the absence of any policy provenance.

The Yeomanry, fully part of the RAC, provides our geographical footprint given the predominance of regular basing in the South. It is set to provide formed sub-units to deploy on operations and consistently proves its worth augmenting both Challenger 2 and Jackal-equipped regiments; Ajax as of yet being an unanswered but necessary question. We continue to provide excellence on State Ceremonial and Public Duties.



We do better on courses and exercises and are to be found across the Army...

Ultimately however, it's not about the kit – it's about the man in the turret. And one thing that has not changed in my service with the Armoured Corps is the quality of its people. We are seen – rightly – as imaginative and innovative. We do better on courses and exercises and are to be found across the Army in demanding and high-performing posts. We have bags of interest at Sandhurst with about five officer cadets expressing an interest in the Household Cavalry and Royal Armoured Corps for every place on offer. Soldier recruiting is another story, but we outperform the rest of the Army and are reaping the dividends as Army-wide recruiting processes are sped up and streamlined, conscious that the proposition (of soldiering) is no longer well understood.

We face, then, a number of challenges as we enter the third decade of the 21st century – but also a great deal of opportunity. We are proud of our history and ready to live up to the standards set by those who have soldiered in the Royal Armoured Corps before us.

Commanding Officer's Foreword

In my office are 27 photos – each of a former commanding officer. Only eight are smiling. Which is surprising. Because it really is the best job in the world if for no other reason than one works with the best people in the world. Jones, Davies, Williams, Smith, Rai and Navunisaravi. Men of Harlech, Swansea, Cardiff, Shrewsbury as well as Thetford, Kathmandu and Suva. And, increasingly, women. Our first female trooper joined our ranks in 2018, and we will commission at least one female officer in 2020. More yet.

In our 60th year, QDG enjoyed operational commitments in Europe and training in Africa and across the United Kingdom. In the first part of the year, A Squadron completed its six-month tour on the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's eastern flank, in Poland, as part of Defence's enhanced Forward Presence. The Squadron formed part of a United States Army Battlegroup (2/278 Armoured Cavalry Regiment (The Tennessee National Guard)) and conducted a series of exercises, demonstrations and rehearsals making a small but important contribution to deterring a revanchist Russia and reassuring our allies and partners. A winter tour, with snow on the ground for half the period and with temperatures as low as minus twenty degrees centigrade, QDG soldiers rose to the challenge presented by the environment and developed warfighting skills in a frozen and heavily wooded landscape. Tough soldiering certainly but with opportunities for in-country travel including tours of World War Two battlefields, cultural trips to Krakow and skiing in the Zakopane mountains.

During 2020 QDG delivered training support to other regiments and battalions. In March, Battlegroup Headquarters deployed with B and C Sqns to Kenya for two months to provide live fire training and an opposing force to 2nd Battalion The Rifles. Our soldiers relished the daily safari afforded to them whilst simultaneously unhinging Riflemen with yet another well sited observation post, skirmish or ambush. And there was time for adventurous training too – white water rafting, climbing and river scrambling – at the end of the exercise. In August, QDG deployed to Salisbury Plain for

six weeks providing an opposing force to 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland (The Black Watch). As reconnaissance soldiers, comfortable operating dispersed and within intent, QDG were the scourge of our Celtic cousins.

Most recently, QDG has begun the process of building back up to battlegroup level activity. We have completed simulated training in the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer, headquarters staff training and conceptual development. And all this with one firm aim: to ensure that as a Light Cavalry regiment we are acknowledged as a reconnaissance battlegroup capable of war-fighting against a peer adversary in a degraded environment. We will validate our progress against this aim on a large-scale exercise on Salisbury Plain in January and February 2020. As part of a brigade exercise, whilst working alongside other units in 7th Infantry Brigade (The Desert Rats), we will re-establish our reconnaissance credentials and receive a host of attachments to increase our capability, from electronic warfare and influence specialists to unmanned air system operators. We will also integrate Yeomen from our paired reserve regiment – The Royal Yeomanry – as we work to deepen the relationship and support them in their deployment to Poland in October 2020. And, working with industry partners – many of them QDG veterans – we will use the exercise to trial a range of exciting new capabilities including unmanned sensors, hand-held surveillance and targeting devices and communications. Bottom-up we intend to improve the reconnaissance capability we offer to the Army and remain First and Foremost.

We have an enviable forecast of events. Held at readiness in 2020, QDG will be prepared to generate forces for operations abroad and in the UK, providing resilience to the home base. Continuing a West African focus to our Defence Engagement, we will send soldiers to Nigeria to train members of the Nigerian Armed Forces. And, we have been warned for a United Nations operation in Mali spanning 2020 and 2021 where we have the opportunity to operate as a long-range reconnaissance unit: at reach, highly mobile and dispersed to find, understand and interdict insurgent



QDG is a highly deployable and employable regiment.



activity while protecting the population we are there to serve. It remains a tantalising prospect for our soldiers who are enthused by the opportunity to put their training to good use on operations.

QDG is a highly deployable and employable regiment. We are getting back into the business of delivering battlegrouped reconnaissance skills building on the strong foundations in place at the squadron level. We are innovating across all ranks to improve our capability, unlock the potential of our soldiers and force the pace of procurement. And we are contributing to and shaping discourse on how best to employ wheeled reconnaissance in the 21st century. QDG is poised to seize the opportunities 2020 affords us to train hard, fight smart and uphold our Regiment's hard won reputation for operational excellence.

HTL



HONOURS & AWARDS



State Awards

Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire –
Col Guy Deacon

Service Medals

Meritorious Service Medal – WO1 (RSM) Jones

Commanders' Awards

Commander Field Army's Commendation: WO2 (SSM) Thomas, Cpl Turner

Commander CABRIT's Commendation: Sgt Flint

7th Infantry Brigade Commander's Commendation: Mrs Ruggles-Brise, Capt Byrd, SSgt (SQMS) Davies, Sgt Green, Pte Limbu

Training Awards

Light Cavalry Troop Leaders Course Top Student: 2Lt Barham, 2Lt Holland

Light Cavalry Crew Commanders Course Top Student: Sgt Warley, Cpl Peel

REGIMENTAL AWARDS

Queen Elizabeth Trophy

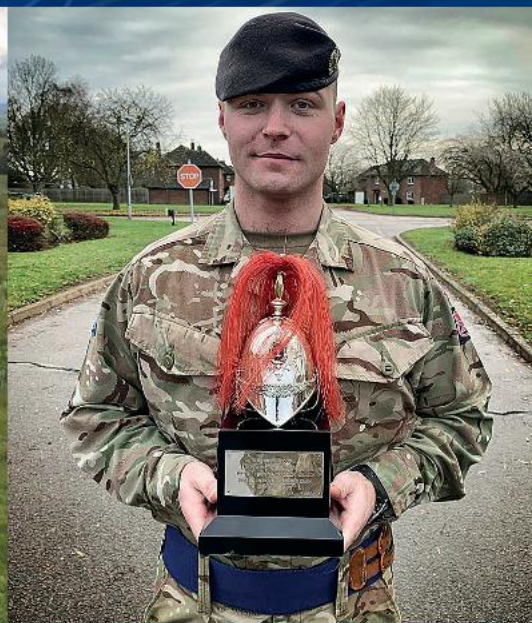
Sgt Comley

Leathersellers Trophy

Cpl Watson

Mann Trophy

LCpl Edmunds



Diary of Events

January

07–18 Platform Weapon Operators Course
 09–11 ACMT & LFTT ranges, STANTA
 14–31 PNCO Cadre, STANTA
 21–25 Ex ASKARI EAGLET

February

04–08 C Sqn BCS, BDTA
 12–14 ACMT & TLFTT ranges, Fingringhoe
 14–19 Ex ASKARI STORM recce
 23 B & C Sqns deploy on Ex ASKARI STORM

March

12 BG HQ deploys on Ex ASKARI STORM
 25 A Sqn return from Op CABRIT
 30–28 April A Sqn Post-Operational leave

April

10–20 BGHQ, B & C Sqns return from Ex ASKARI STORM
 20–06 May Easter leave
 29–10 May Ex ADRIATIC EAGLE
 29–10 May Ex ALPINE EAGLE
 29–10 May Ex WEST EXPRESS
 29–10 May Ex FLYING EAGLE

May

02–16 Ex WATERLOO RIDE
 07–09 Combat Arms Seaview Regatta
 08 Unit Health Fair
 10 Cavalry Memorial Officers' Dinner
 12 Cavalry Memorial Parade
 20–24 GPMG ranges, Beckingham
 27–14 June MCC & DCC ranges, Warcop

June

18 Medical Centre inspection
 20 Waterloo Dinner
 25–26 API training
 25 7th Brigade Commander visit
 26–27 Royal Norfolk Show
 28 Cocktail Party
 29 Regimental 60th Anniversary parade and Families Day



7 Bde Comd's visit



Ex WESSEX STORM

July

01 Memorial dedication and Standard laying-up, Llandaff Cathedral
 03 SHE Audit
 08 LEA
 09 Midlands Military Festival of Sport
 13 Officers' Mess Summer Ball
 17 Noah's Ark Nursery re-opening
 24 Luck Cup final
 27–18 August Summer leave

August

20–22 ACMT ranges, Middlewick
 24 BGHQ, A & B Sqns deploy Ex WESSEX STORM
 29 Tpr Rosier's funeral

September

16–20 Ex CAMBRIAN EAGLE
 27 BGHQ, A & B Sqns return from Ex WESSEX STORM
 30–04 October Ex PEAK PATROL

October

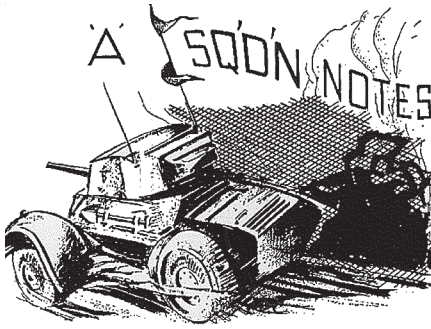
07–10 Ex LEARNED EAGLE (battlefield study), France
 07–13 December Sniper Operators Course
 12–15 Ex CAMBRIAN PATROL
 15–17 7th Brigade Study Period
 15–18 Heavy Weapons ranges, STANTA
 16 Austrian Ambassador and Defence Attaché visit
 21–25 RAC Basketball
 23 Rugby v 2 RIFLES
 26 Regimental Reunion, Cardiff

November

04–15 MCAST and CATT, Warminster
 04 RAC Squash
 12–13 Sharpshooter ranges, Beckingham
 16–26 Football tour, USA
 18–29 PNCO Cadre, STANTA
 19–21 GPMG ranges, Beckingham
 22–30 Rugby tour, Wales
 27 Rugby vs ITC
 25–28 RAC Boxing
 26–29 Mounted ranges, STANTA

December

03 Rugby vs 4 SCOTS
 04 Regimental Christmas Day
 09 A Sqn Christmas leave
 11 Rugby vs 33 Engrs
 14 Christmas leave



A Squadron

In another year of two halves A Squadron has returned from operations, enjoyed a healthy amount of leave and continued to train and take part in every event the Regiment has been committed to over 2019. Thankfully the faces have remained pretty constant throughout with a few of our number leaving on posting or to civilian life while we have welcomed a good number of new Troopers into our ranks.

The snow that was falling in Poland at the time of writing these notes last year continued to fall throughout the early part of 2019. January and February saw us routinely operating in temperatures of -15°C with the wind chill dropping it down to -25°C pretty quickly as the Jackals started moving. Whereas the first half of the tour focussed on exercise and training at Troop and Squadron level, the second half became a series of courses, ranges and trips around Poland that not only helped us qualify a number of new personnel but also gave us a fla-

vour of the country we were operating in. Capt Hind and Sgt Speed ran a grueling Potential NCO course in the January cold, complete with representation from all the other battlegroup nations. From section attacks in waist deep snow to presentations about everything from 'growing up in Austria' to 'why I don't like cats' it proved to be an eye-opening experience for students and DS alike. Everyone is now particularly wary of Tpr Harris 326. This event was seen as one of the hardest courses run during the deployment with those passing very much earning the respect of all other nations. LCpl Brennan is congratulated for claiming the top student prize amidst some tough competition.

Knowing that we would be returning to high readiness in the UK a series of ranges and lessons were then devised to help make this less painful. Lts Brockless and Martel were by this stage adept at bartering with the Polish range staff to enable us to fire, even when it was deemed that individual weapons were more dangerous than heavy weapons and we were banned from firing anything that wasn't vehicle mounted. The joys of multi-national operations. We did manage to finally satisfy Cpl Turner's urge to fire Javelin and were lucky enough to be allocated 4 missiles and 6 NLAW



Cpl Hutchings

which gave a number of young gunners a chance they would not usually get (as well as a good NATO media opportunity). The dying days of the tour focussed almost entirely on ensuring that we handed everything over in good order to our successors in A Sqn, Scots DG. As many readers will know many a regiment has lost its name thanks to a bad hand-over, some sterling work from across the Squadron ensured that we left with our heads held high.

While a winter deployment in open architecture vehicles would always have its challenges there is little doubt that

“...the second half became a series of courses, ranges and trips around Poland...”



“Come on – let's get this over with”



Venice. Kayaking. Adventurous, apparently



The Sqn Ldr congratulates Tpr Huish on not freezing to death



The SQMS plans his retirement

we all learnt a lot that will remain with us for a long time. Whether it be LCpl Murphy battling to get comms back to our US counterparts from just outside Kaliningrad to Sgt Edwards and Capt Alex Lewis (RA) leading a group on a battlefield study to Latvia we all returned home with stories that it would be hard to find from other parts of the world. A balance of trips away, to exercises and training made Cabrit a different sort of deployment. For young soldiers there remains the question of getting some form of formal recognition for this operational tour, hopefully this will have been forthcoming by the time this journal goes to print.

After some well-earned leave the Squadron split into seven groups to conduct Adventurous Training. Masterminded

After some well-earned leave the Squadron split into seven groups to conduct Adventurous Training.

by Lt Tom Oakley but delivered by a range of people, we were able to get nearly every soldier away for a week or two. Their articles are contained in this journal, some impressive work done by some junior soldiers to organise challenging trips abroad for their peers and seniors. Particular mention must go to LCpl Sims who is striding forward in organising climbing trips both at home and abroad.

As we returned from AT we settled back into regimental life, the first time all three squadrons had been in camp together for a number of years. There was no rest for the wicked as we packed up and headed off to Warcop in Cumbria for regimental ranges. A superb couple of weeks organised by the Training Wing gave us a chance to practise both mounted and dismounted firing to a high level, something we hadn't been able to achieve in Poland. None more so than A Sqn's Sgt Sudlow who delivered an excellent fire team and section attack range, complete with waist high water and dead sheep in all likely positions of cover. Cpls Hatton and Griffiths 147 were deemed to have executed the best dismounted section attack of the week while Sgt Speed and Cpl Hutchings claimed the award for the

Sadly the Training Wing hadn't placed out targets to test the anti-aircraft drills...

best mounted section. Amidst some hot competition and in the face of some terrible weather the SSM was pipped to the post by Cpl Jones 188, Tpr Logan and Tpr Smith as the best individual crew, a highly coveted award. There was much consternation at missed targets, inaccurate marking and accusations of underhand behaviour... Sadly the Training Wing hadn't placed out targets to test the anti-aircraft drills some gunners wanted to employ. Thankfully by the end of the period the standard of firing was excellent and a significant amount of ammo had been used up.

As we returned from Warcop A Squadron took over ownership of the regimental vehicle fleet and picked up where we had left Poland in trying to fix vehicles with the LAD. Sgt Wilkins and Cpl Hatton took the lead on entertaining thousands of chil-

The Sqn on OPFOR





DS team photo



There was plenty of this in evidence during a sunny and pleasant four weeks in September.



dren at the Norfolk Show while we went through an intensive period of drill practice to allow us to put on a good display for the 60th celebrations. Sadly the Luck Cup evaded us this year despite the best efforts of LCpl Branston and Tpr Al-Ameri to shoot straight in the basketball and Cpls Parsons and Flower to get one over on the wives in the netball competition. That said, after a day of racing around a go-kart track and proving that officers cannot drive we went on leave to get ready for what was to come in the Autumn.

No sooner had we returned from summer leave than we headed down to Salisbury Plain to play enemy for 3 Scots Battlegroup on Exercise Wessex Storm. With Jackal use on hold we were given a fleet of Land Rovers to get around the Plain and do our best to test the Scots and Latvians placed against us. As you will read elsewhere in this journal playing OPFOR gives a huge amount of freedom and a great chance to try new tactics with junior soldiers more often than not commanding the last few personnel that keep the 'friendly' battlegroup on the back foot. There was plenty of this in evidence during a sunny and pleasant four weeks in September. Early recce patrols by LCpl Moon and Sgt Wilkins proved that we could get through their defences unseen, Tpr Huish surprised one of their headquarters by walking through the tent, greeting them all and then shooting the company command chain before mangling to get out and Sgt Edwards hid in the ground while the Latvians walked over him only to rise from the earth and cause mayhem. Alongside these individual acts of heroism there was an equal number of hugely impressive recce actions that surprised both 3 Scots and the Training Staff. Cpl Jones 188 managed to infiltrate the battlegroup in defence of Imber village and then lead in 60 QDG soldiers to attack with complete surprise, LCpl Edmunds undid a company advance with one carefully placed



The Sqn Ldr wonders if he's incorrectly dressed



"And the 94th interesting thing about this hill is..."



They'd found where Tim Jones keeps his hat



The Guinness World Record snoring attempt



Lt Martel dreams of the glamorous life of the cavalry



Like a coiled spring



Sgt Wilkins gets briefed up

OP and some excellent reporting, to remain in place and then wreak havoc to their follow on forces. Suffice to say that the QDG OPFOR left Salisbury Plain with its head held high, a healthy respect for 3 Scots and the reassurance that we had maintained the standard set by those in Kenya earlier in the year.

Upon return to camp the focus once again shifted to fixing vehicles and dealing with the routine demands of trawls, courses and training. LCpl Clarke and Tpr Gething successfully badged as snipers with 2 Rifles while LCpls Moon and Edmunds have completed the first sniper cadre run by QDG for many years. A superb achievement that starts to address a capability gap we have had for some time. The drive to re-invest in specialist capabilities has been at the forefront of the squadron efforts for the last couple of years, with Cpl Turner leading the way with regimental anti-tank training. He recently outstripped many infantrymen and qualified as a Javelin Section Commander. His cadre of Javelin experts

is rapidly increasing across the Regiment with LCpl Hickmott taking responsibility for training many of the next generation of Javelin operators in the Regiment. Similarly, the traditional courses continue: Cpls Thapa, Couch and Bould all successfully completed Crew Commanders and have now returned to the Squadron ready to put it to good use on Salisbury Plain next year.

With Exercise Wessex Storm in February 2020 looming large in the regimental calendar the complexity of training started to escalate. In November we moved back down to Salisbury Plain, this time to spend two weeks going cross eyed in the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer. Despite

having completed numerous training events over the last year there had been little chance to operate as a recce squadron which CATT gave us the chance to do. Once everyone had worked out which way was up, 'accidentally' shot their mates a few times and fallen into rivers when crossing bridges we embarked on a series of squadron level simulated exercises to run through our own basic procedures. This culminated in the second week when we operated for the first time alongside B and C Sqns to fight as a Battlegroup doing our best to find, destroy and evade the simulated enemy who appeared to have a brilliant ability to see through hills and woodblocks (much to Lt Brockless's dismay).



The drive to re-invest in specialist capabilities has been at the forefront of the squadron efforts...



In and amongst all this Regimental and Squadron activity there have been plenty of individual achievements of note. Tpr Parker spends much of her time repre-



Sharing G4 dits



The 2IC explains the plan

senting the Regiment, RAC and Army Golf teams, Tpr Al-Ameri leads the QDG Basketball team and plays for the RAC while Tpr Smith has returned from a 6 month period with a dance company touring the UK. It would be callous to not also give the Squadron 2ic (Capt Hind) a mention, a man who can juggle the demands of multiple Excel spreadsheets with the onerous task of representing the RAC at cricket throughout the summer and an arduous Defence Engagement visit to India. It is also a year that has seen a large number of A Squadron individuals stand out at Regimental level. LCpl (now Cpl) Bould won the Mann Trophy for best LCpl/Tpr of 2018, Cpl (now Sgt) Edwards received the Leathersellers' Trophy (complete with generous cheque and Regimental cufflinks) as the best Corporal and the year was capped off by LCpl Edmunds being singled out as the recipient of the Mann Trophy 2019. A superb achievement by all in what are hotly contested and very highly regarded Regimental awards.

Alongside this the steady drumbeat of equipment care and routine activity has kept us busy on the short periods we have had in camp. Troop Leaders and Sergeants have earned their money managing their vehicles, equipment and personnel so that we can train and deploy again early 2020 to Salisbury Plain. All of this amidst a very full programme and with manpower that routinely gets pulled away to support the wide range of tasks the Army demands of us. 2019 has proven to be a year where the Squadron has kept up the pace of training and progression demanded of it in order to be ready for exercise and operations in coming months. Every year is a busy year for those at Regimental Duty and we continue to demand a lot of our personnel, thankfully we are fortunate that we have so many that continue to deliver to such a high standard and inspire others to ensure that we remain 'First and Foremost'.

CER-B



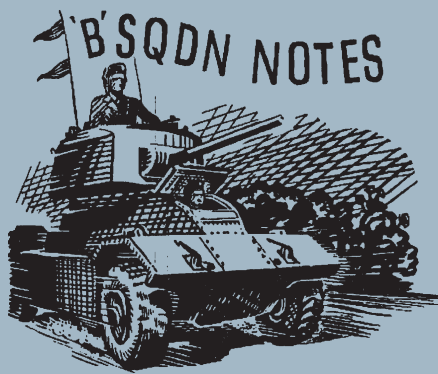
"Is this a wood or is it a forest?"



At the Royal Norfolk Show



Sgt Sudlow bangs on about climbing



B Squadron

In a desperate bid to start this update without using the fabled phrase 'It's been another busy year...' I plumbed the depths (read shallows) of my knowledge to bring you a blindingly good, innovative and wholly new summative phrase by which to lead into this review of B Sqn's year. Suffice to say I failed to come up with anything half decent and so, reticent to break with tradition: It has indeed been another busy year for B Sqn personnel. That said, for the Sqn itself this was a year of re-generation both in structure and purpose having provided the backfill for both A and C Sqns' deployments on the Op Cabrit Main Effort over 2018/19.

The start of the year saw the reconstituted and reinforced B Sqn preparing for its deployment to Kenya as part of the wider Regimental commitment of Opposition Force (OPFOR) against 2 Rifles Battlegroup. Following plenty of mince pies over leave the regenerated Sqn headed out to Stanford Training Area (STANTA) in Thetford for Ex Askari Eaglet. This provided a great chance to bond and form the Sqn teams while developing the dismounted soldiering



Cdre Smirnoff and Gang

skills which would see the Sqn through a year of largely dismounted focussed reconnaissance activity. Despite the wintry January weather unable to replicate the equally challenging heat of Africa, morale was high, leaving Maj Duncan Wiggins and WO2 Dale Thomas satisfied that the Sqn was ready for a showdown with 2 Rifles in just over a month's time.

The Squadron flew out to Kenya in early March leaving the cold damp of the UK to enjoy some equatorial sunshine. Working alongside C Sqn and RHQ, B Sqn had a fantastic two months in a testing and unique environment operating often in close proximity to lions and other big game, honing their tactical soldiering

abilities with many JNCOs stepping up into command and developing in spades. Numerous successes were notable: the perfect Close Target Reconnaissance achieved with stealth and cunning resulting in a complete unpicking of 2 Rifles in the follow on attack, CASEVACs aplenty being managed by the SSM, best (TES) shot of the QDG Battle Group awarded to Cpl Barnard AGC and Tpr Thomas 722 receiving the Commander BATUK's coin. Following the hard-fought (and successful) battles against 2 Rifles, many members of the Sqn found themselves enjoying the brighter side of life in the East African heat on AT. The Sqn collectively attended Savage Wilderness, an Adventurous Training concentration,



Following plenty of mince pies over leave the regenerated Sqn headed out to Stanford Training Area...

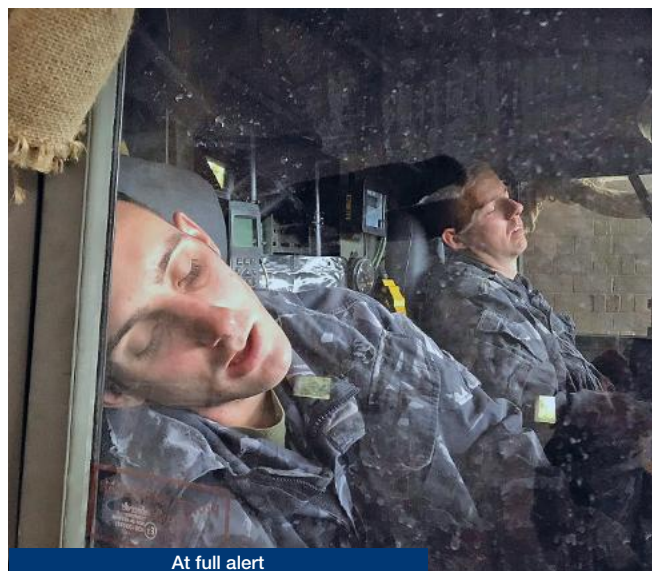


Ex Askari Eaglet





LCpl Knuckey briefly interrupts looking in the mirror to look at the camera



At full alert

completing several activities ranging from white water kayaking to rock climbing, a great way for the Sqn to relax and let off some steam after their toils in the African heat just weeks before. After AT, the Sqn found itself having an unexpected two more weeks in Kenya, courtesy of the upheaval in Sudan. The extra time, though frustrating, allowed individuals from the Sqn to further explore the local culture, sights and attractions before all returning home for some much-anticipated and well deserved Easter leave.

Leave, a time that was relaxing for many but not the SSM and SQMS who decided it was a good idea to run the London Marathon with a 20 kg stretcher. An unthinkable task to many with words such as hideous and disgusting being just a few of the terms I have heard them use to describe the experience. Regardless of this they completed the Marathon in a little over seven hours – an exceptional achievement.

Following leave, the Sqn swiftly found itself preparing to deploy again, this time to Warcop for the Regimental range package. The Sqn deployed in May ready for a week of dismounted ranges followed by a week of mounted ranges. The dismounted ranges saw a progression of firing up to section level Live Fire Tactical Training, allowing the Troop Leaders to get muddy leading the section attacks. The mounted week saw the Sqn progress up to section Live Fire Exercise 6. The progression of shooting enabled the Sqn to hold a number of competitions to determine the best

crew/driver/operator. Top Annual Crew Test was won in typical style by the SSM WO2 Thomas commanding with LCpl Knuckey operating and Tpr Hopkins driving. Tpr Hopkins also won the top driver award, nimbly moving his Jackal across the range. Finally, the top operator award was won by Tpr Moore 318 who shot exceptionally well for the whole week. The Sqn returned from ranges with a four week run up to Summer Leave, a chance to enjoy camp routine, summer parties and the generally outstanding Norfolk summer weather. The Sqn secured the Luck Cup being presented this alongside several other awards for Sqn personnel most notably two 7 Brigade Commander Commendations: one for the Sqn clerk Pte Limbu AGC for all his hard work when in RHQ transferring the Regiment to the new computer system and to B Sqn SQMS SSgt Davies for his exceptional performance throughout his tenure. Before leave commenced it was also time to change Sqn Ldrs with Maj Duncan Wiggins, departing to start Staff College, handing over to Maj Ben Matthews and also Capt Harry Russell providing vital continuity as the Sqn 2IC role also swapped hands from Capt George Jackson to Capt Joe Kite.

It was, however, during Summer Leave that the Regiment received the sad news of the death of Tpr Sion Rosier of B Sqn. Completely unexpected, this shocked the Sqn to the core, and it is admirable the way the soldiers reacted, conducting themselves outstandingly. Be they his close friends who were on guard at the time the news arrived or those who balanced the family's wishes and supported them while also preparing the Sqn for Ex Wessex Storm 4/19 the team rose to the challenge such awful events present. The team of mixed Sqn soldiers did a superb job supporting his very well attended funeral at Llandaff Cathedral where Sion was provided the best send-off possible by the Regiment.



'King' of health and safety



Radio Joe



The mounted week saw the Sqn progress up to section Live Fire Exercise 6.



In late August B Sqn deployed with A Sqn and RHQ onto Ex Wessex Storm 4/19 as part of the OPFOR for 3 Scots Battlegroup. As with Kenya this was a great opportunity to train as a Sqn, albeit outside of our core role. As light infantry, the focus for B Sqn was to develop and polish our dismounted skill set and develop our junior commanders and senior Troopers while also performing as a team our Command and Control functions. The privilege of OPFOR is that, as well as learning from one's own experience, you learn large amounts from the force you are opposing, both good and bad.

Starting with Battle Exercises we had the excitement of first defending a 'Shrewton Street' in Copehill Down Village against the Latvian Company which was attached to 3 Scots. A fast and aggressive group that had different tactics to our own and a definite penchant for their machine guns, there was also something

eerie about facing an opposition that had, to the untrained ear, Russian sounding accents. Fast forward to the 3 Scots B Company, deceptive tactics, slow and methodical (which made them fast!) and silent a real demonstration to us of how to fight in the urban environment.

The other key battle exercise we rotated into was a rural scenario. An initial bit of acting was required during which Capt Harry Russell showed his promise putting in a strong performance that Sacha Baron Cohen would have been proud of. Capt Russell then led the Platoon attack



A fast and aggressive group that had different tactics to our own...



the following morning on the trench system. A simple but effective plan, helped significantly by the raw aggression of the Sqn's junior members, resulted in all but three trenches of the company position being taken and the Field Training Unit Infantry Staff complimenting our junior soldiers and commanders on their skills and drills.

Onwards into the FTX and the Sqn (and Regt) proved what a tough and crafty enemy QDG can be. Great success was had by the employment of stay behind observation posts and the use of 4x4s by Sgts Chater and Petre to harass the 3 Scots Rear echelon. Pte Limbu





A live update from the gym

AGC on numerous occasions demonstrated that you can take the man out the Gurkhas but not the Gurkha out of the man and the Sqn as a whole maintained an offensive spirit to be proud of as counter attack after counter attack sought to slowly unpick the enemy during the various engagements.

The end of Wessex Storm heralded the departure of SQMS SSgt Rhys Davies who moved to the QM Dept to be replaced by SSgt Fisher returning from posting in Bovington. No opportunity was to be squandered as the Sqn continued crunching through crucial individual courses to enable the Sqn and Regiment to be prepared for the challenges that await us on Wessex Storm 1/20 (WS 1/20) and beyond. This started with the Platform Weapon Operators Course led by Lt George Barham and supported superbly by Sgt Karl O'Brien, consisting of two weeks of instruction followed by a week of ranges during which we qualified 23 crewmen and also had the privilege of hosting the Austrian Ambassador who clearly enjoyed getting behind the .50 cal again many years after his national service. Sgt Glyn Williams led the Regiment's drive in the delivery of snipers by supporting numerous sniper cadres, the final of which was convened by the Regiment with six QDG (half the course) on it ably supported by B Sqn's very own Cpl Brown.

Within the space of a few weeks B Sqn regained a fleet of vehicles to manage courtesy of the Land Training Fleet and the challenge thereof to get them fit ready for Ex WS 1/20 and in support of the Regiment's drive to readiness. With vehicles on the tank park it gave a great sense of purpose to daily camp routine with the LAD led by SSgt Jules Davidson



Within the space of a few weeks B Sqn regained a fleet of vehicles to manage...



The progression across the two weeks was rewarding for all...



doing brilliantly to support both B and C Sqn in the drive for availability and the Sqn personnel supporting level one activity equally well not least of all Tpr Moore 318 whose previous career as a vehicle mechanic proved a huge benefit. As if pre-planned however, as the vehicles arrived the majority of the Sqn's Commanders and Drivers disappeared off to exercise on the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer and support RHQ's Combined Arms Staff Trainer. CATT proved, as ever, brilliant at working through the processes and procedures that we will put into action in the rain and cold of Ex WS 1/20. The progression across the two weeks was rewarding for all and, even when only 20% of the Sqn was combat effective at the end of a particularly hazardous delay, the individual and team effort was clear. LCpl Pritchard and Tpr Kenny even brought a tear to the CATT SO2's eye as, without any main armament left and numerous 'injuries', they proceeded to ram the advancing BTR-80s winning a 'virtual VC' between them.

As we sprinted towards Christmas the focus was on four things: preparation for Readiness (a host of Administrative and Training targets to be met), vehicle and equipment availability, sweep up training on the vehicles and importantly having fun while accomplishing it all. The Sqn sent nine on the football tour and four on the Rugby team's tour of Wales while Lt Seb Maxwell and Sgt Jamie Chater planned and executed a challenging PNCO Cadre on behalf of the Regiment with B Sqn's own Tpr Parsons receiving Top Student after an impressive performance, particularly considering he had only been in the Regt for seven months. Roll on Christmas week at the Regiment and at last B Sqn, for the first time since

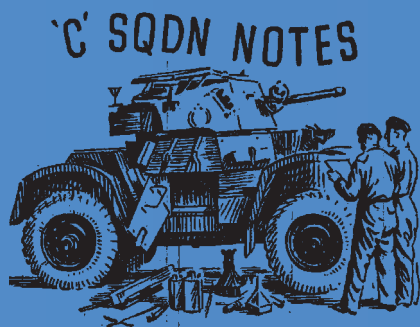


They're not even twins

Ex WS 4/19, were complete in camp allowing us all to celebrate Regimental Christmas together – but not before Sgt Comley had led the B Sqn effort in the Regimentally organised conceptual training which included several demonstrations on the backdoor training area involving a Tp of B Sqn. Christmas Day itself and the Best Fancy-Dress during PT went to Tpr Gale whose Minion costume was carried off with comic perfection, Sgt Bob Comley was awarded the Queen Elizabeth Trophy, awarded to the best sergeant in the Regiment, a superb accolade to all his hard work and Tpr Moore 318 received a Regimental Gerber for his exceptional performance over the year. Tied to this was also the award to LCpl Lewis of his UK Armed Forces Under 23 Cap, a superb achievement with a bright future in rugby ahead. In the last week we were also blessed with the arrival of two further troopers straight out of training. It is reassuring to see first hand the quality of recruit Bovington appears to be producing. Finally, and slipping in with the New Years Honours List, WO2 Dale Thomas was awarded a Commander Field Army 3* Commendation for his exceptional performance over the last year in challenging circumstances, suffice to say that where there has been B Sqn success the SSM has been the bedrock upon which it is all built.

Another busy year? Of course it was but this is 'good busy' with soldiers experiencing things many of their civilian friends can only wonder about and who watch them in awe. As 2020 approaches with an operational deployment in the offing the 'Why' is clear which offers an immeasurable boost to the morale and feeling of purposefulness to the soldiers. The Sqn look forward to the challenges that 2020 and beyond brings.

BCJM



C Squadron

Although there was plenty of time in ownership of the Regiment's Jackal fleet, the main theme of this year has been dismounted soldiering, with playing enemy in Kenya and taking part in the Cambrian Patrol. There has been plenty of time when the Squadron has been quite disjointed, with troops employed on a multitude of tasks, but we end the year back as single team and with a focus firmly on deploying as Light Cavalry on Salisbury Plain in February. Along the way there was a lot to enjoy, a lot to laugh at and a lot to be proud of too.

The year began with return from a generous four-week Christmas leave (bolstered by the last bit of Cabrit POTL) and we kicked off with taking over the vehicle fleet from B Sqn. Even after their valuable work in the autumn there was still a lot to do and the boys spent a good deal of time on the tank park or up at the LAD. In the meantime Lt Kite and Sgt Evans ran a C Sqn-led PNCO Cadre on Stanford Training Area during some particularly cold weather that saw student numbers whittled down severely. From those that lasted the course Tpr (now LCpl) Daley was the pick of the bunch and was duly rewarded with commanding the other

survivors through some unnecessarily complex drill on the pass-off parade. Needless to say, it was done with the expected style and panache. The other training event in this period was Ex Askari Eagle, run by Sgt Welfoot to prepare the Squadron for their dismounted role in Kenya. Although it was just on the RBSM airfield, the final night of rain, a dawn attack and the inevitable casevac finishing up on the rugby pitch meant a testing and memorable time. This left just enough time to hand over the fleet to a ROG team led by the SSM WO2 Davies and Sgt Veasey before a week of pre-Kenya leave.

Deployment via South Cerney, Brize Norton and Nairobi to Nanyuki was long but smooth. Too smooth, we should have noticed, and feared the karmic backlash. But we were eager to crack

on, and after a week in Nanyuki acclimatising and spanning a particularly dodgy fleet we set off for the road trip to Archer's Post. By the first crossroads at Chaos Corner we had lost three vehicles already but the rest of the trip went well and we ended the day setting up camp in a stunning spot, on a broad level piece of sand with mountains to our back and the sunset to our front. We were missing quite a few of our hierarchy at this point as they were needed as range team to run the CALFEX for 2 Rifles, so the rest of us were teamed up with the remnants from B Sqn for a bit of acclimatisation and training on the area. We battled the heat, the wild animals, bandits and eventually 2 Rifles at the famous 'God's Bridge,' which we breached four out of the six times we tried.

With Phase 2 over we re-formed as C Sqn once again. Those who had stepped up to cover the command positions had performed well and the range staff returning had to be on top of their game! We had a strong start spending a good three hours defending a large 'FOB' against wave after wave of attackers. With a smidgen of cunning and a hefty amount of offensive spirit, they were still outside

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Too smooth, we should have noticed, and feared the karmic backlash.

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Ex Peak Patrol,
patrolling in the
Peak District



the berms when the DS eventually called endex. Our high confidence carried us onto good performances for the rest of the exercise, with one regrettable exception when a well-sited Rifles OP forced us into an unplanned 14km detour to get onto the objective in one piece. Tpr Wood excelled with 'the General,' in one phase taking nine of the top ten longest kills. Numerous midnight encounters with dangerous cats were complemented by the wonders in daylight of giraffe, zebra and gazelle roaming across the plains. Truly a beautiful place.

The affection for the country was slightly dimmed when a revolution in Sudan affected the planned military flights to pick us up and we were looking at four weeks until the next gap in the RAF's diary. Fortunately, after a few anxious days, Army HQ authorised for everyone to return on civilian flights. It still took a couple of weeks to get everyone back though, happily still just in time for Easter leave.

Return from Easter leave saw us taking the fleet back from the ROG and a mad scramble to get them ready for Regimental ranges in Warcop. After a few fraught stables parades and the odd late finish, they were good to go and we headed off up north to Cumbria. The newly arrived 2Lt Lewis was RCO for the mounted range and under the guiding hand of SSgt Beal ran an excellent shoot. All crews passed ACT and section first time, with a few achieving 100% scores. Lt Cooper, LCpl Foster and Tpr Astbury were top crew by a small margin. With time and ammo to spare at the end, we ran a section competition and after a nailbiting finish Sgt Welfoot's and Sgt Evans' sections came joint top. Happily the weather was fine throughout, despite low cloud covering the top of 'the back-stop' and often threatening to sweep down. The same cannot be said for our dismounted week, which started with gale force winds and added lashing rain as we reached the section attacks on the Wednesday. Ah well – if it ain't raining, it ain't training – though I have never seen so many people crammed into such a small crew shelter. With quite so many half-frozen sausage rolls. The SQMS's tuckshop made a handsome contribution to Sqn Funds that week.

Back at RBSM we finished handing over the remaining vehicles for A Sqn in time



At the Thiepval Memorial



No boys, you can't bring him home



C Sqn's role was to provide the camouflage and weapons stands for the Families' Day.





LCpl Rowlands at one with the assault bike



Winning the shield



The victorious warrior fitness team



Attention now turned to the second major dismounted serial of the year: the Cambrian Patrol.



for Waterloo and the Regimental 60th, of which more elsewhere in this Journal. C Sqn's role was to provide the camouflage and weapons stands for the Families' Day. Of note, Brig Richmond presented SSM WO2 Ruddy with a commendation at the parade and SQMS Walker was a proud member of the colour party for both the parade and at Llandaff Cathedral. Over this time we took part in the Luck Cup and, thanks to some forgettable results, battled to third place overall, but managed wins in the warrior fitness led by LCpl Rowlands and netball led by LCpl Old. I am not sure how those two disciplines go together, but clearly they do.

Attention now turned to the second major dismounted serial of the year: the Cambrian Patrol. C Sqn had been tasked by the CO to enter 'at least one' team and we were determined to send two. With a certain amount of previous experience in the Sqn, we ran four weeks of training in July for all of us with the intention to whittle numbers down to a squad during a selection exercise after summer leave. Other requirements and injuries gradually crept up on us, however, and the main draw on our manpower after leave was supporting Ex Wessex Storm RLS and range team where the rest of the Regiment was playing enemy. However in between this we fitted in some more Cambrian training, notably an excellent exercise in the Black Mountains run by Sgt Davies 220 and a team-led yomp round the Peak District in (mostly) misleadingly fantastic weather.

Just prior to the actual event we greeted the Swiss Special Forces team whom we were hosting at Robertson for the last week, giving them some training in the SA80 and British reporting procedures. Despite courses and injuries forcing a few last minute changes, our two teams deployed to Wales with confidence high. It was to be dented soon after moving off, however, as bad weather and injuries took their toll. The first team, led by Lt Groome and Cpl Howells, lost three members before the water crossing – but pushed on to complete the challenge with only five and still managed to get a bronze. Lt Cooper and LCpl Smith's team lost two early on but still managed a silver. Both teams were bitterly disappointed not to get the top prize but those who finished had shown guts and determination in the face of the odds, not to mention military skills, that they should

be proud of. No doubt they will be pushing to get back there next year and settle the 'unfinished business'.

With this part of the year coming to a close the Sqn headed to a nearby go-kart track for a bit of cohesiveness activity, although not all were exactly cohesive with the wet track. It seems we have some budding Ayrton Sennas among our troop leaders as they mysteriously dominated the podium. The day finished with a BBQ and a few beers in the Sabre Club, leading into a long weekend. Around the same time, SQMS Walker headed off to Berlin run the marathon there, with a most respectable time of 3h20, and a small team joined the Battlefield Study, with LCpl Bitten and Tpr 'Tarmac' Lewis 321 being especially praised for their presentations. Sgt Rai also boasted a QDG team 100km along the South Downs to a strong finish in the Trailwalker event, a 'brave' choice for Lt Cooper and LCpl Rowlands just two weeks before the Cambrian Patrol.

It was now time to return at long last to cavalry work and after some conceptual training about half the Sqn headed down to CATT in Warminster with the rest of the Regiment. This was a good run out to remember what Voice Procedure is and how to move as a pair across country. Having shaken off the rust in the first week, the second week saw some good tactical work, especially some good javelin sitting and shooting. We also started to take over some vehicles and get back

into the saddle, so to speak, of driving and commanding – as much as possible within the limits of the safety restrictions. The autumn also heralded the start of the sports season. A lucky few headed off to California and Wales for the football and rugby tours and had a most merry time by the sound of it, even playing the odd match! Sgt Welfoot had obviously misunderstood the concept of the Regiment going on CAST and instead got his own leg put in a cast, having got it caught in between Cpl De Jongh and the ball in the first 15 minutes of the first rugby match. Attrition by sports injury was another theme of the year for C Sqn, from the Sqn Ldr hurting himself playing tennis to Tpr Jones busting his ankle on the ice with the Nordic team, and many other examples in between. Perhaps more strength and conditioning is required in 2020.

After an enjoyable Christmas week, with the year complete we knocked off for leave and a chance to reflect back. As well as the Sqn's activity, there were a lot of praise-worthy individual efforts. Our two 'tracksuit soldiers' continued to perform at the highest levels of their

disciplines, with Tpr Robins winning national and world Taekwondo titles and Tpr Mahoney winning inter-services and national development boxing titles. Tpr Allen qualified as a sniper and Cpl Brocklehurst grabbed a hat-trick of top student places on Advanced Signals, Land Navigation and Signals Instructor courses, the last with a 'A Schools' result. Cpl Howells completed the challenging Jungle Warfare Instructor Course (rarely without growing a beard). LCpl Old continued to run the basketball and SSgt Walker the cross country. The new SQMS SSgt Roberts skips the rugby and Nordic and Alpine skiing was led by Lts Groome and Cooper respectively. A number of the junior ranks played their part in the Quarter Guard and were always well-turned out.

Not only can we be pleased with what we have achieved individually this year, we can be proud of what we have contributed to the Regiment. There are solid foundations for a strong performance on Ex Wessex Storm and whatever the rest of the year brings you can be sure that C Sqn will be at the heart of it. I would like to extend my personal thanks to all those in the Sqn, in particular those who have worked hard this year to organise and run our events and to those who have worked hard while taking part. Although we are the junior squadron within the Regiment, our ethos is always to be 'First and Foremost'.

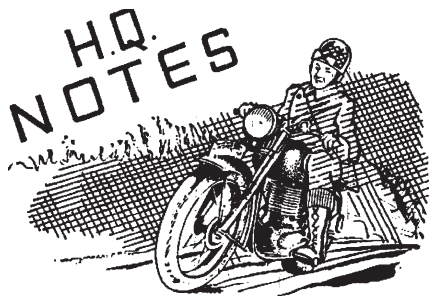
DCMH



As well as the Sqn's activity, there were a lot of praise-worthy individual efforts.



Sgt Flint receives his Cabrit commendation



HQ Squadron

Well, what an epic year it has been, having taken over HQ Sqn in April this year from Maj Alexander Dumont (Monty), it has been delightfully busy indeed. Firstly, I would like to wish Monty all the very best for Staff College and his future posting at the National Training Centre in California. The camp seems quieter without Sabot (his pet dog) terrorising everyone. Another change within the Chain of Command has been the departure of WO2 Jimmy Brisco ('The People's WO') who has been posted to his second home 'Bovington' as TDSG Author AFVTT. We would like to wish him and his family all the very best and thank him for his efforts as the SSM. Welcome to



The Sqn has truly been at the forefront of some exciting and vibrant training serials...



WO2 Gav Griffiths (Ginge Griff) who has been promoted to WO2 and subsequently selected as HQ SSM from HQ SQMS. I would like to thank Sgt Hinton who covered as SQMS for six months and I must say, did a sterling job. Finally, welcome to SSgt Navunisaravi (Nav) who has returned from FTU as HQ SQMS. The Sqn has truly been at the forefront of some exciting and vibrant training serials, which will be highlighted throughout this year's journal.

Early on in the year saw the 80th anniversary of the Royal Armoured Corps (RAC). The RAC formation took place on April 4, 1939, six months before the onset of World War II. To celebrate such an historic milestone all RAC regiments were tasked with travelling around their local villages and towns with flags and signs to promote what has been achieved by the RAC within their 80 years of service.

Initially this year HQ Sqn heavily contributed to the Rear Operations Group (ROG)



It isn't easy being green

during A Sqn's deployment to Op Cabrit and the rest of the Regiment to Kenya. This resulted in the Squadron sustaining both deployments, looking after the welfare of both families and soldiers that were left to guard the camp, while also completing external career courses. The Welfare department did a fantastic job ensuring that everyone was looked after. They also executed a fantastic QDG 60th celebration for all serving and non-serving members of the Regiment which will be explained in detail separately in this



Loves a clipboard, the RQ, he does



Sgt Trudgill works on his LinkedIn photo



The 2IC in a rare moment of levity

journal. Capt Jason Davies (Butch) the Welfare Officer will allude to exactly what activities were organised during the year but I think you will all agree, our people do not go without and are catered for in every way. The RAO Department organised Ex Waterloo Ride a cycle ride from Lands End to John O'Groats. This was predominantly for the injured soldiers within the Regiment who could not conduct mainstream PT. This was a really positive event and a great achievement for all who took part. Thanks go to Capt Tom Crossman-Kellie for all his hard work. We also say goodbye to Tom and wish him and his family all the very best for the future. Welcome to Mark Eldridge, big boots to fill. On the return of the rest from Poland and Kenya, the HQ Sqn kicked in to a conceptual training period in the lead up to deploying on WS 4/19 as OPFOR against 3 Scots.

However, before we could deploy on WS the Regiment needed to conduct a range package in both Mounted Close Combat (MCC) and Dismounted Close Combat (DCC) functions. This was to be in Warcop for a three-week period seeing all for squadrons rotating through. It was organised and executed by the Training Wing with Capt Dan Brown and SSgt Beal at the helm of the planning of the ranges. The QM, Capt Chris Homewood, was responsible for the RLS during the three-week period, ensuring the needs of the soldiers were met. A well planned and executed event which enabled the Regiment to stay current with its war-fighting skills and drills. The TW as a cohort have really invested in the complexities of getting soldiers to the correct start state for operations, ensuring also that all the mandated courses for a Light Cavalry unit are met. Not just taking pictures wearing Russian fighter pilot helmets. Amongst other achievements, they finally managed to get soldiers on to a sniper course, allowing the Regiment to enhance its specialist qualifications as



The Regiment have not trained or operated as a battlegroup since 2013.



they move forward to improve the Light Cavalry concept.

The Regiment have not trained or operated as a battlegroup since 2013. This meant that the echelons were not tested and that the sustainment during exercises and operations were not up to the required standard when conducting future operations in the UK and overseas. The 'So what' was practise and rehearse, thrashing out the basic framework and principles of the Logistical concept including CASEVAC/MEDEVAC timelines around the Conceptual Model Terrain Board, in order for us all to understand the A1/2 and B Echelon functions as we move forward to SPTA as OPFOR. The RAP also had the opportunity to establish itself fully and actually function as a RAP for the first time in 5 years, practising how it triaged casualties on the ground and some of the treatment delivered whilst at the RAP. Well done Cpls Newbury and Siddall for their efforts. WS 4/19 witnessed a full set up of the RAP within A1 which then set the Sqn up for success in both CAST/CATT in Warminster early November and CSTTX in Sennelager, Germany. The Regiment will then be tested operating as a BG during Wessex Storm 1/20 on Salisbury Plain Training Area for six weeks early 2020.

The Motor Transport Officer Capt Matt Hansen has had a challenge in his first job as an LE Officer, ensuring that the core function of MT rolled out as A1 during WS 4/19 OPFOR. This looked seamlessly straightforward to the eye of an outsider who has never comprehended



They call him Buddhi Two Screens



Capt Brown prepares to receive his MPAR



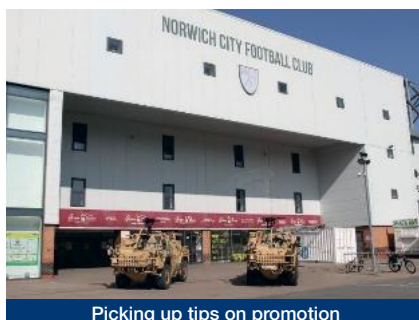
Over 334 years of service between them



Gunfire on Christmas morning



Anyone got any blue camcream?



Picking up tips on promotion



The dream team

the training burden that MT has – however, the MTO and the MTWO WO2 Tommy Hughes along with Sgt (Sonic) Davies have all grafted hard to ensure MT is current and competent to deliver its role as A1 within the BG concept. Matt will allude to his build up and training progression in his article. Just to finish with MT Capt Chud Ruddock has now left the Army and the Sqn would like to wish him all the best for the future. His right hand man WO2 Mitchell also has left the Army, so all the very best and thank you for your efforts within the Department.

Both the QM & QM(T) Departments have been equally busy in the sustainment and demands of the Regiment. They have re-invigorated tired old policies with realistic new ones. This enables the Regiment to operate more efficiently in all that it does. The QM (Capt Chris Homewood) has been working hard liaising with DIO ensuring that the camp is always looking pristine and fit for purpose for our families and soldiers. The QM(T) (Capt Jason Bongo Davies) has ensured that all the demands of the Regiment (2ic Maj Jerome Tyson) have been met by tactical liaison with the Land Training Fleet Warminster (LTF(W)). This has been a team effort with the LAD (Capt Scott Dougal EME) to ensure that the vehicles we receive are in a taskworthy condition, with fitter teams pushing forward to Warminster to conduct work on the vehicles, prior to them coming to the Regiment. Also, our Health and Safety Advisor Capt Martyn Flitcroft has done a sterling job preventing anyone going to jail, ensuring we toe the party line while conducting safe and legal training.



All the Fijian soldiers organised a great cultural experience for all of the regiment to enjoy.



October saw the celebration of Fiji day. All the Fijian soldiers organised a great cultural experience for all of the regiment to enjoy. This was the first time the QDG Fijian soldiers have had the opportunity to celebrate in RBSM. It started off with a traditional welcoming ceremony that is always done to Fijian chiefs or chief guests, so for this day it was the Commanding Officer Lt Col. Hugo Lloyd, HQ Sqn Ldr Maj Paul Jones and Welfare Officer Capt Butch Davies. It involved a traditional drink kava (grog) ceremony, a church service and a brief history of Fiji which the CO addressed to all the guests. Fijian civilian guests and their families were invited to the day as well as serving soldiers from the Regiment. Food was traditional, mainly cooked by the men in a "Lovo", an underground oven which had been fired up at 6am that morning, but not forgetting the delicious cooking of the wives just to add up a variety of dishes on the day. The Fijian soldiers have been our brothers in arms as Commonwealth soldiers for a long time and it was great to get a more in-depth historic knowledge of their traditions and life back home. Thanks go to Sgt 'Sky' Korovulavula and his team for a great day.

The RCMO and ARCMO have ensured that all MS within the Regiment has been

faultless and delivered in a timely manner. Soldiers reporting is important and both have worked extremely hard to meet demanding timelines. In the autumn the ARCMO swapped over with SSgt Gaz Roberts moving to C Sqn SQMS and SSgt Steve Walker coming the other way.

The year ended with the traditional Christmas Day celebrations with the Sqn CoC waking up the single living in soldiers with gunfire and bacon rolls. Later we indulged in some light PT with games, seeing HQ beat everyone in the tug-a-war, followed by a church service, lunch and then the traditional mess visits. A great day had by all. To conclude it has been a very busy period indeed, we have refreshed and rehearsed our core role, ensuring the echelons are fully trained and that we have the trained people to do this. The hard work of the Training Wing and RCMO Dept has really paid off as BGHQ are well established and can operate efficiently as a now more dynamic and agile group, who can deliver communications at reach. We look forward to the challenges that 2020 has to offer with firstly, a deployment to Germany for CSTTX in Sennelager. Secondly, a test exercise in SPTA on WS 1/20 for six weeks. The Regiment is also due to deploy to Mali later on in the year which will bring pre-deployment training over the summer. More will follow through the HHQ updates.

I hope you have enjoyed catching up on what the Squadron has been up to. Thank you.

PDJ



The famous 'conceptual training'



LCpl Jones seeks out Bongo

Quartermaster Department

In line with pretty much every other article, "It's been another busy year".

From a department perspective, it's fair to say we've been stripped, stretched, bashed and bruised trying to meet the needs of the Regiment deploying far and wide, with most incumbents having to step up and down out of their comfort zones. But through some weird stroke of luck (potentially) we have within reason not been found wanting, but let's be honest, G4 just happens doesn't it?

From supporting the Live Firing Ranges in Warcop to deploying pretty much the entire Regiment out the door as OPFOR on Ex Askari Storm (BATUK), then subsequently on Ex Wessex Storm (SPTA), we have collectively driven in ensuring that the logistical needs of the Regiment have not only been met but surpassed. Although everyone will swing a lantern, none of this is easy these days, with Whole Fleet Management restricting the availability of vehicles and equipment at Regimental Duty, so the team often finds itself travelling at short notice the length and breadth of the country, begging, borrowing and stealing (not in the literal sense) to support the multiple and overlapping activities the Regiment are involved in.

Capt (Bongo) Davies managed to find time within his busy rugby calendar to deploy on Op Cabrit as the NSE Commander, where he oversaw the build-up and smooth HOTO between A Sqn and the Scots DG, no mean feat given the complexities in theatre and the sheer quantity of vehicles and equipment. He was also quite rightly selected as the Head Coach of the UKAF U23 as well as the Backs Coach of the Army U23, positions that have not only seen the respective teams improve but have spread the benefit to the Regimental Rugby Team who have gone from strength to strength in what can only be described as an exceptional season.

With a new closure date of 2031 for Robertson Barracks, Capt (Chris) Homewood was set the task of trying to sort some of the legacy funding issues that have seen the camp fall slightly below the standard expected. As you can imagine getting the sums of money required out of the system to achieve this is no mean feat, but through some narratively strong emails and business case submissions it looks like the site will be a hive of activity in 2020, from a complete revamp of the SLA for the ORs, to an upgraded armoury to support the storage of the Heavy Weapons, the list remains endless and limitless – if you can imagine it, then we will always see if we can make it happen.

The team is quite clearly what makes the whole thing succeed, with a couple of G4 stalwarts returning from ERE in Sgts (Kieran) Taylor and (Sky) Korovulavula and the new blood freshening things up with WO2 (John) Davies and SSgts (Boxer) Davies and (Al) Pope RLC all coming into the fold. After the completion of Op Cabrit (Poland) in Apr 19, the department was lucky enough to additionally welcome LCpl (Gary) Brennan and Tpr (Joshua) Tucker and the one and only Tpr (Lukas) Davies, all of whom have added real value and much needed humour around the place.

Every new arrival is often sadly as a result of somebody else moving on to pastures new. It was pleasing to see now WO2 (Tom) Hughes move on as MTWO, although it is still a rarity for him not to be found wondering around the QM building daily. After what seemed like an



Every new arrival is often sadly as a result of somebody else moving on to pastures new.



"Hello, QM Dept, how may we help you?"



Yet another social

eternity, SSgt (Jigme) Lama left to return to the comforts of an RLC unit, it's safe to say both he and his culinary prowess will be missed (mmm, momos). Sgt (Kevin) Young decided that he needed yet another post at ERE, this time in Cyprus where clearly, he will be hiding in the shadows of the sun trying to avoid being burnt, very similar to his time in post at RD... Sgt (James) Sudlow came and went in quick order, with everyone still wondering exactly what it was he did? One of the biggest losses was in Tpr (Luke) Kemp, a seasoned soldier whose work ethic and capacity far exceeded that of the rank he achieved. We ultimately wish them all the very best and hope to see them succeed in the future, be that in service or as a dirty civilian.

In summary, the department as whole has changed significantly over the past 12 months, as have the work and results we are expected to achieve and complete on a daily basis. The team works tirelessly and often well after everyone else has knocked off for the day to accomplish this. It is testament to what they produce and the environment they have created that we have JNCOs and soldiers from the Sabre Sqns knocking on the door to see if there are any positions available – something unknown of historically.



Rigid organisation in the QM hangar

Motor Transport

2019 has been a busy year for MT. From changes in personnel to the constant requirements to run training for ourselves and the wider Regiment to the two fleets which both need constant servicing. Throughout the year the core of the department under Sgt "Sonic" Davies has taken on each challenge.

The start of the year saw MT under the stewardship of Capt Alan "Chud" Ruddock and WO2 John Mitchell. They spent the first quarter of the year continuing to keep MT on the straight and narrow and dealing with ensuring that MT could support the wider Regiment. They both started 2019 in the knowledge that this would be their last year in the Army. Chud had decided that after a long career with the LDs and latterly with the QDG, it was time to settle down and start to concentrate on life in Norfolk. His efforts in MT in his final months meant an easy handover to the new MTO in April to Capt Matt Hansen.

John, with his service running out in Sept 2019, was still working hard as the MTWO while at the same time working on his resettlement. He was chasing vehicles to support range packages, sorting out transport for A Sqn's R&R from Poland and their return in April and keeping courses running. He eventually stepped aside and handed over the reins to the newly promoted WO2 Dil "Tom" Hughes, who came over from the QM(T) department.

The core of MT is the Tprs and JNCOs that serve in it. They are the ones that fix the last-minute issues that come up. They lean forward to support the wider



The core of MT is the Tprs and JNCOs that serve in it.



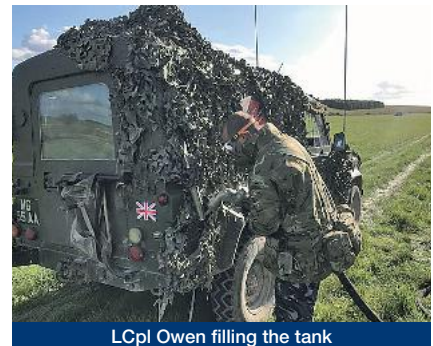
Regiment with only the smallest of grumbles as they do. The Cpls are the rock with Cpl Chris Yard delivering a large amount of the training to the Regiment, which is needed for the Sqns to function fully. He's constantly asking for more licences from other units, to get QDG soldiers through their training. Cpl Rick Williams, who came to MT from A Sqn, ended up behind the details desk constantly on the phone tracking down vehicles so we can run events. Cpl Ward has been the lead in keeping up with the constant need to service the Green Fleet vehicles. As a Cpl he's had more vehicles to maintain than some Sqns, with only a tenth of the workforce.

The LCpls and Tprs work hard driving details and supporting the NCOs with servicing the fleets. Their jobs are constant without much time off. They all end up out and about visiting other units to collect vehicles and equipment and then returning it. Often, they are the only contact other units have with the Regiment and they always conduct themselves well. They do a lot of work in the background to support the Regiment, that a lot don't see and understand, so things work. Their knowledge is leant on by the MTO and MTWO constantly. They have been doing this, in some cases, a lot longer.

MT have deployed in one form or another on all the Regiment's exercises and ranges this year, usually driving them there and back then in the middle taking part with the rest. On Wessex Storm in September the main bulk of MT deployed as part of A1. There they supported the Regiment with the fuel, rations and water. At the same time, they also managed to help the SQMSs keep A Sqn supplied with their cans of Monster and chocolate bars. MT managed to drive around Salisbury Plain Training Area in one form or another numerous times. There is not a lot they don't know about the Southern and Northern transit routes... They even managed to get out and support the



Truckin' over the Plain



LCpl Owen filling the tank

Sqns on several occasions as riflemen running around Imber Village, loving getting stuck in.

MT at the end of 2019 finds itself in its usual place: trying to support the wider Regiment, maintain its own kit and training whilst trying to train the wider Regiment for up and coming commitments in 2020. At the same time, they are chasing up the vehicles for the ski teams.

In Jan 2020 we will see LCpl John Bernard return to us after 6 months in BATUK. At the same time Cpl Chris Yard will be heading out to BATUK for 6 months. The call to the wider Regiment is, try and remember the MTWO doesn't have minibuses and 4x4s hidden on camp! Try and give us a fighting chance to support you by asking as early as possible for our help.

MH



"...and this truck is for the blue camcream"



"Behind the jack is a heavily camouflaged Support Vehicle"



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Training Wing

2019 has been a busy and productive year for the Training Wing, with a plethora of Regimental training activity to support, from ranges and exercises, through to the delivery of reformed pre-courses to the careful management of course loading for soldiers in line with their career progression.

After having the Training Officer post gapped for the majority of 2018, January 2019 saw the arrival of the new Training Officer Captain Dan Brown, who had just returned from Op Cabrit. There's nothing quite like a new broom to sweep clean and the already existing knowledge and experience of the Training Wing team combined with the 'great ideas' of a new boss set the foundations for a complex and challenging year of training delivery and support.

Navigating the Regiment through the ever-changing maze of bureaucratic red tape that is weaved firmly throughout the training programme, while managing expectations of those participating, has been a big challenge for the team. It has been a tiresome battle and a steep learning curve for all involved, but realistic, challenging and arduous training, while reducing the risk to as low as reasonably possible, is fundamental for a professional combat unit's operational effectiveness.

The first big hurdle was the delivery and support of a complex mounted and dismounted range package called Ex Mounted Eagle at Warcop in Cumbria.



All hands to the pump bashing the ammo at Warcop ranges

“ This firing period involved the entire Regiment and was designed to bring all soldiers up to the required standard ”

SSgt Beal and Cpl Gurung immediately took the reins as the Regiment's Mounted and Dismounted Close Combat subject matter experts and started planning to deliver the live firing packages. This firing period involved the entire Regiment and was designed to bring all soldiers up to the required standard and level of training prior to certain regimental test exercises later in the year. Naturally, it rained consistently throughout, with high winds and cold temperatures, but this didn't deter the squadrons from achiev-

ing some great results while maintaining a positive approach.

Another successful Training Wing led activity was Ex Lost Eagle, which was a navigation exercise conducted in June, that formed part of the three-week Crew Commander pre-course training, which is required prior to attending their four-month arduous course in Bovington and Warminster. The exercise was conducted over the Black Mountains in Wales and saw 12 students from across all three Light Cavalry regiments being trained and tested under challenging conditions, navigating their way by day and night, with and without compasses. Cpl Canning was quick to volunteer his services to support the exercise and played a key part in the administration, planning and de-confliction of the delivery. Cpl



Engrossed in their phones, none of the soldiers realised they were in fact in Wales



Cpl Gurung claims the credit for his wife's cooking



If you have any complaints, Scouse's door is always open

Brocklehurst, who was fresh off his Land Navigation course, was borrowed from C Squadron to assist in the planning and delivery of the training. The weather was glorious, and although it was physically demanding, all students seemed to enjoy the week, returning to Swanton Morley with nicely tanned smiling faces.

June also saw the delivery of Ex Degraded Eagle which was planned and delivered by the Training Wing Warrant Officer, WO2 Ananins. The exercise was designed to test soldiers operating in a degraded environment, while conducting certain tasks as troops, from CBRN to AFV recognition while patrolling from stand to stand in full kit. Continuing to operate to the required high standard, while patrolling in full CBRN attire and carrying the full complement of heavy kit that the modern-day combat soldier is required to, is not easy. However, all completed the training on that hot June day and although arduous, it stood them in good stead for future training.

The relentless and slightly painful task of scrubbing the start state requirements for soldiers that were to be loaded on external courses sat with the Training Wing JNCO Cpl Buddhi Gurung. This would see him de-conflicting daily with training providers and Squadrons in order to maintain the Regiment's mandated training requirements and to aid in supporting soldiers' career progression. Additionally, Cpl Gurung has been busy managing the Regiment's DCCT and 25m ranges while regularly planning and delivering complex live ranges at distance. During busy periods, his good wife has also supported the Training Wing by kindly treating the team to a well-prepared Gurkha curry late in the evenings.

Cpl Canning has also played an important role in delivering quality training on the Jackal crew training front, often

running back to back commander and driver courses to support the Regiment's requirement prior to major exercises or courses. Often, he would return to his desk late of an evening after a long day's instruction to tackle his emails, with a deep red wind-burned face and blood-shot eyes from the exposure of the open architecture vehicle, he still managed to maintain a smile and a great sense of humour.

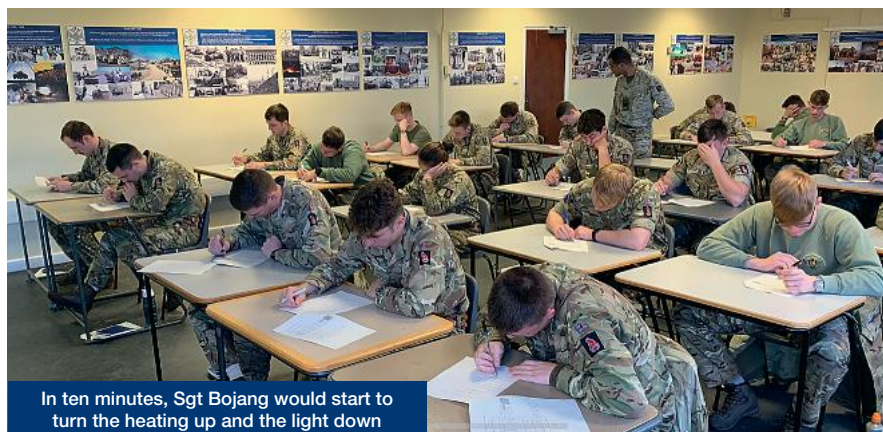
Sgt Alan Davies (Harry Potter type) has played a key role on the Communications Information Systems training front and has single-handedly managed to tackle the BCIP 5.6 Bowman Radio uplift training for the entire Regiment. Additionally, he has been the Regiment's go-to man for all CIS training and has worked hard to standardise the training delivery for our distributed signals courses. Throughout the year, Sgt Davies has often been seen peering at his computer screen for hours on end surrounded by dirty cups and mugs, whilst mumbling to himself in a strange 'CIS world' dialect, that only the most knowledgeable like-minded subject matter experts would ever be able to translate. To the loss of the Training Wing, Sgt Davies moved to C Squadron in November to assist them within SHQ.

The dawn of 2020 will see the Training Officer depart the Training Wing and move to Regimental Headquarters

The Training Team thanks him and will miss his cheerful personality and contribution throughout 2019.

The dawn of 2020 will see the Training Officer depart the Training Wing and move to Regimental Headquarters as the Regimental Careers Management Officer. Unfortunately, the Training Officer role will be gapped for a short period of time, but fear not, as the very capable Training Wing Warrant Officer, WO2 Ananins, will once again take the reins of the department, closely supported by SSgt Beal. The Training Wing will no doubt continue to deliver the high standard of service deep into 2020 much like it has done this year. It has been a fantastic and very satisfying year and the Training Wing team have been solely responsible for making the job an enjoyable one. Thanks team.

DB



In ten minutes, Sgt Bojang would start to turn the heating up and the light down

Welfare Office

2019 has been an extremely busy year for the small Welfare team, we have overseen the final couple of months of A Sqn's deployment to Poland, organised and delivered the QDG 60th birthday party, worked closely with Noah's Ark Pre-School achieving a Good Ofsted report and currently we are organising Halloween and Xmas parties.

During the first couple of months of 2019 A Sqn were finishing off on Op Cabrit so Sgt Louise Green was delivering trips on a fortnightly basis for the spouses and dependants. These trips are paid for by operational grants the Regiment receives and are there to try and keep those left behind busy. It is very important that the bond between the Welfare team and the families is strong and robust and these trips allow both parties to enjoy each other's company and build on our family ethos. We invite all those involved with the deployment and we even had Cpl Hutchings' father-in-law on the trampolines at Gravity.

QDG 60th birthday was enjoyed by both past and present members of the Regiment all coming together for what was a great day held at the Regiment's home in Swanton Morley. I must take this opportunity to thank all those that were involved in delivering the day and a big shout out to Cpl 'Dangerous Dave' Watson who was outstanding on all tasks.

Noah's Ark Pre-School has recently undergone a complete transformation with a huge amount of help from the Armed Forces Covenant, Breckland



Butch presents the QDG Cup at Fakenham Racecourse



These trips are paid for by operational grants the Regiment receives...



Council, the Early Years team from Norwich and our very own Capt Chris Homewood (QM). We have a new manager (Rebecca Langton) who engages daily with the committee headed up by Capt Jason (Butch) Davies, together they provide the very best early years care they possibly can. The nursery is now thriving, and we are slowly growing with children from the local village enjoying the establishment alongside our soldiers' children.

The Halloween party was a blast with great food, great disco and fabulous outfits. There was a best dressed house competition judged by the community committee. Sarah Diamond won the



The CO saying a 'few' words before cutting the ribbon

first prize but we must applaud the effort levels around camp for the number of entries.

We are currently planning the children's Christmas events starting with a military pantomime coming to camp. It is organised by our Community Support Development Worker (Miss Sarah Coote) and will be watched by over 200 people allowing us to extend our invites to the local village.

All in a great year for QDG Welfare team and the community group that supports us daily on all that we want to deliver. 2020 will bring new challenges, with the Welfare Officer Capt Jason (Butch) Davies now on the Armed Forces Covenant Board (Norfolk). Hopefully we can secure some more funding to deliver another memorable year.

JPD

Noah's Ark Pre-School with new improved rating



Welfare not Warfare! Butch shows off his new working dress



Light Aid Detachment

A busy year for the LAD has seen tradesmen support the unit on numerous training exercises and deploy as OPFOR in support of Ex Wessex Storm 4/19. The LAD also provided critical Equipment Support to enable the success of the Regimental Mounted live firing package which took place at Warcop Ranges.

The LAD supported the deployment of A Sqn on Op Cabrit until April, with the Fitter Section taking the lead in organising cultural trips to Gdansk and

Auschwitz. While the Regiment deployed to BATUK in a dismounted role, the LAD temporarily adopted a centralised structure in order to support the Regiment's ROG. For this first part of the year the LAD were the only ones not complaining on fleet handover as they were involved both before and after!

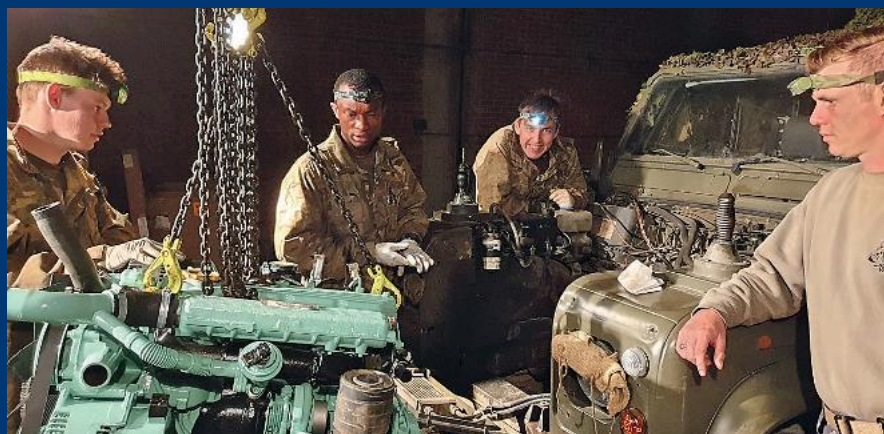
In July, both EME and ASM handed over with Fitter Sections becoming embedded in the Sabre Squadrons once more. With the enlarged fleet for Ex Wessex Storm

OPFOR the workload went through the roof and it was an effort to get it ready in time to deploy.

In wider Regimental life, the typically enthusiastic craftsmen have thrown themselves into the thick of things as much as possible. Sgt Harvey and team ran the bar at the Families Day, there is strong representation in the rugby and football teams, SSgt Lunn leads entertainment in the Sgts' Mess. There have also been LAD trawled elsewhere: Cpl Souch to Kenya, Cpl Mattin to Germany and Cfn Nimmo to the Falklands. With manning already low this has meant extra work for those on camp but they have buckled to and got on with it with only minimal fuss for which I, for one, am grateful.

We now look forward to deploying on Ex Wessex Storm to recover and fix the Regiment's fleet when needed. Then the challenge of readiness, so keeping availability at a very high level – this should come with extra resources which will be welcome. Thanks to all that have worked hard this year – more of the same next year.

SCD



Staff and Personnel Support Detachment

The SPS Detachment have really been put through their paces this year. At times the Detachment was down to around 40% manning, this was largely due to how busy the QDG have been in 2019, but also in part down to individuals being trawled for exercise and overseas postings. Nonetheless, the output from the Detachment did not waiver and we were justifiably rewarded with the 'Detachment of the Year' award within 1XX.

The Regimental Accountant, Sgt Sasha Chilvers, was one of these trawls and spent six months in the Falklands and a further two months on leave, leaving the accounts in the more than capable hands of Lt Nathan Rixson. Some have been heard to say that the accounts have never looked better. He has been heard as saying "the Audi does not pay

for itself". Sgt Sasha Chilvers had the following to say about her time in the Falklands:

"The latter stages of 2018 saw the start of my second 6-month tour in the Falklands. The base is completely self-sufficient with its own power station,

school, water plant and airfield. At Mount Pleasant base the world's longest corridor (half a mile long) links the accommodation, gym, two shops, and two bars. This means it is easy to avoid the often-daily wind speeds of 50mph. Wind speeds are such that the few trees on the islands grow horizontally".



He has been heard as saying
"the Audi does not pay for
itself".



The team at the AGC Cross-Country Championships



Sgt Chilvers wondered whether to try hold or hand luggage



Sgt Akum finishing the Berlin Marathon



Pte Fisher wrestles with the log



Thrilled to be doing some real soldiering at last

"During my time there I was lucky enough to see a variety of wildlife including striped caracara, sea lions, elephant seals, dolphins and killer whales. Not to mention King, Rockhopper, Magellanic, Gentoo and Macaroni penguins. The highlight of my time in the Falklands was a week-long stay on the Antarctic Ice Patrol Ship, HMS Protector. HMS Protector has a 0.5-metre-thick hull to glide through ice. The ship conducts exploratory surveys and ensures that environmental guidelines are being upheld".

"All military in the Falklands work Monday to Saturday. On Sunday helicopter flights take personnel to the numerous battle sites and memorials of the 1982 conflict. Many of the downed aircraft remain untouched. I also climbed the tallest mountain in the Falklands, Mount Usborne, went on an air to air Voyager to Typhoon refuelling flight and ran the

Although windswept and remote, I would recommend a visit to the Falkland Islands to anyone.

Falklands marathon, the World's Most Southerly Certified Road Marathon".

"Although windswept and remote, I would recommend a visit to the Falkland Islands to anyone".

Other work commitments have seen members of the Det partaking in the AGC's Triple Crown competition, attending the AGC Seminar Dinner Night, Flag bearing during the Six Nations and attending various Adventure Training packages. Although the team has worked very hard, they have made sure to incorporate lots of fun activities. Sgt

Paul Akum organised a small team to run the Berlin Marathon. Running seems to have been the theme this year with four members of the Det taking part in the AGC Cross Country Championship. LCpl Hari Bakhem seems to be in his element when in running shoes as proven by destroying the field when winning the cross-country in the Luck Cup competition.

The forthcoming year already looks to be action packed. The Detachment for one cannot wait for the excitement to begin. As with every attached arm people come and go so we must say farewell and thank you to Capt Tom Crossman-Kellie, SSgt Katie Wilkinson, Sgt Paul Akum, LCpl "AJ" Jaiteh and LCpl Charlotte Cronin, while welcoming the arrival of Capt Mark Eldridge, SSgt Rob Drew, LCpl Martyn Hodgson, LCpl Hari Bakhem and LCpl Robyn Purvis.

NR

Catering Department

As Christmas leave comes to an end, the Chefs of the Queen's Dragoon Guards return to RBSM fresh and raring to go, as SSgt McDermont's team prepare for another busy year with numerous exercises & functions planned.

Sgt Lacey and Pte Etherington-Hughes started the year on their 6-month deployment on Op CABRIT in a very cold Poland. During their deployment they took the opportunity of having a week off in country to go sightseeing, taking in the sights of Krakow and an educational visit to Auschwitz.

At the same time LCpl Gitau & Pte Britton deployed on to Ex Askari Storm in Kenya to support B & C Sqns who went across to play enemy.

At about the same time the UCM donned some spandex and partook in a leisurely cycle across the UK from Lands End to John O'Groats!

With the Regiment back together in May for the first time in a year a trip to Warcop ranges was on the calendar and gave the Chefs a chance to dust off their rifles and pretend to be soldiers for the week!

With the QDG 60th and Waterloo fast approaching, Sgt Lacey seized an opportunity to miss out on some work and deployed with the Cambridge University Officer Training Corps in Germany on Ex Bavaria Order. There he cooked for 100+ but soon came unstuck when two reservist "chefs" turned up to help him. One was a doorman and the other was an ex supply specialist.

Waterloo Day saw the annual event come together with the team putting on a high tea for the Cricket and Rugby followed by the dinner night where Horse was on the menu once again. The RLC's Mascot skit for the dinner night went down a treat!



The Wessex Storm set-up in Avon Compound



Paul Hollywood and Prue Leith are just out of shot

The QDG 60th Anniversary was held on 29th June, which brought the families and the QDG Association together for a parade, sports day and plenty of food across the day. The UCM and the team produced a BBQ for 2000 attendees which was appreciated by all.

Ex Wessex Storm saw the department split into 2 teams. The exercise team under Sgt Flint, set up a field kitchen and prepared to cook for 200 personnel per meal. It was good to see that all admin was conducted before deploying, especially on the first night when LCpl Pun nearly froze to death and asked Cpl D Gurung for his bouncing bomb, as a summer sleeping system wasn't really working for him!



The UCM and the team produced a BBQ for 2000 attendees which was appreciated by all.



The RLS team was headed up by SSgt McDermont, who worked alongside an ESS contractor, well say worked alongside, the ESS chefs knew where the smoking shed was from 0500 – 1900. When established the team worked hard to make small changes within to ensure all customers were well fed with feeding up to 600-700 daily reaching a whopping 1000 soldiers and staff. The UCM



Are these chef's trousers or 'OPFOR blue'?



A great big lorry full of deliciousness



Suspiciously-sourced and amusingly-shaped

and Sgt Lacey started a card game challenge and it finished 365 – 373 to Sgt Lacey. Again, the Annual review of Health & Safety at work was required for Sgt Lacey as he decided to do the splits on the tailgate of the Pantec.

Ex Askari Storm again sees LCpl Gitau trundle back off to his home nation to work alongside yet another battlegroup in Kenya. George loves Askari Storm!

Cpl Reed went and ran the Berlin Marathon for a laugh with no training and managed to raise some money for his chosen charity.

CATT & CAST in a very cold Warminster saw a newly arrived Sgt Hodgson and LCpl Pun deployed to aid the contractor in Rollestone Camp on SPTA.

Sadly, this year we have had to say goodbye to a number of members of the department.

Sgt Ernie Flint has ducked and dodged for the last 24 years, they have finally wrestled his golf bag off him and will see him gently out the gates for pastures new in the civilian world.

Cpl Devendra Gurung is close to completing his dream transfer over to the supply specialist role where no sheet will remain unstacked! Pte Etherington-Hughes has ended her service and Pte Jesse Britton is off to pastures new with the Royal Engineers in Tidworth.

We welcome Sgt Craig Hodgson, Cpl Bhoj Gurung and Pte Callum Watson to the catering team. Here's looking forward to the madness that the Christmas season brings and another busy year ahead.

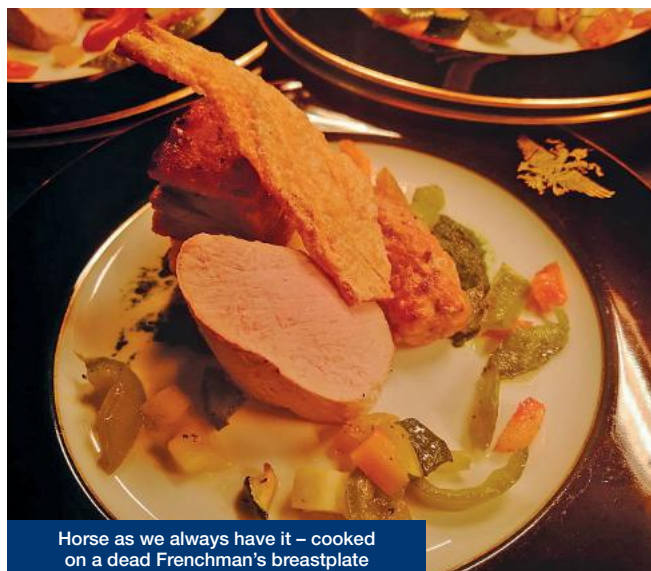
JL



Next year I'm definitely going on Masterchef...



Waterloo high tea



Horse as we always have it – cooked on a dead Frenchman's breastplate

Regimental Aid Post

The RAP has had an active year of supporting the Regiment in its many activities. For a large part of the year the previous RMO was on a trawl in Africa, leaving the management of the RAP to Sgt Lee, who is now grateful that a new RMO Maj Lyne-Pirkis has been in post since July.

In the first half of the year Cpl Siddall and LCpl Franks were supporting those from the Regiment deployed on Op Cabrit. This was a good opportunity for both of them to get further exposure to working in an Operational environment.

Over this time Cpl Newbury was deployed on Ex Askari Storm and the rest of the RAP were busy completing the multitude of varied courses required to build toward Wessex Storm in Jan 2020. Alongside courses there was also a significant amount of work on improving the equipment care and infrastructure of the RAP. This effort was recognised by 7 Bde when SO2 Med came to review the eCAF.

In August and September, the RAP deployed with the Regiment on Ex Wessex Storm as enemy. This was a really useful opportunity to identify kit deficiencies and work on the low-level

skills and drills of an RAP in the field. This culminated with a display to the Regiment (as they came through a resupply) of the set up and management of a casualty through a Role 1 facility in the field. For many at QDG this was the first time they had seen such a demonstration and it was well received by everyone within the unit.

Subsequently the RAP has been hard at work within the firm base. The RAP has given significant support to DPHC Swanton Morley Medical Centre, following their 'Inadequate' grade on CQC inspection. This work has resulted in the Corrective Action Requirement being lifted from the facility in December. The CMTs have also all attended Role 1 Validation and all passed, again building to the required level for Ex Wessex Storm and subsequent deployments in 2020. The CMTs have also been busily vaccinating and audiogramming the soldiers to ensure that they are at the required state for readiness.

Throughout the year the CMTs have also been employed on a multiple of medical covers for sports and training activities. The most eventful was QDG's opening Rugby match of the season, with three significant casualties in short succession. The most serious of these required the air ambulance to attend. Cpl Siddall did a fantastic job and all casualties are now back at work.

The RAP managed several functions, notably attending escape rooms in



Norwich. The RAP split into two teams and the more junior completed their escape, showing up the more senior team (including both RMO and Sgt Lee) who failed to escape within their allotted time.

So, a busy year for the RAP but in reality, there was plenty of time to draw breath before 2020. This will be a challenging year with multiple overseas deployments and not forgetting Ex Wessex Storm in January.

CHdeML-P

This was a really useful opportunity to identify kit deficiencies and work on the low-level skills...



RAP Escape Room champions 2019



Look hard and you may spot the RAP

Gymnasium

2019 has been an extremely busy and successful year for all Physical Training Instructors (PTIs). It has seen the roll out of the new physical fitness tests that have been implemented Army wide, as well as taking the opportunity to provide vital training to all Ground Close Combat (GCC) PTIs.

The gym has seen an uplift of new infrastructure and equipment which has greatly improved the capability during lesson delivery, as well as the aesthetics of the gym itself. The uplift has greatly supported the implementation of the new Army Physical Training System (APTS) and encouraged a fresh approach to Strength and Conditioning training throughout the Regiment.

The Regiment was fortunate enough to host the 7 Brigade RAPTCI Regional Study Period in March. This gave us a chance to show we were more than capable in executing the new Soldier Conditioning Review and Role Fitness Test (Soldier), testing criteria above and beyond the standards required. The PTIs and the RAPTCIs underwent the training for all the new GCC testing and had the rare opportunity to collectively share good practices and discuss barriers we are currently facing.

The sporting success continued, which saw LCpls Critchlow, Marais and Ball

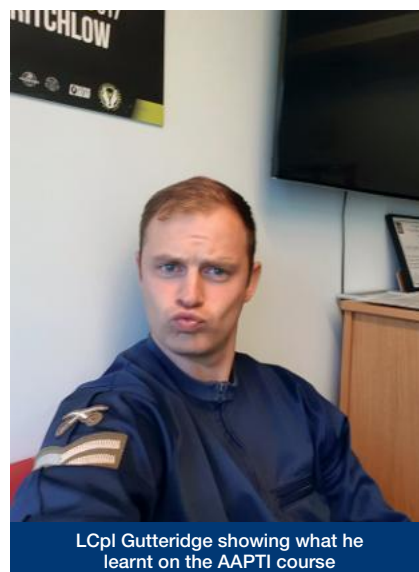
represent the unit at the 1st UK Division Bismarck 4x4 Relay Challenge. The event consisted of each completing a 4.4-mile run carrying 15kg. The gym has hosted and officiated in various events which include boxing, swimming and Army individual Cross-Country Championships.

The gym continues its sporting prowess with SSgt Taylor (SSI) achieving success at the Army and Inter Service Diving Championships. He took 1st place in the Army Championships in springboard and platform and 2nd place at the Inter Services.

With the regeneration of the Luck Cup this has seen several sporting events conducted throughout the year. Events have included football, rugby, basketball, hockey and the final event being the British Army Warrior Fitness competition, which was organised and run by the gym. The event was a success, with C Squadron taking the win, however B Squadron were the overall winners of Luck Cup.



The gym has seen an uplift of new infrastructure and equipment...



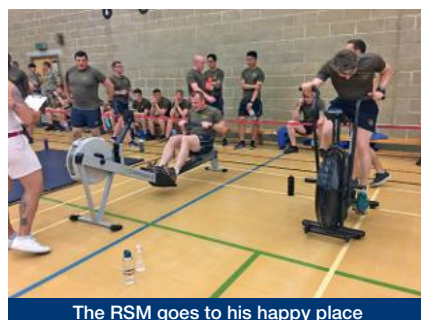
LCpl Gutteridge showing what he learnt on the AAPTI course

2019 has provided the gym staff with numerous opportunities to be at the forefront of physical development and sport, this has seen the Regiment held in high regards for its continued support and professionalism. Rolling into 2020 with pre-deployment training commencing early in the new year for Ex Wessex Storm, the Department aims to ensure that physical readiness of the unit remains to the highest of standards.

CJT



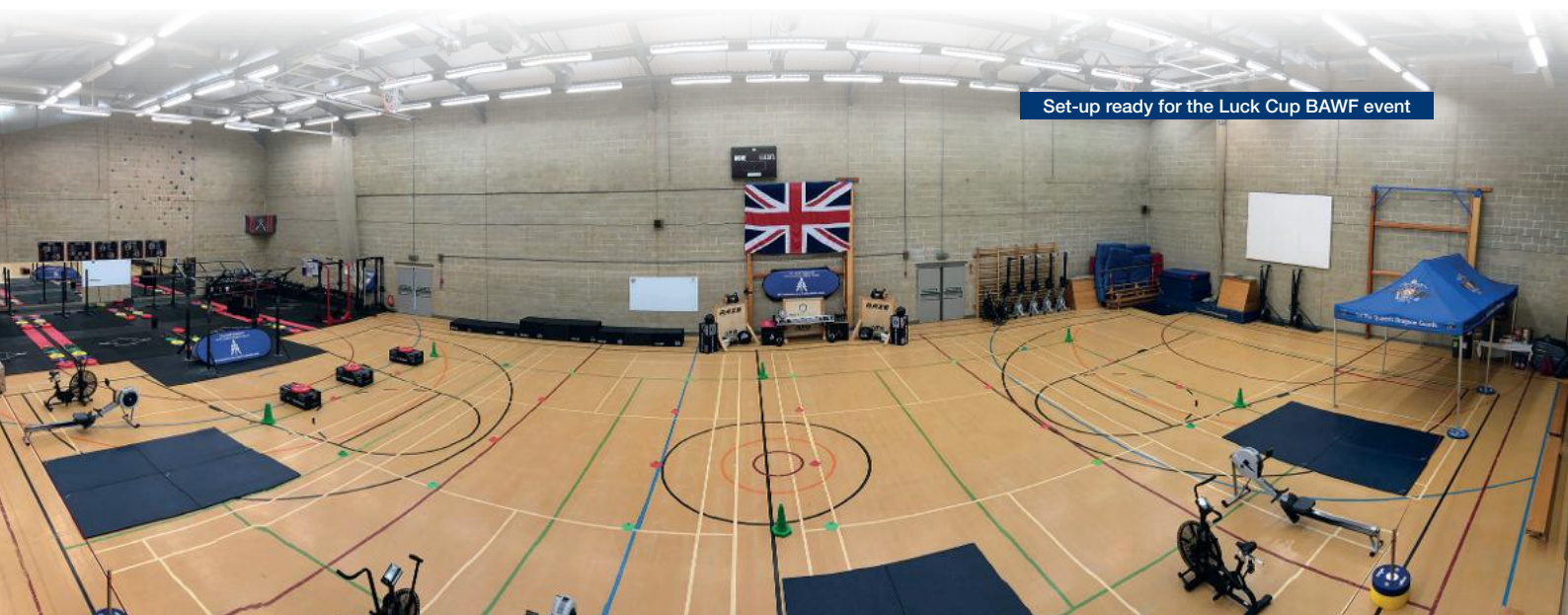
Tpr Hopkins already falling behind



The RSM goes to his happy place



Lots of shiny things to keep the PTIs happy



Set-up ready for the Luck Cup BAWF event

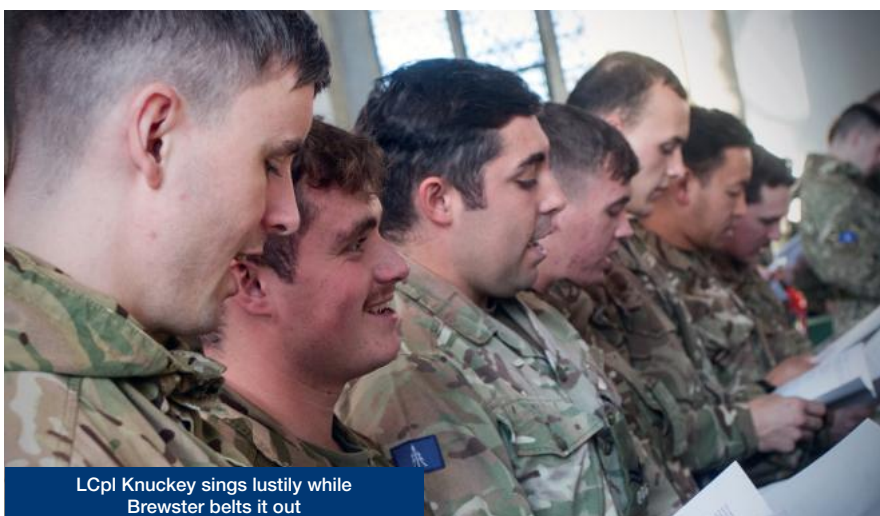
Padre's Notes

After a very warm welcome and a slightly delayed start to my assignment with QDG, it was time to get to work! I arrived just as the Regiment was looking forward to celebrating its 60th Anniversary and plans were afoot. A weekend of celebrations here at Robertson Barracks, followed by a Church service on 1st July to lay up an old Regimental Standard in Llandaff Cathedral and to dedicate the Regimental Memorial which has been installed in the Cathedral. All in the presence of the Colonel in Chief, His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

In the weeks leading up to the service, I prepared the order and content with the RSM, the Regimental Secretary, the Dean and the Precentor of the Cathedral. What could possibly go wrong? Well, thankfully, nothing. A great service, at a time of celebration in the life of the Regiment, the laying up of an old Standard in the Cathedral and the opportunity to remember those in the life of this Regiment who had given their lives in the service of their country and the service of others.

Whilst Llandaff Cathedral has its place as the Spiritual home of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, we continue to enjoy the use of All Saints Church in Swanton Morley for services closer to Robertson Barracks, most recently those who were not away on course joining the congregation on Remembrance Sunday and, at the time of writing, using the Church to hold our Regimental Christmas Carol Service early in December.

As I said in my address at the Carol Service, in the Christian calendar, as I



LCpl Knuckey sings lustily while Brewster belts it out

write this article, we are in the season of Advent.

Advent, for me, is one of the most special times of the year. It is a season of hope and of anticipation as we move ever closer to Christmas. Not just looking forward to time with family and giving and receiving of presents, but we are also looking forward to the birth of Jesus. It is a time of expectation, of preparation and a time of waiting.

The truth is that we are all waiting for something, though we don't like to have to wait for anything. We would quite like to have things when we decide we want them. Advent can pass some people by in the busyness of their lives, and so waiting seems negative and unexciting,

the boring bit before we get to the exciting bit.

I hope that you might get an opportunity this advent to stop, to pause and to slow down. Advent is a time to be still in the midst of our busy lives.

If you do not get an opportunity to have your 'Advent' and a time to be still, take some time in the new year to do just that. To reflect, to be still and to look forward. I am sure that you will find it a great blessing.

The forecast of events in the life of the QDG for 2020 is as busy as ever. I look forward to the year ahead, for all that is to come and hold you all in my prayers. Every Blessing to you all.

SW



C-in-C, COTR and CO at Llandaff



This time was Maj Wiggins' turn to wear the medal

The Officers' Mess

As ever it has been another busy year for the Officers' Mess, starting with the Mess shoot in early January. As A Squadron were still in Poland, 3 officers away in Verbier and a number preparing for Ex Askari Storm, the Mess could have been quiet, but it remained energetic at the home of the Regiment in Norfolk and ensured that new officers were arriving at a Mess that they remembered from previous visits.

Over the year the Mess has hosted a number of dignitaries, guests and Potential Officers and did so with much enthusiasm and panache. We held two Ladies' Dinner Nights in the year, and it is fair to say that all involved very much enjoyed themselves – it is only fair to put on a good show for those who arguably deserve it the most.



A face only a mother could love



Dopey and Happy join the Mess

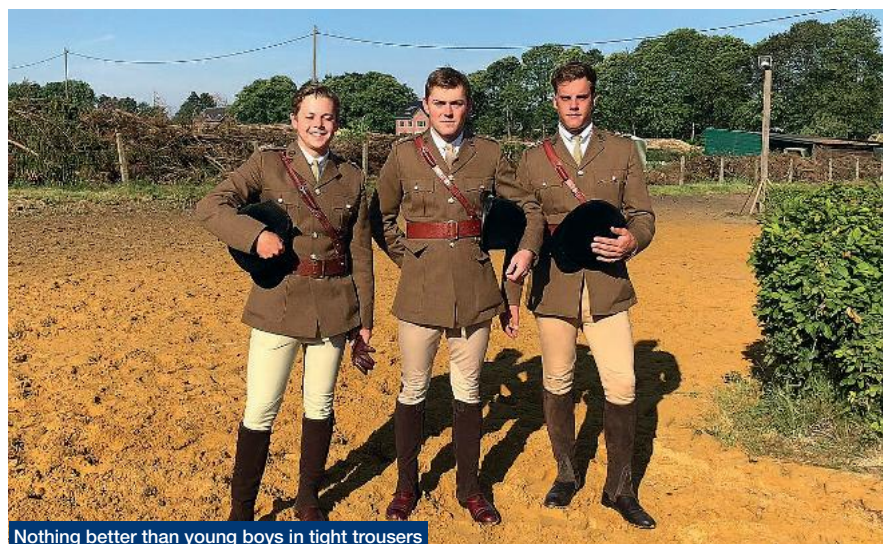


This marked the full strength of the Mess back as one...



After Easter Leave the Mess was finally back together after 18 months of various Squadrons away at any one time and the summer promised to be as enjoyable as ever kicking off with Cavalry Memorial weekend in London. Some say the best weekend of the year ahead of the Summer ball, celebrating "Cavalry Christmas" at the Cavalry & Guards

Club and Boisdalses in Belgravia. This marked the full strength of the Mess back as one, which was essential for the upcoming Waterloo celebrations. The first part was Hugo Chaplin, Ed Cooper and Seb Maxwell heading off to Brussels for the Waterloo Ride – mainly trying to look 'dashing' in jodhpurs while shaking off the hangover from the night before.



Nothing better than young boys in tight trousers



Dan Brown shows Harry how to do block jobs



Literally the most exciting moment of Nordic that didn't require a FMT3



Monopoly Deal mania continued to sweep the Mess



George Barham learns about the importance of PPE

They were the only British subalterns this year so hopefully there will be more representation next year.

Waterloo at RBSM came around quickly and after two disappointing defeats to the Warrant Officers and Sergeants Mess in both rugby and cricket the year before, the Officers were more than keen to get their own back. Under the watchful and skilful eye of Capt Bongo Davies, the Officers team were victorious on the rugby pitch. In similar fashion to the rugby, the Officers showed no mercy in beating the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess as cricket as well, perhaps the highlight having more than eleven cricketers to choose from certainly saving some of the upset from the year before.

The Summer Ball, once again, was a huge success and great to be back in fancy dress after the year before. Although it was the first "proper" ball for a lot of the Troop Leaders it is fair to say that some of them were born for Ball Prep and whichever individuals oversaw the entrance hall were not. Despite some concern from the senior livers in, the Mess and the ball really came together in the final few hours and even impressed a few summer ball veterans. The day after was also memorable with England winning the Cricket World Cup amongst the "tidy up" from the night before.

Post-Summer Leave saw almost the entirety of the Mess head down to Salisbury Plain to play OPFOR against 3 Scots. Although perhaps not the highlight of the year it was still good to spend time on exercise with more than one Squadron and in particular listen to what Capt Kite thought of being the rebro. Once the

Amongst this, the mess was able to get away en masse and head to Sofia in Bulgaria...

Regiment had returned from exercise, we started a busy period of more hosting with visits from the Regimental Trustees and the Austrian Ambassador as well as the steady flow of Potential Officers. Amongst this, the Mess was able to get away en masse and head to Sofia in Bulgaria – another excellent weekend organised by Capt Will Simpson.

The Mess finished off the year by hosting the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess on Regimental Christmas Day with a good rebuttal to their Christmas song written by Capt Tom Oakley. An excellent way to finish off what has been another busy but successful year for the Officers' Mess of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards.

EJMH



Ed Hind unnecessarily cheerful



WOs' & Sgts' Mess

As we returned from a well-deserved Christmas break and started to get back in to the fast-paced way of life the Mess was found wanting for hot water. Unfortunately, this took longer than normal to fix meaning two long weeks of ice-cold showers. Grateful for the team's hard work to rectify the problem so swiftly. However, this came at a great cost: the heating. Once the hot water was flowing the heating went off for a good two cold months, not to the dismay of a few members who spent this time enjoying the warmer months of Kenya.

The Mess had the great privilege of saying a grand farewell to General Sir Simon Mayall in the form of a Mess Breakfast, delivered by SSgt McDermott and his Catering team. This breakfast left no expense spared with many members feeling humbled in this gesture of saying goodbye. General Mayall was the first Commanding Officer for many and has been part of their lives throughout. We as a Mess wish him all the best for the future.



Now looking unlikely to promote to Sgt



No dinosaurs in the Mess



Waterloo Survivors



As the year progressed so did the anticipation for Waterloo.



As the year progressed so did the anticipation for Waterloo. It was with great satisfaction that the rugby would again be full contact and to keep alive the past tradition of a Frozen Cabbage an award was presented by the RSM. This year saw the frozen cabbage awarded to Sgt Welfoot for ill-discipline and continuous foul play. The day went on with the Officers winning not just the rugby but also the cricket, something we need to work on for next year. As the night continued and the dinner was coming to an end Mess Members and Officers were greeted by LCpl Jones the Regimental Mascot, whom unfortunately, left a little present of his own on the carpet. The night continued with fun and games and after a constant nagging from Capt Bongo Davies

to have the survivors' photo, the PMC continued to push it until he went to bed.

The Summer Ball this year was held outside on a beautiful summer day and was themed from the 90s. The turnout was great, with fancy dress from Oasis to Pulp Fiction, Kurt Cobain to the Hoff. We even had two Baywatch safety staff on call to blow the whistle when morale got too high. Music was of the highest calibre with the band playing a volley of hits from the 90s, all the while Sgt Maj Hopkins was nursing an ever so slightly injured shoulder from falling on the inflatable Gladiator stand. A huge thank you goes to the PEC SSgt Lunn and his team for arranging everything from food and drink to entertainment, a night enjoyed by all.

This year the Mess had an opportunity to dine out a few fellow Mess Members, either to the great wide world or Commissioning. This was in the form of a BBQ to utilise the refurbished Garden area and enjoy the warm summer night. We said a farewell to Sgt Glen Cartwright



Day just as he was in the 90s



"So you reckon we could get this long-term partnership thing?"



Sgt Welfoot overjoyed to receive the cabbage



WO2 Hughes fails to scare the batsman



Sgt Wilkins receives his MPAR

and WO2 John Mitchell and a congratulations to now Capt Hansen the new MTO.

The year was finalised with a well-deserved Christmas function which was a Masquerade Ball themed event, where there were some hilarious masks being worn. All guests were welcomed with a

nice glass of cheap champagne (pro-secco) before being called into a well decorated dining room. The food served throughout was a traditional Christmas menu and the catering staff were commended on their efforts. There were numerous prizes won by many of the Mess Members and well done to Sgt Chilvers for putting them together. The

evening concluded with a live band where several Mess Members spent the remainder of the evening cutting shapes on the dance floor. A big thanks goes out to the committee members and SSgt Lunn who made this event possible and it has gone down as one of the best.

TJH

Corporals' Mess

It has been a sociable year in the Cpls' Mess. The year kicked off with the whole Regiment deploying to Kenya in March as part of the training cycle and returned in April after getting a good dose of African sun. Having all the squadrons in camp for a change has given the Mess some added life and the environment has been immense.

We started the social events in May by inviting the warrant officers and sergeants to our Mess for a quiz night, not before beating them convincingly on the football pitch that afternoon, giving us bragging rights and a trophy till next year. The quiz, set up by Cpl Lunness and LCpl Gutteridge, was the highlight of the evening. After pie and chips and a few refreshments we called it a night.

May was a busy month. We were fortunate that the majority of Mess members were present when we held our annual celebration of the Lucknow battle honour. It was a great evening attended by the



"Who wants to go on a motorbike course?"

Commanding Officer, RSM and SSMs. There were some Oscar worthy performances from those chosen to recite the events of the battle. Cpl Bojang (now Sgt), LCpls Booker, Branston, Pritchard and Knuckey all stood out. The evening was capped off with some great food and as per tradition downed with some Port.

Cpl Harrison took the lead in organising the summer Mess function. This was his opportunity to make real his two-year dream of having a music festival on camp. It was aptly named Messtival and the attendees did turn up in style. The event was filled with various games, with the slide and Rodeo being the popular choice. The event ended with a spectacular display of fireworks, much to the



Cpl Thapa wondered why no-one else was wearing their medals



There were some Oscar worthy performances from those chosen to recite the events of the battle.





Warming up for the Lucknow Dinner



Warmed up for the Lucknow Dinner



Cheeky blinders

displeasure of our neighbours who were abruptly woken from their sleep thinking the worst.

In October we brought a little bit of Germany into the Mess by celebrating Oktoberfest. With German beer flowing, pretzels everywhere and an elegant turn-out of lederhosen, for a minute it felt like we were back in Germany.

The last week before Christmas break is everyone's favourite time of year in work. After Christmas dinner we invited the Troopers into our Mess after they had earned the right by singing a song for the Corporals. It was a poor effort this year and they were lucky to be allowed in. We prepared a few games of which the Cpls

The last week before Christmas break is everyone's favourite time of year in work.



Spot the maverick wearing green lederhosen



Cpl Casey is asked for a Slow Comfortable Screw

won all. The day ended without incident, but I'm sure there were many sore heads the following morning.

In the same week, we concluded our Mess functions by travelling back in time to the 1920s with the speakeasy party. The turnout was great with some impeccable dressing. The CO, RSM and some warrant officers were in attendance. A three-course meal was provided, with entertainment from show girls, comedian and a DJ. The Christmas bash was a great event to end what has been an exciting year in the Mess.

TM



The PMC briefing the Troopers to keep away from the Christmas decorations as they enter the mess

Regimental Mascot – LCpl Emrys Forlan Jones

2019 started off with the traditional Royal Gun Salutes in Cardiff Castle, the first of six such Salutes that LCpl Jones attends each year. The Farrier Major and LCpl Jones then started to get into the general parades which keep them busy attending cadet and school visits around Wales. Holyhead in North Wales was an especial highlight due to the Armed Forces Day parade being held there.

The celebration of the Regimental 60th anniversary in June was amazing. LCpl Jones stood alongside his fellow soldiers for the Regimental photo and later that day marched out onto parade accom-

panying the Farrier Major who received a Regimental Medal. The next day LCpl Jones travelled to Cardiff for the second part of the celebrations, where he met HRH Prince Charles at Llandaff Cathedral.

LCpl Jones has also attended a number of county shows this year around our recruiting area of Wales and the Border Counties. These shows were great to be a part of, with Jones often the main focal point leading the grand parades. Among others, he attended the Brecon Show, the Three Counties Show and the Winter Fair but the highlight was walking out into the main arena during the Royal Welsh



At Cardiff Castle



Smoothing things over with the police



Defence Engagement



Dreams and Wishes at the Royal Welsh Show



At Brecon

Show in front of around three thousand members of the public. During this show we had the opportunity to do a parade on the military stand, where LCpl Jones got to meet some of the young girls and boys from the charity Dreams and Wishes. This is an excellent charity that helps young children and their families who suffer from life threatening illnesses and has established strong links to the Regiment. LCpl Jones made one little girl's day by making her smile as she took his lead rope and led him around. Jones was more than happy to follow the

“

During this show we had the opportunity to do a parade on the military stand

”

little girl for most of the day. The FM and LCpl Jones hope that they can attend some more such events which bring joy and happiness to the boys and girls at Dreams and Wishes.

It soon became the season of Remembrance, seeing the team travel around a total of eight parades within the Cardiff region in the month of November, as well as a number of cadet visits. A very busy period indeed.

The hardest parade of 2019 was the laying to rest of a fellow QDG soldier. This was a hard parade for LCpl Jones as well as the FM as they had to hold back their feelings. Jones can pick up on people's feelings easily. The family of the soldier requested for LCpl Jones and the Farrier

Checking out the King's Troop



Major to attend. As it was one of our own some key dates were re-arranged for us to attend, a small price to pay as everyone understood the reasons why.

As we come to the end of the year, he will be enjoying a well-deserved break and getting ready for a busy and an exciting 2020. I will be looking to go that extra mile to reach out to more members of the public as well as attending more schools within Wales.

I cannot overstate the positive reaction LCpl Jones gets from the public. He certainly does fly the QDG flag, ensuring we are recognised around Wales and the Border Counties. It is important for our future and even more important for our



Time for their annual bath



At the QDG 60th parade

wider recognition. Work is still in the planning process for LCpl Jones to attend some of the Welsh fixtures during the Six Nations Rugby Union Tournament. I am pushing this hard as this will also raise the Regiment's profile. I would like to take

the opportunity to thank everyone who supports me in my role, a role I love and enjoy so much.

FM

Regimental Christmas Day

This year's Regimental Christmas Day was held on Wednesday 4th December. Although this was relatively early, it was the only date that worked with the whole Regiment being at RBSM. It was particularly important to spend the day together as a family, as due to operational commitments it wasn't achievable last year.

The day started off with Gunfire, the traditional early call from the Sqn CoC clambering through the accommodation blocks, armed with bacon rolls, minced pies, tea and coffee, which may or may not have had extra festive spirit added for good measure! For all those troops that thought single man rooms, with additional locks, gave them immunity in participation, "Yes!" the SQMS does have a master key!

The RSM shun'd the Regimented dressed as an elf, something that was clearly a lifelong aspiration.

Next was the Regtl morning PT parade, conducted as usual in fancy dress. The RSM shun'd the Regimented dressed as an elf, something that was clearly a lifelong aspiration. LCpl Marais had organised the festive PT with such activities as tug a tinsel (Tug of War), mince pie dash (Sprints!) and dodge a deer (Dodge ball). Clearly, he misinterpreted "Fun PT" in fancy dress, with such activities as Sprints!

Soon after, the Regt was formed up in the Cinema where each Sqn gave a cross brief on the activities that they had completed over the year. It was good to see that the rivalry between Sqns is still as prevalent as ever, with each taking the opportunity to take full credit for the Regiment's achievements, while simultaneously disregarding and discrediting the others.

Before the Regiment stepped off for the traditional Christmas church service in Swanton Morley, the Commanding Officer had a few surprises for some. He promoted several deserving but unsuspecting Tprs and JNCOs. He awarded the Queen Elizabeth Trophy to Sgt Comley, the Mann trophy to LCpl Edmunds, and the Leathersellers' Trophy to Cpl Watson,



Even the horse is out of step



The mince pie challenge

as well as awarding several Regimental sports colours, testament to the strength in the Regiment's sporting talent. Once complete the Regiment turned to the right and marched through the village, giving the locals a spectacle of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards style and panache, whilst on the heel and hoof.

Regimental Christmas lunch was served by the Officers and Seniors in the tra-



Excellently imaginative costumes

ditional manner. However, this year with only the occasional flying Brussels Sprout, thanks to Lt Maxwell! The food and setup were a testament to the Regimental catering staff, headed up by the Unit Catering Manager SSgt McDermont and Sgt Lacey.

After lunch, the Tprs were hosted by the JNCOs in the Cpls' Mess to allow the festive celebrations to continue. Meanwhile

the WOs' & Sgts' Mess descended onto the Officers' Mess, with both parties exchanging humorous Christmas Carols. Clearly, the WOs' & Sgts' Mess had better banter, with only the same thin-skinned people taking offence. Hopefully, next year they won't take it to heart because they are definitely going to feature again!

The evening continued with the Officers' Mess moving to the WOs' & Sgts' Mess to carry on the celebrations. The trusty game of Nails again featured heavily in the centre of the bar, with the LEs educating those around them. Meanwhile, the Commanding Officer and Sgt Welfoot swapped stints on the Mess piano until the early hours, enthusing both messes to engaged in song and cheer. Overall a great day of festive celebration had by all.

TH

Luck Cup

With all Squadrons back from operations and overseas exercises, time was made to squeeze in a quick and reduced version of the Luck Cup Inter Squadron Sports Competition. With corporate memory allowing some to remember playing it in 2009 and trophies last engraved in 2003 it was even more important to get it re-established in the routine annual cycle of regimental activity. The format now focusses on enabling Squadrons to enter teams that encourage maximum participation, sometimes to the detriment of the skill on display. That said, it has served as a useful talent spotting event from which many of the regimental teams are now benefitting.

Sgt Comley kicked off the competition by organising a 5-a-side football tournament. This was hotly contested as regimental and Corps players went head to head across the squadrons in a quick-fire series of games. Despite a close-run final HQ Squadron claimed their first scalp over B with C narrowly claiming victory over A in a penalty shootout for third place.

The Regimental 60th celebrations gave a superb chance to maximise on events, players and spectators with rugby, tug of war and the inaugural netball competition. While much focus was given to the rugby, masterminded by SSgt

The Regimental 60th celebrations gave a superb chance to maximise on events...

Roberts and expertly officiated by Col David Wakefield (Deputy Commander 7th Infantry Brigade), the wives and squadrons went 'net to net' on the court. Once again HQ Squadron prevailed on the rugby pitch, much to their Squadron Leader's relief (and again beating B into second place); however, C Squadron skipped away with victory on the netball court despite the best efforts of the others to get around them (and the wives) in the searing heat. The events culminated with Tug-of-War masterminded by SSgt Taylor and the gym staff, again seeing HQ bring out some big guns to drag B into second place. A and C appeared to be too busy playing netball to worry about it seriously...

As the competition progressed it became clear that HQ would be the ones to beat, B Squadron finally turning the tables on them during a thrilling afternoon in the gym playing basketball. LCpl Old and the regimental team organised a superb event that quickly became very competitive as more and more routine players struggled to cope with some of the more 'amateur' tactics employed by others. With it all to play for it was decided that the final event (worth double points) would be the brainchild of the PTIs and



Luck Cup: The Final

serve as decider before allowing everyone to enjoy summer leave.

On the hottest day of the year with everyone firmly focussed on three weeks off SSgt Taylor and his team devised a gruelling warrior fitness competition tailored around the ever-increasing gym temperature. From weight lifting, to rowing and bike races to a final steeplechase event all squadrons were able to throw their finest and fittest (or most available) into the mix to try and claim the prize. C Squadron claimed their second finish at the top of the podium with B and HQ coming second and third respectively, a hard fought and very closely contested competition. As final scores and totals were totted up

the Commanding Officer announced that B Squadron were the overall victors of the Luck Cup 2019, having snatched it out of HQ's hands in the dying seconds of the final competition.

At the time of writing the competition is up and running again with a view to more sports being included and it will culminate once again in time for summer leave next year. It has been great to not only see such a large number of people taking part in sport, but also the efficiency and effectiveness with which all the events have been organised by some relatively junior soldiers.

CER-B



The CO elegantly vaulting the obstacle

Ex Learned Eagle – World War 1 Battlefield Study

For one week in October, 30 members of the serving Regiment took a short hop across the Channel to spend some time studying two periods of World War 1: the first day of the Somme (1916) and the Battle of Cambrai (1917). The week was the brainchild of former Commanding Officer, Col (ret'd) Anthony 'Spook' Pittman, who had both generated the idea earlier in the year and offered his services as the study guide and academic lead for the week. His knowledge, understanding and ability to target an audience of all ranks from Trooper to Lieutenant Colonel was critical in making the week such a success.

Based from Albert, a small town an hour and a half away from Calais, we were within easy striking distance of both study areas. Discussion topics ranged from the strategic context behind that area of operations down to the kit, equipment and tactics used at the lowest level.

From walking through old trenches to walking the path taken by so many on 'the bloodiest day in history' it was naturally sobering for all concerned. Despite this Col Spook kept everyone focussed on the challenges they faced, it quickly becoming clear that many of them are still as prevalent today as they were over a century ago. The second day at Cambrai allowed us to not only follow the course of the battle and see the ground unfold but also look specifically at some of the actions of our forebears in the Queen's Bays with extracts from the Regimental Diary adding colour through-

out. With innovation and experimentation very much in vogue now, we were able to look at how some rapid developments in both equipment and tactics supported a fundamental change in how both sides fought, again supporting the concept of seizing initiative and letting good ideas play out.

While the options of standing in muddy fields on cold October days talking tactics was obviously the main focus for the week, we did take a few detours to keep everyone's academic interest up. The Somme museum in Albert had Sgt Edwards (A Sqn) fizzing with excitement at the kit and equipment on display, most of which he has in his bergen anyway. The Cambrai Tank Museum at Flesquières allowed us to hear first-hand from Philippe Gorczynski who dedicated over 30 years to exhuming a buried tank (Deborah) from the battle and who has recently opened a new museum to tell



Discussion topics ranged from the strategic context behind that area of operations down to the kit...



At the Thiepval Memorial



Pondering the varied sartorial choices

the tale having kept her in a barn for nearly 20 years. This proved to be a crowning moment of the trip, Philippe's passion and enthusiasm for his subject shining through and leaving a lasting impact of all of us. HQ Squadron Leader and SSM followed this up with a talk on logistics and sustainment which would normally have had everyone running for the bus, but thankfully they followed the Commanding Officer's direction and kept it to an appropriate length.

The tour ended with a visit to the Thiepval Memorial and a short act of remembrance led by the Commanding Officer, a fitting end to a trip which served to highlight the similarities and differences between soldiers a century apart. As time moves on it gets no less relevant even if the memories do fade. Despite having to endure Wales scraping a World Cup victory over Fiji, morale remained high throughout with excellent presentations and work displayed by some very junior soldiers (LCpl Bitten and Tpr Lewis 321 in particular). The Regiment has a good track record of conducting battlefield studies each year, this one being fitted in despite a very busy period between training events. Our thanks must go to Col Spook for all his advice and input throughout. We were very lucky to have such expertise from someone who could so easily relate each event to a level of interest for all and maintain the balance of study and interest so effectively. With a plan to conduct a series of studies for different ranks next year we aim to continue to offer such opportunities to more soldiers serving at Robertson Barracks. A great way to spend a week at work.

CER-B



In the trenches





COTR inspecting
A Sqn

QDG 60th Anniversary

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards was formed on 1st January 1959 on the amalgamation of 1st The King's Dragoon Guards and The Queen's Bays. With one third of the Regiment deployed in Poland in January it was decided to shift our 60th Birthday celebrations to the Summer so all could enjoy it. The Anniversary was split into two parts, a Regimental Families day at Robertson Barracks and then the laying up of the Standard (after 26 years) and the Dedication of the Memorial in Llandaff Cathedral.

The Regimental Families Day (29 June)

In usual tradition the organisation of the Regimental family's day was given to OC HQ Squadron, initially Major Dumont and then Major Jones. However, the day was also going to mark Brigadier Richmond's first visit to the Regiment

as Colonel of the Regiment. The RSM, WO1 Homer, was therefore given the challenge of delivering a suitable parade. Matters were not made easy as the parade square is not even and due to the tempo of activity there was only a week of preparation. This final week would also see plenty of rain although the day itself would prove to be the hottest on record at 30 degrees!

The parade itself was a triumph. Not many could pull off such good drill without a band but the RSM managed it. It delivered enough pomp and swagger to make us feel proud to be QDGs. The rifle drill was exceptional, sadly the Officers were not in the same league although Lt Ed Cooper finally got his timing right. Both RQMSs would share standard duty with WO2 Davies on point for the parade and WO2 Cubitt for the laying up of the

Standard. The COTR gave a few presentations which included the Regimental Medal for the Farrier Major, LCpl Holland, who with the mascot does more to promote the Regiment than anyone else.

The Families Day also provided an excellent opportunity to conduct a number of Luck Cup sporting events. The inter-squadron Rugby was excellent, and HQ Sqn under SSgt Roberts' leadership won easily. HQ Sqn quietly thanked the RCMO, Capt Grundy, for the recent re-orbat which loaded the Squadron with the rugby players. It also proved a very useful talent spotting event for the Regimental team. A new sport was added to this year's Luck Cup, Netball. Initially started by Rachel Ruggles-Brise for females attached to the Regiment, her suggestion that the 'Blue Dragoon' team play the serving Regiment meant it quickly became



B Sqn attempt to
shift Cpl Souch



C Sqn wait to march on

a very competitive event. C Sqn Ldr, Maj Hoey, was seen patrolling the touchline like an overly competitive parent and questioning any decision that was taken. Luckily for him C Sqn won the Luck Cup netball although all the Sqns were soundly defeated by the 'Blue Dragoons'. The final event was Tug of War which again saw an HQ Sqn victory. Apparently, it is all about the anchor man and Cpl Souch REME proved to be first class.

Other activities on the day included the Nepalese community providing a magnificent tasting menu. This was headed up by SSgt Lama RLC and Sgt Rai QGE. It was as usual excellent. The REME under Sgt Harvey stepped forward to run the bar and Lt Maxwell oversaw the dog show, the least popular event. In total there were only three entries to the dog show. Either everyone had been put off by watching Maj Wiggins and Draffen practising or opted for WO2 Griffiths' excuse which was that Rufus was a working dog not a show dog. Or was it that his dog is just disobedient? The end result was Maj Wiggins won which elicited the second smile from me in the year, the first being on his wedding day.

After the day's event everyone moved to the Junior Ranks Club where the chefs had delivered a first-class BBQ. No one went hungry. For entertainment there were several live bands although the only people apart from Sheep and Jugs seen dancing were Maj (ret'd) Stenhouse and the Ruggles-Brises. The night proved too much for some and one individual was found sleeping on the tank by the guard-room first thing in the morning.

There are too many to name all those who played a significant part in the day's success, but I would like to mention



The families watching the parade



Without their hard work and effort the day would not have been such a success.



Maj Paul Jones, Capt 'Butch' Davies, Liz Tyson, Rachel Ruggles-Brise and the entire QM Department led by Capt Homewood. Without their hard work and effort the day would not have been such a success. I personally have many very happy memories of the day and it brought us together as a community.

Laying up of The Standard and Dedication of the Memorial (1 July)

It has been ten years in the planning but finally the Regiment has a spiritual home in Llandaff Cathedral. On 1st July the Regiment moved to Cardiff for the Laying up of the Standard that had sat in HHQ for 26 years and also for the dedication of the memorial for all QDGs who have been killed in action since our amalgamation. We were lucky to be graced with a visit from our Colonel-in-Chief, HRH The Prince of Wales, for this very moving and poignant occasion on our 60th Anniversary.

After the Families Day the Regiment had a busy Sunday tidying up camp before moving to Cardiff. HHQ, led by Mark Hawtin, and the RSM, WO1 Homer, had done all the leg work to make the day a success. It was wonderful to see so many people from the RCA and those serving at ERE attend this very special day in our history. We essentially had two services in one, first the laying up of the Standard, where the RSM's drill instructor course



SSgt Walker looking totally at ease



Presenting the old Standard

stood him in good stead. We had a display of crisp and sharp drill that would rival any Guards Battalion, very unusual for the QDG! After the laying up of the Standard we dedicated the Regimental Memorial. This now provides us with a focal point for our remembrance no matter where the serving Regiment is. We owe Lt Col (Retd) Basher Brace a debt of thanks for this.

I for one will never forget the day and I hope that in ten years' time we are celebrating our 70th anniversary. When you look at what the QDG has achieved in the last 60 years it is very impressive. There is almost no major campaign that the British Army has been involved in over the last 60 years that the Regiment in some form or another has not been part of. Long may this continue.

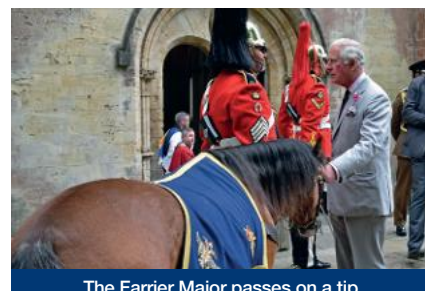
JGES/TJH



Basher presents his handiwork to the C-in-C



Prince Charles meeting the young officers



The Farrier Major passes on a tip for the 4.30 at Newmarket

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inside than you
might think...*



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Dining out of the Colonel of the Regiment Lt Gen Mayall

After 22 years with the QDG of which 11 years and 5 months were as Colonel of the Regiment, Lieutenant General Sir Simon Mayall finally passed on the baton to Brigadier Alan Richmond. General Simon is the longest serving CoR by almost 5 years, a significant achievement. He has mentored five Commanding Officers, overseen the Regiment deploying to Afghanistan three times, to Poland twice and saved the Regiment from amalgamation. A pretty impressive resumé.

I personally have much to thank General Simon for as I was his last subaltern to arrive when he was Commanding Officer and then his last Commanding Officer as Colonel of the Regiment. The Regiment owes him a debt of gratitude for all he has done over the years and therefore before he handed over the serving Regiment we invited him to Swanton Morley for a final 36 hours. This included a tour of Robertson Barracks meeting as many soldiers as possible. There were

plenty of laughs along the way. A highlight was meeting LCpl Rees 333 (PTI) who had at one point been the highest ranking QDG in Kenya after our nightmare recovery when no RAF flights were available. General Mayall and LCpl Rees traded WhatsApp messages until the Regiment was finally out of Kenya and back in the UK.

After the walk around camp there was a full programme for the evening which consisted of a whirlwind tour of both the Cpls' Mess and the WOs' and Sgts' Mess before having a formal dinner night in the Officers' Mess. Major Wiggins as PMC ensured there was some suitable wine for dinner and what followed was a superb meal, the COTR particularly pleased to still be able to wear his QDG Mess Kit – and to see his new portrait hanging in the Dining Room. The following morning after he had addressed the Regiment for a final time, inspiring a new generation of QDGs, the RSM invited him to have breakfast in the WOs' and Sgts'



There were no tears, but it was a close call.



Mess. This was a very moving affair with the COTR being presented with a Silver Charger. There were no tears, but it was a close call. Meanwhile the Regiment was forming up outside awaiting to clap him out of camp while the officers dragged him in a Jackal. His departure was more akin to the liberation of Paris or Rome during WW2 with him as the victorious General rather than a final extraction from Robertson Barracks.

It was a wonderful time and provided a good send-off for General Mayall who has given so much to the Regiment. We wish him well for the future and hope we will see him back soon.

JGES



The PMC explains the mess kit changes to CO and COTR



"No need to brake!"



Fiji Day

Trailwalker

The Trailwalker is an annual charity event organised by the Queen's Gurkha Signals to raise money for Oxfam and the Gurkha Welfare Trust. This year's event took place over the weekend of the 20th – 22nd September 2019. The aim of the challenge is to complete the 100 km (62 miles) across the South Downs Way in 30 hours or less. The event tests you and your team both mentally and physically, across some truly remarkable scenery.

Four members (Lt Cooper QDG, Sgt Rai QGE, LCpl Rowlands QDG and LCpl Bakhem SPS) from 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards took part in this year's event. Due to other commitments, we started our training individually in our own time. The actual event started from Queen Elizabeth Country Park at 0600 hrs on 21st September passing



In our experience it was the hardest thing we have ever done.



Feeling strong at the start



Feeling knackered at the end!

through the major landmarks including Harting Down, Bignor Hill, the River Arun in Arundel, Chanctonbury Ring, Devil's Dyke and Ditchling Beacon, finishing at Brighton Racecourse at 21.49 hrs. It took us 15 hours and 49 minutes to complete the 100km. Overall, we came in 22nd position which was an outstanding effort from all of us.

In our experience it was the hardest thing we have ever done. It exceeded all our expectations. It was an amazing experience that we will never forget. The mental and physical challenge you face is extreme but the feeling of pride and

accomplishment you get when you finish is indescribable!

We would like to thank our support team. The support team play the vital role during the event. Without their hard work it can't be done smoothly. We would also like to thank the Regiment for allowing us to take part and raise the money for a good cause. Finally, we would like to say thanks from the bottom of our hearts to all the sponsors who sponsored us to raise the money for Oxfam and the Gurkha Welfare Trust. We managed to raise total of £315.

SR

Berlin Marathon

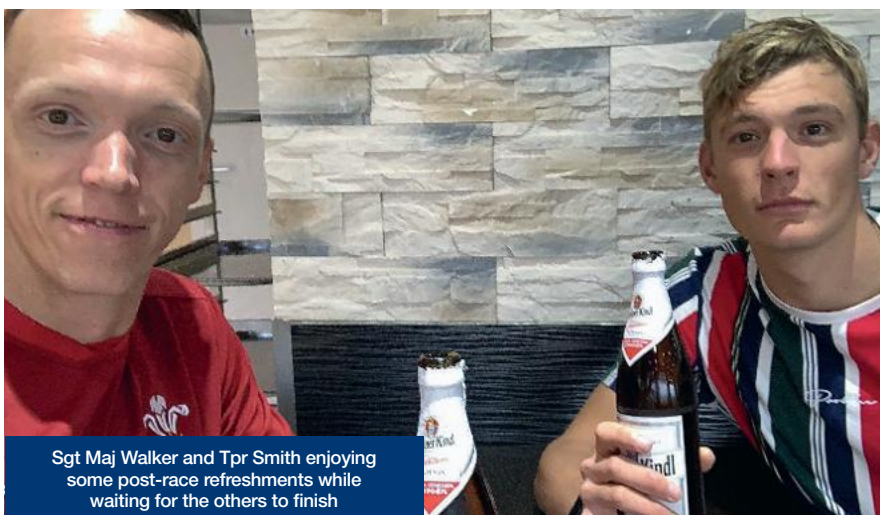
Well where do I start? On a cold morning on 27 Sep the decision was made to meet at 0630 at the guardroom. Unfortunately Sgt (Paul) Akum was nowhere to be seen, even though it was him who wanted to meet at that time. Anyway, after a long 45-minute wait Sgt Akum appeared looking fresh and like he had 45 minutes extra in bed.



Tpr Smith finds out he's on Cambrian patrol once he gets back to camp

We made the gruelling trip from Robertson Bks to Berlin taking the scenic route of driving, don't miss that trip. We arrived in Berlin at a nice hostel which was our home for the next three nights at around 0030 hrs on the 28th but this didn't change my mind about running the Berlin Park Run that morning. Cpl (Steve) Reed and I attended the Berlin Park Run, which for an event that normally only sees around 100 runners on average was overwhelmed with over 700 runners.

Once this was over, we all had to go to the ExPo as it was called to collect our race numbers. This was by no means easy. It was at an old airport, and it was just like being at the airport getting your bags checked and seeing lots of non-duty-free stuff. It was a sort of one-way circuit that after what seemed like forever you reached the place to collect the numbers. I think in total that day we all covered over 20,000 steps (some more than others). Not the best rest day you



Sgt Maj Walker and Tpr Smith enjoying some post-race refreshments while waiting for the others to finish

The well-deserved
finishers medal

The start line

Newly formed boy band: the
Brandenberg Pockets

could ask for before a marathon, but it had to be done.

On marathon day Sunday 28th, we were up early ensuring that we had all eaten before taking the Subway which was free for marathon runners that day. It was only a couple of changes to the start point. With all of us in different waves we departed separately. Berlin was a relatively flat course with bands playing and people cheering all over. Berlin had such a great atmosphere which everyone

enjoyed and happily all of us were able to complete the course.

On Monday some members moved on to the culture part of the journey, attending Berlin war graves which in itself is a place of tranquillity. We also made the trip to Bergen Belsen which saw us not only pay tribute to the lives lost in both places but gather an understanding of what went on in these two rather different places.

Team places

1st Sgt Maj Walker 03:21:56
2nd Tpr Smith 04:01:26
3rd LCpl Hawkins 04:25:08
4th LCpl Parry 04:28:55
5th Cpl Phillips 04:30:37
6th Sgt Akum 04:50:29
7th Cpl Reed 04:54:16

SW

Basic Sniper Operator Course

QDG have successfully run their first basic sniper course in years thanks to the help of HCR and 1 R Irish. The students effectively completed 10 arduous weeks of learning and accomplishing a number of sniper skills from night navigation and judging distance to shooting and stalking. The course began in Robertson Barracks, where for the first two weeks, students completed skill at arms and classroom theory work ready for their first week on ranges down on Salisbury Plain. The students very quickly got to grips with firing the sniper rifle.

Applying the theory work from the classroom to the range, the students were able to hit targets out to 1000m with a first round hit. This stage culminated in completing their ACMT. They then pushed on to starting sniper skills, in which there were a few teething problems at first, but these were quickly ironed out.



The students very quickly got to grips with firing the sniper rifle.



Perhaps a comb might be in order?

After spending four weeks down at SPTA, the course then moved up to Otterburn training area where the northern November weather started to test the mental resilience of the students. There were a few hard nights which weren't finished until well into the early hours. Being pushed for daylight, the intensity of the course increased. However, the students always came out on top. They were starting to understand and produce the required sniper skills. These include observation, judging distance, static map, camouflage and concealment and stalking. These skills were becoming their everyday.

After a few more weeks, the students were ready to begin their Sniper Badge



SKYLINE!

test week. Unfortunately not everyone passed. As you can imagine, there were some sad and unhappy faces, but this did not deter the students. They pushed on to the Final exercise in a very unforgiving training area called Spadeadam. The whole cohort worked extremely hard over the course of 4 days and 3 nights. At this point, even the course instructors were feeling it.

The Sniper course was able to badge 8 snipers, 3 being QDG. All of these are now able to deploy and act as an ISTAR asset for the upcoming Ex Wessex Storm and hopefully form the basis round which a cadre will be built within the Regiment.

GW

Rugby



After a couple of years with no established team QDG RFC returned to the field in July 2019 to compete in the Army Rugby 7s in Aldershot. With limited time to train, the newly formed QDG made it to the semi-finals narrowly losing to the competition winners RMAS.

For the 2019-20 season QDG RFC had entered into the Army Championship North. Their first fixture was against 2 Rifles who had travelled all the way from Northern Ireland. It was clear that 2 Rifles hadn't come all that way to lose. We were unfortunate that within the first 8 minutes we had 2 injuries, one of those being a significant break to Sgt Welfoot's leg. After the air ambulance vacated the pitch the game continued and QDG RFC managed to fight its way back into the game. Cpl Delana kept us in the game with a mazy run to set up a try and then a fantastic touchline conversion which put us within 3 points. Then some skilful work in the backs put debutant Tpr Jones 853 in the corner in the dying seconds of the game. QDG won 37-35 and the pitch invasion at the end was testament to how happy we were with our comeback.

QDG RFC's next fixture saw us travelling to Catterick to take on 1 Bn REME. On arrival it was clear that they could not field a team, a call went out to see if any players in the Garrison wanted a game. Soldiers from 4 RA and RDG answered their calls and the game was on. Even with the ringers that were brought in we

managed to come away with a convincing 27-44 win.

A month later QDG RFC found themselves travelling up to Catterick again, this time to play ITC on a very damp pitch. It was clear from the start that ITC thought they were the more physical side but the well drilled QDG scrum proved them wrong. Again, QDG left Catterick victorious defeating ITC 11-19 in a very physical game.

QDG RFC's final game of 2019 saw us travelling away again, this time to 33 Engineer Regiment in a camp familiar to the Regiment, Carver Barracks Wimbish. Getting the team together was difficult as A Sqn were already on leave and the skiers on the team were travelling to Verbier that day. Dedication was shown from the likes of Cpl Griffiths who travelled from North Wales and the non-rugby playing skiers who watched patiently before getting on the road. The wind was horrendous for kick off and QDG chose to play against it in the first half to get it out the way. Typically, at half time the wind died completely off and not one flag was blowing. QDG won a well fought game 19-22



The wind was horrendous for kick off and QDG chose to play against it in the first half...



Officers outclassing Seniors in the Waterloo match

but it was clear that the QM Capt Davies wasn't paying attention. As SSgt Gaz Roberts kicked the ball into touch to end the game, Capt Davies ran on screaming to him that he had lost us the game not realising that it was us that were leading. This got him the nomination for 'dork' of the day and a pint to drink.

Let's hope for a continued success in the second half of the season and thanks to all those that have supported us so far.

GG



Cpl Casey with a dramatic score



SSM B getting in the way of the air ambulance



"Right, who have we got left?"



A hard fought win against 2 RIFLES

Rugby Tour 23–30 November

Parody of 'The Scottish Trip'

We went to the Valleys of Wales, the land of the Maindy and beer. We all brought our wives back a present so we could go next time again.

We loaded the bus up with kit and left at twenty past 10. We stopped fifteen times between Maindy and Roath; we arrived at Whitchurch at Eleven.

Now Rees went up to Wolfy, he asked if we could stop for a while. Wolfy said "Good heavens alive, we are travelling to Catterick. You will have to hang on till Rhyl."

Rees climbed onto the sunroof, and he shook his haircut in disgrace. He wasn't to know that the A1 was so long. But he sang with a smile on his face.

Now Reesy was singing his heart out, and his Calon Lan was croaky as hell. You heard Gaz say as Rees was singing away, "Let's have a bit of 'Hymns and Arias'."

We went to the Valleys of Wales, the land of the Maindy and beer. We all brought our wives back a present so we could go next time again.

With apologies to Max Boyce

It's been a while since QDG RFC went on a rugby tour anywhere. With the kind permission of the CO and support from all Sqn Ldrs the team left for Cardiff on a wet and windy Friday. Wolfy Thomas's bus was full and singing could be heard. That only lasted an hour. Eventually our old haunt of Maindy came into sight and the boys were impressed when they arrived to find out that the barracks haven't changed since the goat incident of 1996.

The unpacking was swift and the Heath was visited before going to the Arms Park to watch Cardiff RFC and Aberavon. No one can remember the score because thoughts turned to the Goat Major where some team bonding began. The Coach Bongo Davies was informed that the boys were taking the match seriously and would only have a few pints. They would be in bed by midnight. The team manager Pecs was happy with the explanation.

Match day arrived and the weather, although very wet, produced a rather entertaining game. The match was organised by an old friend, Chris Hunt.



Wolfy Thomas's bus was full and singing could be heard.



The referee for the day was Lanky Will. I must say when on the park he could be heard for miles and miles and miles. Shame he didn't have his glasses on.

The game reminded me of Fran Cotton back in the day as you could not recognise who was who. However, QDG RFC were victorious 31–21 and the after match singing and drinking (very low consumption) took place. The home team nominated our dress wearer SSgt Gaz Roberts as man of the match. He had the honour of the dress due to a yellow card for a tip tackle, which Lanky Will brandished with a broad smile upon his face. Legend has it that Gaz may indeed be QDG's most yellow carded player. However, since he was already in the

limelight and due a congratulatory beverage, the skipper took it upon himself to nominate a second man of the match to Young Tpr Tyler Roberts.

The next part of the road trip was to Catterick Garrison to fulfil a league fixture. Cardiff to Catterick on a cold, wet Monday morning was the highlight of many hangovers. Wolfy's bus was full and the next stage commenced. The match was a 1030 kick off and, as many of the RCA can testify, conditions in Catterick in November are wet, cold and very windy. ITC were fit, robust and had some rather large Commonwealth soldiers. However, grit, determination and a dominating pack saw QDG RFC victorious 19–11. This match was targeted, and the team earned their victory. As a QDG management we were extremely proud of the performance. Maj Pecs Jones even bought a round in Richmond after. He must have been chuffed.

No hosting as ITC had recruits to train so the team frequented the local 'Spoons in Richmond for a hearty after match meal and some liquid refreshments to re-hydrate. The home team nominated two players for man of the match as they couldn't split the solid performances had by all and chose SSgt Gaz Roberts and Lt Will Groome. Due to work commitments from Lt Will Groome, Gaz was provided with a congratulatory drink along with WO2 Gav Griffiths who was this time sporting the lovely dress due to a few wise words from the touchline. Tpr Pitt engaged the team with a rendition of Hymns and Arias and also provided a one man showing of the New Zealand Haka. The EME Capt Scott Dougal decided to test the reaction time of the local constabulary while Maj Pecs Jones decided to engage with the local manageress of building products within her public house.

The next morning Cpl Wolfy Thomas's bus was full and the next stage started



SSgt Nav looking for contact



The EME offloads to 'Tarmac' Lew



SSgt Roberts after 70 mins hard play

with our road trip to Chester. To clear the heads, Pecs kindly treated the team to some team cohesion which involved a couple games of bowling followed by a round a crazy golf. With accommodation booked at Dale Bks it was decided that a bit of fancy dress was the order of the day, so a £10 challenge was given, and you had to kit out your partner in crime.

The amount of dresses bought was disturbing but the best dressed was Sgt Davies 220 (Harry Potter's Brother) who put a smile on everyone's face. A staunch Welshman dressed up in an England polo top, England hat and a Manchester United bum bag made 220 a grumpy man all night. Maj Pecs Jones came

dressed as Eyeball Paul and the barmaid thought Tpr Eveleigh was a woman.

The game against Rhyl was another played in very wet conditions. QDG RFC took to the field against Rhyl 2nd XV and it is fair to say we took a while to warm up. The match was tight and the fact that Capt Scott Dougal's size 14 boots hadn't turned up didn't help either. He at least got 20 minutes though thanks to a young lad from the Rhyl youth team who lent him a pair. He then had to wear a certain dress after the match. The North Wales boys clearly stick together as Rhyl nominated Young Tyler 'bang him' Roberts as the game's man of the match. You'd have thought with all these star performances he'd by now be able to drink a congratulatory beverage!

Again, QDG RFC were victorious 14-7 and it was great to see many RCA come to support, such as John Kemp, Steff Shaw and Scouse Johnson. It has been a while since we have played rugby in a league or gone on tour. We are grateful to the CO for his support but also grateful to the RCA who came to watch in Cardiff and Rhyl and braved the weather conditions. A good old-fashioned tour was had by all and I am sure it will be remembered for a while. We didn't get to go to California like the football team but at least we played and won all our games on our tour!

JND

Football

The football team saw a revival this year after a very hectic previous year which limited the football team to two charity matches only. The Regiment has had another busy year, but this did not hinder LCpl Leighton Pritchard from organising another Remembrance Football Game against the Swansea City All Stars. The game was played in a fantastic spirit, with locals getting involved with both teams which created an outstanding atmosphere. Once again, a significant amount of money was raised for the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal.

In the busy schedule, Lt Nathan Rixson also managed to organise a football tour of the west coast of America. The tour saw 22 lucky personnel travel to San Diego,



Well-hosted by Dental America



Waiting for penalties in a sweaty San Diego



A scintillating 4-4 draw was decided by a tense penalty shootout.



Los Angeles and Las Vegas over a ten-day period towards the end of November.

The team spent the first three days staying in downtown San Diego with the first game against Dental America being

played on the very first morning. A scintillating 4-4 draw was decided by a tense penalty shootout. Tpr Drew Murray, our 4th penalty taker, stepped up to slot the decisive kick past the goalkeeper to win the shootout 3-2.



Fact-finding visit to the LA Kings



Crazy shirts, crazy guys



Don't tell his mum he smokes

The game saw debuts from Lt Ed Cooper, Tpr Chris Daley, Tpr Jack Fogarty, Tpr Brandon Figg, Tpr Callum Wilkinson and Tpr Sam Jones 196. Lt Ed Cooper, from whom not much was expected at first, defied opinion and put in a feisty and energetic performance on the wing. The first half, which was played in sweltering Californian conditions, saw a young and fairly inexperienced team put in a solid defensive performance. Tpr Harry Dear who debuted as captain put in a man of the match performance. He controlled the game from the off and managed to stabilise the first half jitters. Tpr Dear compounded his first half performance by scoring in the first minute of the second half. Dental America quickly pulled one back before goals from LCpl Nathan Donnachie and Tpr Thomas Hopkins which saw the QDG establish a 3-1 lead. It didn't all go the QDG's way however. The conditions meant that fatigue kicked in and this saw Dental America claw their way back into the game. After a series of open goal misses by Tpr Hopkins and LCpl Donnachie, Dental America found themselves 4-3 in the lead. The QDG rallied and increased the pressure on their opponents. With only minutes to go Tpr



The team would then spend the next four days in Los Angeles.



Hopkins made amends for the series of misses by calmly scoring the equaliser. Pandemonium ensued. A thrilling and very enjoyable game was followed by the opposing team hosting the QDG to a good old American BBQ with a Mexican twist. A fantastic experience for the entire team. The team enjoyed a further couple of days acclimatising and exploring the beautiful scenery in and around San Diego.

The team would then spend the next four days in Los Angeles. Unfortunately, the game in Los Angeles was cancelled by the opposition, but this did not deter the team from having a good time and conducting their own internal 5-a-side competition. Further highlights in LA saw the team explore the vast area of Los Angeles including Hollywood and Santa

Monica as well as managing to visit the Staples Center on two occasions for the LA Lakers (Basketball) and the LA Kings (Ice Hockey).

The final part of the tour saw the squad travel to Las Vegas for three days. This saw the football team play Tyneside United. Unfortunately, this resulted in a narrow defeat. The opposition were a very well drilled team and their experience of playing together over many years was very apparent. This did not quash the team spirit that was established over the previous weeks and the team went on to enjoy a final night together playing TopGolf and other customary American games.

Overall it was a very enjoyable and action-packed tour with far too many memories and stories to list here. I am sure you will be able to coax a few out of the squad in person.

A special mention would only be right for LCpl Nathan Donnachie who once again represented the Army Under 23s as well as RAC team.

NR

Match photo with
Tyneside United



Boxing

Following a protracted subsidence due to recent operational and training tempo, this year has seen a welcome return to Boxing within the Regiment, to re-invigorate the sport that requires the skills and mentality similar to those that underpin the character of a reconnaissance soldier. SSgt Taylor (RAPTCI) and his staff improved the facilities at RBSM. A recent re-generation of the gym resulted in the procurement of new Boxing equipment. Aside from an array of heavy bags, there is now a training ring and new protective equipment, vital for developing individuals in the pugilistic art.

In the summer, under the eye of the sports officer, a plan was hatched to nurture the short – and long-term aspirations of the QDG Boxing team. Firstly, a small team would be entered in the RAC Boxing championships (Hodson's Horse). After raising the profile of the sport amongst all ranks, the view is to hold an inter-Sqn competition at RBSM in July 2020.

Newly attached engineer Sgt Stevens boasts an impressive coaching CV, as head coach of the Engineer Corps boxing team. Under his watchful eye, Cpls Symons and Thurston were selected to represent the Regiment at the RAC championships. Prior to attending the event held at the Armour Centre in Bovington, the pair underwent a gruelling eight-week training programme. The mandatory training period consisted of 3-4 high intensity PT sessions per day, focussing on strength and conditioning, both of which are key in sustaining performance during the high intensity sport. Sgt Stevens also organised external training sessions, allowing both Symons and Thurston to spar against boxers from other units. This opportunity to train with the Royal Engineers and Light Dragoons was invaluable in the final preparation for the competition.



Finish him!

Cpl Thurston was first to compete in the week-long tournament. Unfortunately, despite a valiant effort, he was narrowly beaten in the preliminary stages. Cpl Symons competed in the 86Kg cruiserweight novice division. He fought three extremely hard contests, beating his Light Dragoons, RTR and ARMCCN counterparts. With the CO and RSM in attendance, his performance in the final was un-swinging and as a result he is the newly crowned Royal Armoured Corps cruiserweight champion. To have a boxer in the final of the competition from a team of only two is no mean feat. The success of both boxers is also testament to the hard work and perseverance of Sgt Stevens behind the scenes.

An individual who has enjoyed another year representing the Regiment in this unique and demanding sport is Tpr Mahoney. Enjoying continued success on the Army team one of his notable contests this year was against a 56kg RRF opponent. Tpr Mahoney boxed in excellent fashion and secured a unanimous decision, his second year as Army individual champion! More recently, he defeated a Royal Marine 11 years his senior to become the UKAF champion.

“More recently, he defeated a Royal Marine 11 years his senior to become the UKAF champion.”

Mahoney has been training fulltime at the Army Combat Sports Centre in Aldershot for over a year. As well as conducting the training expected of the elite Army team, he is also supported daily by nutritionists, psychological and lifestyle coaches. His future aspiration is to secure the Welsh National Championship in the 56 kg division and subsequently represent the country in the Commonwealth Games 2022.

Tpr Mahoney has also offered to make himself available in a coaching role in July 2020 in preparation for a regimental fight night at RBSM. The event has been endorsed by CO QDG and is already in the planning stages. The night will culminate with a final between each sub-unit promoting competitiveness amongst squadrons, reflective of days of old.

RD



Cpl Symons lands a left jab

Golf

The aim this year was always to build on the successes of 2018, no mean feat considering how busy we have been as a unit and how on occasions the weather has not been very kind. With an uptake in attendance and some of the stalwarts of the team raising their respective games, this has been achieved in spades with the Regiment not only attending some of the Regional and Corps Golfing events but competing at the highest level which has resulted in some top finishes and our heads held high.

From a representation perspective the Regiment on average made up 25% of every Eastern Region Army Golf Association event, with the following successes. At Belton Park, LCpl James Casey 113 came first in Division 2, a feat also achieved by Cpl Dave Watson at Swaffham. These were only topped by Capt Chris Homewood who came first overall at Stoke Rochford.

There was also individual success for Tpr Beth Parker who, having been narrowly knocked out at the quarter finals of the Army Ladies Matchplay Championship, went on to win the subsequent Stapleford Event by a country mile. Tpr Parker was also selected to play for United Kingdom Armed Forces (UKAF) v UK Police and has since been selected for the UKAF team for 2020. Finishing the season on a high, Tpr Parker then went on to represent the Army Ladies Team in the Inter Services Championship, which they won for the third year running.

Sgt John Hinton represented the Regiment in the Corps team in the Inter Corps Championship and was a regular name on the team sheet playing for the Eastern Region in the AGA Regional Finals. A number of QDG's golfers also took part in the 'Longest Day' golf challenge, playing four rounds in a day to raise money for charity.



Tpr Parker with the Saunton Bowl at the Army Matchplay Champs

The main success of the year came when the Regiment managed to field two very strong teams at the RAC Championships where in some very testing conditions the Regiment was narrowly beaten to first place by the Light Dragoons by a single point after 36 holes, a real achievement for a group who are still learning the game and its intricacies.

2020 offers yet another set of challenges to develop the game within the Regiment. With a busy operational commitment ahead, time spent on the golf course may prove to be difficult, but as a collective we are committed to continue to drive and enhance our sporting prowess in this field. We have some flesh blood in Cpl Jamie Harrison who has been working on new ideas and events for the future and, after his return from ERE, Sgt Kieran Taylor has taken up the reins of OIC Golf from Sgt John Hinton – who is far from retired!

JH



Would you buy a used car from these men?



Like polo, but for sergeants

Please ensure you have registered your arrival in the Pro Shop prior to teeing off

Basketball

The year has been one of the best for QDG Basketball in a long time, from the basic level at weekly practice and the success of Luck Cup to the Regiment being yet again the dominant presence at the Corps level.

This year we have seen LCpl Old take over both the Regimental and Corps Teams as Head Coach and Cpl French go on to once again Captain the RAC for the 3rd consecutive year making him the longest serving continuous Captain they have seen. Tpr Al-Ameri has taken over the Captaincy of the Regimental team with Cpl French being on posting. He will look to expand his role in the coming year as he obtains his level one Assistant Coaching qualification along with Cpl French.

Congratulations to B Sqn on winning Luck Cup Basketball this year and thank you to the respective Sqn Captains for their work in organising their Sqn teams. Off the back of the competition, we have seen the size of the Regimental team grow to the size in which a development team can be formed. Six of this year's RAC team came from the Regiment, showing to the rest of the Corps that we are the best!



Flying the flag

In July, 2Lt Holland took over as Basketball Officer and is looking forward to helping further shape the team and guide it into the future as we aim for a potential tour to Texas in Spring of 2020. This in itself shows the passion and commitment of the Regiment to making the team the best it can possibly be.

Before summer leave, we saw three members of the team rewarded with their Regimental Colours; LCpl Branston, LCpl Old and Tpr Al-Ameri. Unfortunately this was LCpl Branston's last year with the team as he has moved on to pursue a career with 4/73 Bty RA. As a team we would like to thank him for his commitment to the team and his presence both on and off the court.



LCpl Old, player/coach

At the start of the year the Regiment purchased a new kit for the team. By replacing the old kit, we are reflecting the path in which we are heading down by rightfully representing the Regiment with the Wine and Blue colouring paying homage to the Regimental colours, while still keeping a clean and modern styling.

As a team we would like to thank all those who allow us to keep pushing forward and extending the reach of the team and, as the old saying goes, "Nothing in front but the Enemy".

MO



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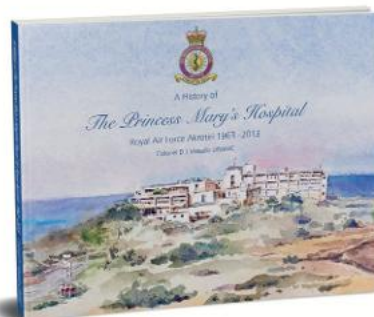
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Sailing

While Regimental sailing has continued to bump along in a fairly informal, minor sport kind of way, this year has seen some highlights with a team winning the Gold Cup at Seaview for the first time since 1983.

The season started with a number of expeditions along the south coast as part of A Sqn's AT package upon their return from Poland. Sgt Wilkins put together some groups on a number of boats provided by JSASTC at Gosport and in between wrestling with jib-booms and bobstays they enjoyed exploring various branches of Wetherspoons up and down the English Channel. For most, this was an introduction so hopefully we will see them out on the water again.

Majs Hoey and Ruggles-Brise led two crews in the Combat Arms Seaview Regatta in May, an excellent three-day racing event on the Isle of Wight. There is a broad range of expertise in the fleet and so some good competition whether you are at the front or the back. The weather was kind enough to provide steady wind throughout with minimal rain so a full race programme was run and the QDG 'A' team ended up fourth over-

all. This was the highest RAC Regimental team and so enough to secure the Gold Cup. Well done to Cpls May and Phillips and Tprs Harrod-Green and Walker who were quick to learn on the job as crew. There was also QDG representation on the Army Victoria 34 team who won their class in the Services Offshore Regatta.

Mention must also be made of Mark Ashley-Miller, who is circumnavigating Great Britain in his boat Good Dog, on a mission to visit every Harbour Master. Have a look on his Instagram account 'HarbourMasterSailingChallenge' and see if you can crew for him or donate to the Seafarers' Charity.

The RAC Yacht Club celebrated its 70th anniversary with a dinner at the Royal Yacht Squadron in Cowes. The serving Regiment was represented by Lt Col Nick Fenton (back from Mali) and Maj David Hoey while Chris Cecil-Wright, now back from Monaco, flew the flag for the old boys. The RACYC continues to go from strength to strength and is now offering heavily discounted Competent Crew and Day Skipper courses taught by the Bosun.

DCMH



Life on the ocean wave



Aboard the good ship Good Dog



Tough times on the Services Offshore Regatta



Gold. Always believe in your soul



"The key to racing is focus, Tpr H-G..."

Blue Dragoons Netball



Season team photo

Another year has gone by and the Blue Dragoons Netball Club continues to be well supported by ladies on both sides of the camp. As the seasons have changed we have both bid farewell to a number of founding members and warmly welcomed new talent. Although some Dragoons have gone far afield we are thrilled to hear that they are still stepping on netball courts across the country. Looking back over the year we have had many highlights; from having our own court on camp (no mean feat) to becoming permanent members of the local league in Dereham, taking part in charity tournaments, and celebrating our first birthday in the Summer.



Best foot forward

However, our most memorable highlight this year was bringing netball to the wider QDG community as part of the Regimental 60th celebrations. Two Blue Dragoon teams took on all four Squadrons in the searing heat. It is fair

to say that the QDG competitive spirit shone bright and even the most laid-back members of the Regiment soon became determined to beat the us. Cries of 'bias', 'Ref!' (Umpire) and 'I didn't realise how quick those ladies are' filled the court and made for an excellent afternoon which saw the Blue Dragoons winning overall whilst C Squadron became the inaugural winners of the Netball Luck Cup trophy.

We are thrilled that netball now has a place with regimental sports and hope that we can continue to attract both serving and non-serving players. My thanks must go to everyone who continues to support us on and off court (the QM in particular!). The biggest thank you, as always, must go to the players, who turn



Best foot forward again

up week upon week regardless of work or family commitments and play against some ferocious opponents to keep the flame alive.

RMR-B

Field Sports

The Glorious Twelfth was quickly upon us and the QDG had secured six days' grouse shooting up at Warcop. After last year's cancellation, due to the low numbers of breeding pairs after the 2018 heatwave, it was particularly popular and only a lucky few secured a gun. Lt Byrd was fortunate enough to have the first day and we waited with bated breath to see if the rest of us would be able to go. The numbers were good, and the season looked promising, but unfortunately it was decided that the grouse would not be shot for another year in order to preserve the numbers for the 2020 season. Fingers crossed the summer is not too hot and QDG officers can enjoy the grouse next year before Lt Byrd shoots all of them on the first day again.

For those who do not get the chance to experience Warcop there are plenty of shooting opportunities at our local shoot on STANTA. Perfect for the weekend Orderly Officer to spend their Saturday enjoying an armed walk, without an SA80, on the Thetford training area. A combination of rough and driven shooting allows those who have never shot to experience the sport we all love, a great opportunity for all.



Maj Wiggins approaching a smile

Fishing was particularly popular this year with adventures starting in Kenya. A much-needed post-exercise fishing trip was organised to Ragati Conservancy on Mt. Kenya for the officers deployed on Ex Askari Storm. Set in the foothills was a little camp with accommodation consisting of camp-cots and green canvas two-man tents, no electricity or running water. Fortunately, this felt like the Ritz compared to the dusty training area in the north of the country where you sleep with



The OpsO happy with a successful trawl

Two local ghillies showed us the best spots and most caught one of the infamous Ragati Reds

one eye open watching out for Samburu intruders. Two local ghillies showed us the best spots and most caught one of the infamous Ragati Reds, a uniquely coloured rainbow trout that was first introduced in the 1920s. Supper was cooked over an open fire and enjoyed by all. Unfortunately Maj Hoey did suffer with a dodgy stomach, however it was quickly realised that the litre of 'delicious' Kenya Cane was the cause. The evening was filled, long into the night, with endless Monopoly Deal where Capt Russell continually sabotaged any chance of the CO winning, much to his frustration.

Back in Norfolk, Cpl Canning is the go-to man for all the best spots round camp, including the River Wensum, usually



The team at Ragati



Officers' Mess Shoot

accompanied by Sgt Speed. The new doctor Maj Lyne-Pirkis is an avid field sportsman and is fully exploiting the rich wildfowling opportunities in Norfolk on his many canoes.

The year rounded off nicely with the annual Officers' Mess Shoot on the Keiths' land, a highlight of the field sports calendar. Unfortunately, all the 'adults' were on CAST in Germany which meant the subbies were left to split into two teams of seven guns and enjoy a brilliant day of shooting. 2Lts Al-Khamiri and Fulloway were blooded, both shooting their first pheasants. The gamekeeper, John Hassell, organised a fantastic day, however he did point out that our bird recognition needed working on, after Capt Hind shot a woodcock. Let's hope this doesn't reflect the officers' AFV recognition. The day paused for a delicious curry lunch and continued through to the evening to cap off a superb day. Thanks again must go to James Keith and his fantastic team for providing such a fun day for us all.

Dogs continue to be a key feature at Robertson Barracks with Maj Wiggins' black Labrador, Draffen, enjoying his first season in the field, proving he will



Dogs continue to be a key feature at Robertson Barracks...



be one to watch in the future. Flashman, Capt Carter's black cocker spaniel, finally retrieved his first live game, much to his owner's relief and Morley, Capt Russell's fox red Labrador, continues to retrieve everything, particularly sugar beet, not birds. Robertson Barracks has also seen a reduction in the rat population with Mr Griffith's Patterdale Terrier doing a sterling job of keeping the numbers down – well done Rufus.

All-in-all it has been a fantastic year for field sports at the QDG. The sport continues to grow and it's great to see so many new faces get involved. This year Capt Russell hands over the reins to Lt Maxwell to lead a successful 2020/21 season. Those that wish to get involved with any of the activities are encouraged to get in touch.

HPR



Morley and Draffen



Draffen collects an enemy fireteam



The new boys show Lt Holland how to slay the birds



Khambo: First Blood



He'd go much quicker if he closed his mouth!

Alpine Skiing

QDG Alpine Ski Team departed RBSM on the 10th December 2019 to compete in the RAC Alpine Ski Championships on Ex White Knight 36. After a relatively simple journey that many have described as the gold standard when compared to that of the Nordic Ski team, the eight lucky Dragoons arrived in Verbier. With only two members of the team having previously completed a White Knight and three novices, it was quite a junior team but managed to achieve some impressive results over the course of the exercise.

After an admin day it was straight into the relentless training cycle of skiing with the Swiss instructors desperately attempting to stop Lt Barham from skiing like 'Spaghetti'. Something they did achieve when several weeks in they decided to label him 'The Shed' instead. Lt Maxwell, Tpr Jones 702 and Tpr Jones 353 began to steadily learn and master the art of skiing (some much faster than others), whilst Lt Cooper, LCpls Lewis and Brewster and Tpr Murphy attempted desperately to improve in order to make QDG competitive come race week.

With just one day off since the 10th December the short Christmas stand-down was much appreciated. The opportunity allowed the conduct of slower paced team-led training whilst the QDG was also chosen to host the RAC Ski Club Christmas Party. Never to be



QDG Alpine Ski Team

outdone by junior cap badges the team leaned fully into the organisation required for what most cap badges admitted was the best social of the Exercise. A grueling Christmas morning lugging supplies up to the snow park was completely worth it when the other units turned up for a ski-off and party before Christmas lunch at the 'Furry Shovel'.

After three weeks of intense training Race Week was upon the team. Following the initial seeding race all members of the team began to climb through the rankings with none finishing behind their initial seed position (even Tpr Jones 702!). Given our lack of racing experience the QDG had a very impressive race week with the A team finishing fourth in the Team GS (Giant Slalom) and the B team finishing second of the B teams and even beating the KRH A team.

The individual events were also better than expected. In the Individual GS Lt Cooper finished 5th out of 80 with LCpl Lewis hot on his heels in 10th place and 'The Shed' (Mr Barham) and Tpr Murphy also finishing in the top twenty. Individual Slalom results had the QDG team gunning hard for a place on the podium with Mr Cooper 7th, Mr Barham 10th

and LCpl Lewis 12th. Tpr Murphy's first run put him in a blistering 7th place and it appears the pressure got too much when he forgot how to ski on his second run! Despite this unprecedented four skiers in the top 15 following the first run the team were not able to capitalise on our Slalom expertise in the team event with Lts Cooper and Barham both having to take up Nordic Skiing in order to run back up the slope to gates following crashes, scuppering our results. The incident did however confirm their belief that Nordic Skiers have at least one screw loose!

The QDG Alpine Ski Team had a brilliant Ex White Knight 36. All eight Dragoons had a brilliant exercise and created friendships both within QDG and across the RAC. The competitive edge on display was keen and refreshing and even cooking in the evening became something to try and win. Lt Cooper and LCpl Lewis had a hard-fought battle for fastest QDG and Lt Maxwell and Tpr Jones 353 were battling for fastest QDG novice. The results were unprecedented for a team from which only two had raced before. Next year the team can build on this performance and there are podium finishes for the taking on Ex White Knight 37.

ECCC



I want a Magnum for every team!

Biathlon

On the 4th December eight of our finest Dragoons left RBSM heading for Sjusjoen, Norway, for the annual Nordic Skiing Exercise. We managed to make it to Holland before the first 'event' occurred. Having decided that Tpr Murray needed his fourth McDonalds of the day and Mr Groome his first headache, a short comfort break was extended somewhat due to an abrupt halt, which could perhaps be described as a 'collision'. This delayed the start of the exercise and our arrival into Norway by two days. Nonetheless, we arrived in good order, excited and ready for the skiing to begin.

After teaching the newer members of the team the basics of Nordic ski admin we reunited with our illustrious coach Silje who wasted no time familiarising us with skiing up the hills rather than down them, a foreign concept to some but not to all. After numerous sessions of both Classic and Skate skiing morale was high and levels of fitness higher. This, combined with a rigidly enforced clean-living campaign set by Mr Groome, devoid of Monster, fast food, alcohol and other vices, meant that the team was fighting fit. When we weren't skiing, eating or sleeping the team was diligently learning the specifics of Biathlon shooting such as breathing techniques, trigger control and the position and hold of the rifle. This all contributed to being able to hit a target slightly larger than a two-pound coin

at 50m having skied 10km over arduous terrain. Having read the above you will be able to appreciate that the team's ability had increased sufficiently to be ready for the coming competition, Ex White Fist (the RAC Nordic Skiing Competition) held at the World Cup Biathlon Arena in Hochfilzen, Austria. Extracurricularly the team managed to experience a night in Lillehammer as well as a short stop in The Hague on the way back to the UK, where it was noted that the local delicacy, a cured meat and fish platter, caught some off guard at supper.

Having completed nearly three weeks of training in Norway the team headed back to a well-deserved Christmas with their families. Mr Groome issued a stern reminder to eat clean and exercise well over the festive period!

With Christmas over we regrouped at RBSM on the 2nd January ready to begin the next adventure, starting with a drive across the continent to Hochfilzen. Arriving safely and in a timely manner, the ante had been upped. We quickly began race admin for the first of three races, a

15km Individual Classic ski race. This first test served as a wakeup call to all that the physical exertion required to compete and do well in a Nordic ski race is colossal. In this race, the level of effort applied from all was excellent but Mr Groome feared his Christmas regime hadn't been rigidly adhered to! On to races two and three, the 10km Individual and 4x7.5km Relay, both Biathlon events, in our preferred discipline, Skate. The team performed well with the skiers registering some competitive times. Cpl Hatton, a veteran of the Army winter sports scene, showed that class is permanent with a strong showing over the demanding course. In the fiercely contested team relay the QDG team placed 14th out of 28 teams, a genuinely respectable result considering the team entered comprised of largely novice skiers competing against battle hardened opponents.

Overall, the QDG team performed well when competing, learnt many new skills and most importantly enjoyed their time on the Exercise this year. Eight soldiers returned to RBSM having developed both physically and mentally with new stories to tell about faraway lands and different cultures. The exception being Tpr Jones who has physically regressed as he is now in a cast having mysteriously fallen on ice. Nonetheless, all involved enjoyed their time and are keen to return to the pursuit of excellence next year.

WREG



Mr Groome issued a stern reminder to eat clean and exercise well over the festive period!



Lt Groome keen to get going



Well this doesn't look too steep



Biathlon banter



Breezing through it



"Jolly good fun eh Cpl Hatton?"



"When do we get to go downhill?"

Army Rugby U23

The Army U23 season kicked off again this season in September. This year QDG sent two players to represent: LCpl Ronan Lewis and young Tpr Tyler Roberts. Once again Capt Bongo Davies was part of the coaching team.

The season leading up to Inter Services was also the trial part and the squad was whittled down until the head coach, Capt Mal Roberts, was happy with his squad. It all started with a mini tour to Cornwall to play Camborne 2nd XV. With a week's worth of rugby strength and conditioning and putting the players through their paces as well as bonding 30 young players from all aspects of the Army, the trip was worthwhile as we walked away with a victory.

Throughout September and October, fixtures came thick and fast playing tough teams such as Oxford University Greyhounds, Sandhurst, Taunton and Hinckley. All games resulted in losses apart from Sandhurst which ended in a draw. These types of fixtures were exactly what was needed leading into the Navy match. Throughout this time both Ronan Lewis and young Tyler Roberts represented themselves really well. It was also an opportunity for both players to work on certain aspects of their game.

The Navy match was upon us and after the fixture venue was changed the time of the game was changed as well. That aside, the Army team took to the field with LCpl Lewis making the squad, although unfortunately Tpr Roberts didn't make the starting 23. His attitude throughout was commendable. The weather conditions on the day of the match are some of the worst I have ever encountered on a rugby pitch: gale force winds and driving rain in a very open pitch. The Army team played their young hearts out but discipline and the right mindset in the right areas let us down. At times it seemed



The weather conditions on the day of the match are some of the worst I have ever encountered...



the weather got into the Army players' mentality and the Navy players wanted it more. Final score Navy 28 – Army 12.

The result against the Navy meant it was a must win against the RAF the following week at Aldershot stadium. Although cold, the night was perfect for a great game of rugby. Once again Ronan Lewis started. The game in the first 25 minutes certainly went the Army's way leading 17 – 3. The RAF then came back. The whole match was tense and became very close, but the Army were victorious 25 – 22. It was great to see some old

faces in the crowd such as Lt Col Basher Brace and Bongo Davies Snr. Lt Hugo Chaplin also came to support.

Unfortunately, the Navy beat the RAF which meant they are U23 Inter Service champions 2019 and congratulations goes to them. U23 level rugby is a great stepping stone to A team level and beyond but also a look forward to UKAF rugby. Capt Bongo Davies is looking forward to his last season as UKAF U23 head coach and a trip to France to play the French Combined Service U23 as part of the VE day 75th anniversary. This is also his last season as a coach with the U23s and who knows the Army Senior team may be calling. My thanks go to the CoC for supporting representative rugby but also supporting the development of young talented players as they move forward in their Army Rugby.

JND

Santa Rosa Ironman

Arriving at Pirbright a week after playing in the 2018 Army Navy match, I thought it was time to switch my efforts to scratch an itch that had always been there and take up Triathlon. It was hugely encouraging to find a thriving, welcoming and passionate community at ATC(P), headed by Cpl David Smith. There seemed to be an abundance of knowledge about the sport, which people in the club seemed only too pleased to share.

After a relay sprint at Dorney Lake, Windsor, with the team, I got the bug and that weekend jumped into the unknown by signing up to the Santa Rosa Ironman. An Ironman consists of a 2.4 mile swim, 112 mile bike, and ends with a marathon. The reasoning behind choosing Santa Rosa was that the inevitable turmoil that I'd find myself in would perhaps be made easier by cycling and running through wine country in Northern California.

After the best part of seven months of (semi-serious) training and some fantastic sessions with members of the triathlon team at Pirbright, my wife and I arrived in San Francisco the day before the event. Jet lag and four airplane meals perhaps wasn't the perfect pre-race preparation, but nevertheless I found myself on the start line at 0600 hrs next to 3,000 other competitors ready to swim for an hour or so in Lake Sonoma. The swim



went well, and seemingly all those early mornings driving to the Aldershot pool with Cpl Smith, Taylor and Finch paid off. What the pool didn't really prepare you for is the jostling and fighting for space whilst in the water. The advice I had been given was to pick someone going at a similar speed and stay on their feet the entire swim, allowing them to pave the way for you.

The transition then went smoothly and the 6 hour ride went roughly to plan. I was conscious I needed to consume around 400 calories an hour as well as drink enough on the bike. Ignoring this would mean starting the marathon depleted and be a recipe for disaster. At around mid-day the temperature rose to 26 degrees making things a little tricky. Being on the bike, the amount you sweat is limited because of the wind, therefore your intake of fluid has to be regimented.

The transition from being on the bike for a long period of time and then running is a funny one, with your legs feeling like lead as soon as you start (well they did for me). But the idea was that if I ran around a 4hrs 10 min marathon, I'd be on for a sub 12 hrs completion time which was a good goal to aim for. The run was a three loop 8.5 mile course which was nice and flat – having said that, half of it was on trail or gravel terrain which meant at least two people from my view were unable to complete the race due to twisted ankles and knees.

The atmosphere when you came back into Santa Rosa town for the final time was unbelievable, and all a bit of a blur. Seeing my wife as well as the red carpet by the finish line prompted a sprint finish, and thankfully I managed to come in under the time I was after. I could not recommend the challenge enough, and

The atmosphere when you came back into Santa Rosa town for the final time was unbelievable...

if you are lucky enough to be reading this with access to ATC(P) you have all the facilities, teammates and knowledge to go and complete one. You just must be proactive with your time. I would like to thank members of the Tri club that became excellent training partners, and especially Cpl Smith whose knowledge was invaluable. Also thanks must go to 2 ATR for contributing to the overall cost of my entry fee, (it's not a cheap sport!).

WLTS

Tpr Robins

Becoming the International Taekwondo Federation (ITF) World Champion it is an understatement to say that Tpr Robins has had a successful year. Add in the fact that he also completed Part 2 Signals and it becomes one for the record books.

The last twelve months have seen Tpr Robins train hard and finish on the podium in every competition that he fought in. Twelve Gold Medals, three Silver Medals and three Bronze Medals (in twelve competitions) in his first twelve months at the QDG shows just how suc-



Dominating the podium at the ITF World Championships

cessful he has been and also his great potential for the future, especially as he is not yet twenty. While martial arts have been his main focus he has also been soldiering this year and has completed Part 2 Signals and the Regimental Gunnery Camp in Warcop (there is still some way to go for Tpr Robins to shoot as successfully as he fights!).

With Tpr Robins representing the Army team and competing in largely national and international competitions, the Army

and Interservice Championships proved a whitewash for him. Three Gold Medals in the Army Championships and four Gold Medals in the Interservice Championships resulted in him being one of the British Armed Forces' most successful Martial Arts fighters this year. He has also represented Wales at the ICO Kickboxing World Championships in Scotland and narrowly lost in the final to England, winning his country a Silver Medal.

In November 2019 Tpr Robins fought at the International Taekwondo Federation World Championships. In his biggest challenge to date the plucky Dragoon had an outstanding performance and defeated the Dutch pretender to the title in the final of the -70kg category. An incredible achievement that allows the QDG to count one of their own as a world champion and Robins, much like a boxer picking up belts, is aiming to win more world championships in the coming year. Despite Tpr Robins' Troop Leader claiming that some of this success is due to



An incredible achievement that allows the QDG to count one of their own as a world champion...



two hours of Judo that he did in 2017, it is hard work and ability that is paying dividends for Tpr Robins this year.

The future remains bright for Tpr Robins and in 2020 he will mainly be representing the Army team in elimination competitions. Next year Tpr Robins will move to London to allow him to receive the highest level of training and coaching, important as he will next year be fighting more often in high profile 'single ring' events as he moves up the world rankings. The Regiment are very proud to have one of its Dragoons competing and winning at such a high level and look forward to supporting Tpr Robins in the future.

ECCC



With 3 gold medals at the Army Championships

Head In The Clouds Ex Flying Eagle (sky diving at Netheravon)

As my legs dangled out the Cessna 172, I was surprised to find that the wind wanted to push me back into the aircraft rather than suck me out. This thought didn't last long as I stared down through the clouds at the ground 4000 feet below. Then came the nervous double guessing, "Is my hand placement right? Will I execute the perfect arch? Have I packed my parachute correctly?" These questions would quickly be answered. Over the roar of the engine the instructor screamed those dreaded words "LOOK UP!"

And for a few seconds I was on edge waiting for the last command, the final one to be given in the aircraft. A thundering silence.

"GO!!!"

I launched with as much power as I could muster. A clean exit. Contorting my tumbling frame for that perfect arch. My breath was ripping from my lungs and I struggled to guess which way was up in that twisting high altitude world. "So this is freefall?"

But before I could enjoy it I was viciously thrown downwards as my canopy opened.

Relief ensued as I enjoyed my eerily silent flight towards solid ground, embracing the inertia with each turn and gust of wind.

Finally came the landing, statistically the most dangerous part. As the ground rushed up from below, it was only then that I realised just how fast the canopy was taking me. Ten feet from the ground and I flared with such force I pretty much stopped dead in mid-air. The landing was as graceful as a rugby tackle but at least I had landed. The realisation of the last few minutes hit me and I was flooded with adrenaline and accomplishment.

"That's one ticked off the bucket list!" I thought.

DRH



Class photo



LCpl Crosby with a textbook exit



Phew!



The concept boy band 'Boyz A-Bobbin' was not a success

Ex Adriatic Eagle

It was a depressingly cold and dark April evening in Bemowo Piske, Poland. The troopers raced against the rain as they dug their shell scrapes that were slowly filling with a thick brown slodge, each of them looking forward to stag, knowing that the cupola was the furthest they would get from the mud below. But that was the Scots DG. The soldiers from A Sqn QDG had left Op Cabrit far behind and were settling into their beach apartments in Italy.

Ex Adriatic Eagle saw twelve members of A Sqn deploy to Lignano Sabbiadoro, just north of Venice, on what would be a thrilling two-week kayaking expedition. As the soldiers unpacked in their rooms, their balconies overlooking the

marina, they realised two things: 1) the weather was currently far better than the BBC had predicted and 2) LCpl Clark had packed a lot of skin-tight neoprene clothing (unfortunately only the latter of these two observations endured). Once settled in, the instructors and Lt Oakley disappeared to procure the kayaks, WO2 Chant and Cpl Hutchings went to the shops to purchase food and Sgt Doolan staggered on the balcony in case the girls from the apartment next door needed help sunbathing. All the ingredients for a very enjoyable two weeks were falling into place.

The first day tested everyone's ability to stay upright on the water, with basic kayaking drills being taught in and around the harbour. Tpr Parker and LCpl Branstor were naturals, soon proving to be the fastest in the group, meanwhile Sgt Doolan demonstrated his new experimental approach to kayaking, in which the kayaker spends the majority of the day underwater and upside down. Something he was an expert at by the end of the trip.

As the days progressed so too did the group's ability. One of the days saw the expedition approach a small island near the Slovenian border. The instructors

used the high waves crashing on the island's beach as an opportunity to demonstrate surf kayaking. LCpls Parsons and Clark embraced this and

were soon riding waves into shore and successfully battling their way back out. By the afternoon Tpr Diamond too was impressing the group with his new found grasp



Perfect for Sgt Doolan to gaze at his reflection

of the waves but not before joining Sgt Doolan in obtaining his Foundation Lvl 1 in underwater upside down kayaking.

By the end of the trip, the weather had taken a turn. Gentle aquamarine waters were replaced with waves from The Day After Tomorrow, and the wind was so strong that Tpr Williams and Lt Oakley both lost their questionably fashionable hats. The last day on the water saw the group navigating fast flowing waters around the estuary, dodging between sudden mud flats and swirling whirlpools. Although the conditions worsened, morale only became greater and despite being soaked and covered in mud, every single member of the group came in that day with smiles on their faces.

Ex Adriatic Eagle was a big success, taking a group from complete novices barely staying upright in the water to confident paddlers contending with wild weather, hostile waves and a variety of different waterways. It was a huge contrast to the joys of the training area in Poland but allowed for everyone to relax and bond with each other while trying out a new activity and overcoming all of the challenges the Adriatic Sea could throw at them.

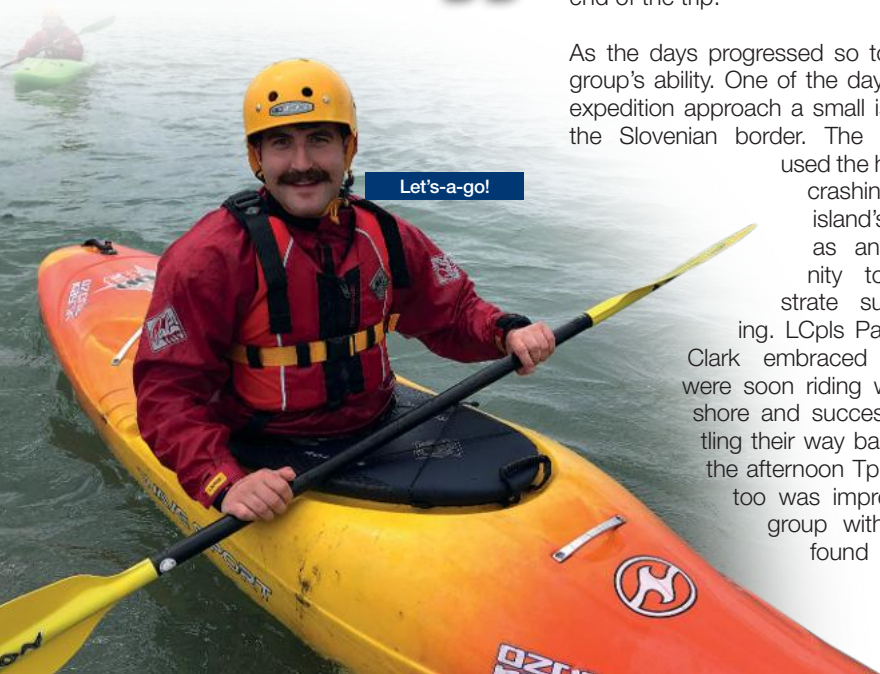
TJO



As the days progressed so too did the group's ability.



Let's-a-go!



Ex Alpine Eagle

AT came as a welcome reprieve for members of Sabre Troop, it was a chance to get back into the swing of post Poland life and an ambitious Multi Activity package in Bavaria was planned. The idea was simple: we would climb mountains, cycle marathons and rewrite the local guide book with our fantastic ideas.

Then Day One came. SSgt Hanlon and Cpl Gilliam took their eager cohort on a 26 mile long mountain bike trail. Having previously bought up his proposed route to me SSgt Hanlon had assured me the guide book said it would take 3 hrs 15 mins and just to be safe he would allow 4 and half hours. "Okay" I replied. Anyway it was my turn to climb that day and what a glorious day it was. The sun was out, it was set in a beautiful backdrop and LCpl Walton made us all stop at a riverside café to "enjoy the views".

After finishing up with our day's activity, the AT group's WhatsApp chat exploded with messages from the cycling group. Messages such as "we've still got 10 miles to go" and "I can't cycle up another mountain." This amused us smug climbers as we arrived back at Haus Magnus but then news came down that LCpl Olagunju decided he was taking a helicopter back. It is safe to say that upon the return of the rest of cyclists there were one or two sore individuals and the cycling routes for the rest of the trip were promptly shortened.



Still smiling at mile two

Day Three and our next obstacle appeared, the apparent season confusion of the Bavarian Alps. What started off as a gloriously warm trip descended into heavy snowfall. This turned out to be no drama for our brave climbers who assaulted the local indoor climbing centre where heroic efforts from Tpr Henry and LCpl McSween deserve a mention.

Day Seven and the weather had improved now for two days meaning mountain biking was back on the cards (sorry Cpl Williams). By now however a third daily activity was occurring in everyone's spare time: "summer time" tobogganing (a sledge that shoots down a mountain on tracks).



So...beautiful...mile 25...



The smug climbers



Heading for the big crack

Day Ten came and the trip ended. While there was the odd bruised individual we had a great time, the enthusiasm to continue and complete AT courses was widespread and we all left with a smile on our faces.

We were brilliantly looked after throughout and on behalf of everyone who attended I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who made this possible.

HM





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Ex West Express

With leave complete following Op Cabrit, it was time for A Sqn to conduct AT. Twelve personnel from A Sqn were given the opportunity to play on board a couple of yachts at JSASTC.

With only two of the selected personnel having experience it was going to be a long week for certain individuals. Having split down into our crews and received the mandated safety briefs we then loaded up and just after lunch we set off on our adventures on the high seas of the Solent, across to the Isle of Wight for our first leg of getting used to the yachts, learning what did what and getting the feel for the week ahead.

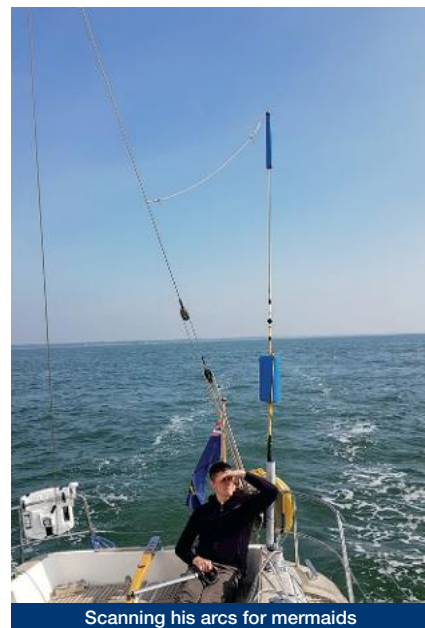
Day 2 consisted of the longest leg of sailing all the way down to Weymouth. With the weather behaving and the atmosphere being relaxed it didn't take long for the crews to relax and start to fall asleep leaving the SNCO to steer the yacht on a bearing. Luckily the officer had also fallen asleep therefore ensuring we maintained our course. With this trip taking 10 hours there was the chance for lunch to be prepared onboard the yacht while at sail. It was a challenge for LCpl Murphy to say the least, with a lot of foul language and laughing coming from below and with his final comment being, "Here, have your butties!" It was a show to say the least. Day 2 ended with an escort of dolphins into Weymouth harbour where we tied up for the night before having a few beers.

Day 3 was planned to sail along the Jurassic coast towards Lulworth Cove where we would anchor up for lunch while en route. We would conduct some man overboard drills with a buoy as no one on board would volunteer to jump in as the dummy. Once anchored for lunch it gave people the chance to have a swim if they wanted (none of the Petrel crew did). After lunch we motored along the coast under engine power due to a lack of wind to fill the sails. The only wind was from Capt Lewis who gave us a wonderful a capella rendition of 'The Good Ship Venus' word for word which I suggest you Google and listen to when there are no children around. Day 3 would finish with the yachts at anchor for the night. Once preparations for evening meal were in full swing the crew of the Petrel soon realised that with low beer stocks and Cpl Bould's call of nature, a trip to shore would be required so that then started the best two hours of comedy ever set on the waves with three grown men and an inflatable dinghy.

Day 4 dawned bright and breezy. After the night under anchor and with the wind finally strong enough to fill the sails, we made our way back towards the Isle of Wight allow-



Cruising around, picking up buoys



Scanning his arcs for mermaids



Definitely a danger to shipping



It had been a good week with a good chance to relax and have fun.



ing our skipper to take control and show us what the boat could do while getting it to move along at a 45 degree angle, much to the annoyance of Cpl Bould who did not find this safe at all. This gave Capt Lewis and LCpl Murphy the chance to show us the skills they had learnt on previous trips and the three of them began to tack and gybe and really gather pace, all the while trying to avoid the extremely large ships that were also cutting about the Solent. Day 4 ended back on the Isle of Wight where the group could finally get a shower and have a few beers.

With sprits high on Day 5 we set sail for Thorney Island. It had been a good week with a good chance to relax and have fun. With the weather being glorious it was back onto the motor. So, while Capt



Cpl Thomas adjusting to life at an angle

Lewis cooked a full breakfast, the remainder sat up top and enjoyed the flat seas and soaked up some rays. Once back we cleaned up the boats, handed back our kit and said goodbye before boarding the bus for the long trip back to RBSM.

The group agreed it was a brilliant experience and fun was had by everyone even the ones who wanted an engine on the boat not a sail. And with the Petrel crew producing more smoke than a real pirate ship I don't think it will be their last adventure on the high seas if the weather is good.

BW

Ex Dragon Welsh Eagle

On 2nd October, seven members from A Sqn QDG deployed on a seven-day climbing exercise to South Wales. The aims of the exercise were to encourage soldiers to participate in Adventurous Training and to inspire them to gain further qualifications through the Joint Services Scheme, therefore enabling the Regiment to conduct more challenging expeditions in the future.

After a long, traffic-ridden journey to Cardiff, we finally arrived at Maindy Barracks. We immediately conducted exercise admin and issuing of equipment before heading out to the Heath to sample the local ale and discuss the week's activities. For some this would be their first time climbing. For others, it was a chance for them to develop and refine their climbing ability whilst under controlled exposure to risk.

The week consisted of a mixture of climbing outdoors in the Rhondda valley and indoors at Boulders in Cardiff. Within the climbing community there are a lot of interesting names for routes. 'Leaky Ball Cock' was among one of the favourites.

Due to the timing of the year, autumn can be very unpredictable in the Welsh valleys. Some say that you can be exposed to all four seasons in one day. We had the privilege of experiencing the fine Welsh weather. Cpl Hatton's "Oh that cloud doesn't look good" didn't exactly fill me with confidence whilst setting up at 30m on a crag ledge. In this instance



Like the Rangers at Point du Hoc



Mustn't...look...down...

there was nothing else we could do but ride out the storm which lasted the best part of 15 minutes until the sun came out. Luckily the crag dried out quickly for the lads to be able to climb and to put their skills into practice.

As the instructor it was interesting to see individuals' coping strategies whilst under pressure. Watching a fellow climber on the wall suffering from sewing machine leg can be quite amusing whilst they hang on for their life. Cpl Hatton's animal noises on the wall, Cpl Retallack hurling abuse at his belayer and LCpl Rai's utter refusal to let go of the wall

whilst attached to the auto belay were all extremely entertaining to watch.

Ex Dragon Welsh Eagle was a successful rock-climbing package. There were a lot of lessons learned for both instructor and individual. The exercise provided QDG soldiers with a challenging experience that developed their individual leadership skills, courage and climbing ability. All the exercise members that participated are keen to pursue climbing and hopefully will have many more fantastic opportunities in the future.

SS



Ex El Chorro

Ex El Chorro was a climbing and hill walking expedition to southern Spain which was a welcoming change of environment for members of A Sqn. After being in Poland on Op Cabrit for 6 months seeing nothing but snow, the sun was never going to get boring for the week we had out there. But first, a little bit of training was needed using the great landscape the Peak District had to offer.

The expedition started with the group split in half, leaving one group to walk around Kinder Scout seeing the beautiful views of the Peak District, while another group went to Horseshoe Quarry for some training before battling the crags in Spain.

Both groups had no problems with the skills taught to them by LCpl Sims and Cpl Hatton which left the instructors no choice but to challenge the groups on a 40 metre climb in Horseshoe Quarry. This not only challenged the skills recently learned in a safe environment but also testing their fears. Although Lt Brockless and LCpl Hickmott were more than happy to show everyone how it's done, not everyone was able to complete that climb. Some couldn't even face attempting a climb of that height just yet and would leave that challenge to face in Spain.

With a quick change over of kit back at Robertson Barracks everyone was soon



Not the Rhondda



Hat under a helmet. Never appropriate





Searching for a crevice in Derbyshire



I can see the car from here!



A very interesting rock formation

on a plane to sunny Spain. On landing, the instructors were quickly reminded of the heat as soon as everyone was out the door. On arriving at the accommodation, the worries of the heat soon went away when the troopers found out there was a pool at the accommodation.

The next day we hit the ground running, splitting the group into two again with one group hill walking on the beautiful hills of Southern Spain and the other group taking on the first climb of the week. Tpr Protheroe, as the only ginger

on the exped, soon found the heat more than too much and had to take advantage of every bit of shade we could find.

By the end of the week the groups had taken full advantage of the training and were taking on every challenge that was thrown at them. They even weren't too scared when they were faced with a 20 metre climb that when arriving at the top would have them looking down a 1000 metre drop.

The last climb was one to test the courage of the groups which would see them climbing 40 metres along a thin crag to then reach the top where they would find LCpl Sims ready to hook them into an abseil back down to the ground. Not everyone did rise to the challenge of climbing the 40 metre crag but those who did had some great views of Southern Spain to take in for their hard work. But to complete the crag they would have to abseil back down and with a bit of encouragement eventually everyone did.

JS

BMATT Nigeria

July 2019 saw Lt Oakley take over as the Regionally Aligned Brigade Liaison Officer (RABLO) to the British Military Advisor Training Team (BMATT) Nigeria. The position was previously held by QDG officers Joe Kite, Max McKechnie and Charlie Byrd.

Lt Oakley found himself escorting various visits to the conflict zone of Borno State in the North of the country. Here the Nigerian army operates alongside Niger, Cameroon and Chad combatting Boko Haram factions, including Islamic State West Africa, and is supported by British Military advisors on Op Turus. On one of his visits to the North of the state capital Maiduguri, Lt Oakley and former QDG Col Matthew Botsford discovered a CVRT Scorpion bravely scan-



Old comrades reunited



A jungle hat as it should be worn



Not the BDTA



Absolutely not on a jolly

ning arcs deep into Islamic State territory. Fears that the CVRT may have fallen off the bottom of a previous QDG Orderly Officer check were put to rest when Lt Oakley discovered excessive Lumocolor graffiti throwing “friendly-ish” banter at the Life Guards, hinting that the vehicle may once have belonged to the Blues and Royals.

During his posting Lt Oakley was BMATT’s primary LO between training teams run by 1 Scots, 1 Rifles, 2 Lancs and 42 Commando Royal Marines, spread across the country, all providing infantry training packages ranging from PDT and PNCO cadres to COIN and Special Operations. One of his first taskings was to assist 2 Lancs in running a two-week STTT to Liberia where they worked alongside French soldiers from Op Barkhane to provide infantry, CIED and med training to Liberian soldiers ahead of their MINUSMA deployment to Mali. Inspired by the positive impact generated from such a relatively small team, Lt Oakley decide to meet with British High Commission security coordinators in Abuja to develop a training package for Nigerian Mobile Police attached to Diplomatic Missions. With manpower provided by 2 Lancs, he put together



Lt Oakley making friends and influencing people



The inaugural QDG Reunion, Abuja branch

a training package including weapon handling, med, civil affairs training (supported by US Embassy), search drills and contact drills which was met with great appreciation from the Mobile Police and British High Commission who have since requested an enduring training package from future RABLOs.

As well as the liaison work, the posting allowed Lt Oakley the opportunity to work with various civilian organisations and get exposure to operational and diplomatic HQs, while soaking up the culture of a fascinating part of the world. And – most importantly – a chance to enjoy the delights of staff work.

TJO



Out and about in Sub-Saharan Africa

Happily Drawing The Short Straw

Lt Col N J Fenton, Chief U35, MINUSMA, Mali

We all love some jobs more than others so when I had the opportunity to jump ship from the DIO in 2019 it was too good an opportunity to miss. When the alternative was nine months in Mali on the UN's most dangerous mission to date, or so the Press had labelled it, the decision was an easy one. And besides, after 32 years of service it seemed like a good way to bring an exciting career to its next chapter. It all happened fairly quickly. Pre-deployment training and the normal hunt in the attic for the operational kit you want to take with you only to find that it was now very passé. Embarrassed, you leave it behind.

The UN Mission to Mali, MINUSMA, began in 2013, not long after the French swept through the country to clear it of rebel forces who were threatening to take the capital, Bamako. The French counter-terrorist sweep was a great success, but as we have seen in Iraq and Afghanistan, terrorists do not just go away quietly, and slowly their forces built



The French counter-terrorist sweep was a great success...



Who needs a bergen?



The Kamandjan Arch



Coming in to land

back up again. The UN, on a non-offensive mandate, can do little to combat the terrorists, but its role to protect the population and to try and implement the Peace Accord suddenly became a serious task. Terrorist groups and inter-ethnic violence have taken a serious hold again in many parts of the country. I arrived in country in June 2019.

I lead an odd existence here in Mali, on so many levels. That should not be a cause for concern, but more an excuse for me to explain the peculiar way in which my work unfolds. I am the Near Future planner, or Chief U35, (which many will find amusing, especially those that remember me). My planning horizons are not what one would expect of the traditional role; looking into the far distance is not my job. If there is a problem today, I have to produce the solution to fix it for next week or maybe in a month. It is both extremely satisfying and hugely frustrating in equal measures.

Every morning we have the set Force Headquarters briefing. 50 people in the room and I am there to listen to the ten or so briefers who explain to the General what has been going on during the previous 24 hours. This is my role; I am there to catch that fast-ball as I hear those magic words – “we need to do something about this”. He then turns to me and says, “I need you to plan an operation to...” It could be to stop something happening, to try and start something or to facilitate an event that was unforeseen previously, but now falls into the context of ‘get Fenton to fix it’. I have had over twelve of these so far and that does not include the endless planned operations. In nine months, that has kept me busy. It is no wonder that time is flying.

The first task became a surge operation to move troops into an area where there were too many unpleasant activities going on – primarily inter-ethnic



The second was more complex and potentially up to the limits of our Mandate...



violence. The second was more complex and potentially up to the limits of our Mandate – what we are allowed to do under the UN Charter. After endless conversations with the lawyers, the situation changed so we were not able to be as dynamic as we had hoped, but it was still a massive step-up from normal Peacekeeping. I was bringing additional troops in to an area in Eastern Mali in just about every configuration possible. Would the Egyptians work with the Bangladeshis? Just how would those fabulous El Salvadorian helicopter pilots



Working in a great multinational team



What happens outside Capt Flitcroft's domain



Old and new

distinguish the Burkina Faso from the Nigerians at 500 feet and 80 knots?

You have to love the Air Force (I don't mean the RAF – we have at least 5 different air forces represented in the Mission). I was trying to get a Hercules plane to land at a distant, almost deserted airstrip in Eastern Mali. These planes are designed to land in the middle of nowhere, disgorge soldiers and then take-off in a cloud of dust. To have an airstrip is a luxury. The senior civilian ele-

ment of the UN air-planning team was about to veto this flight as the deserted airstrip had (of course) no ground crew, no fire engine and no generator in case of a problem, to restart the engines. It took all my negotiation skills and eventually we were given the go-ahead – Hurrah. I did have to promise to ensure that the airstrip was free of camels before the plane came into land. I thought he was joking. He was not. The airstrip was 'swept' by a rather disgruntled bunch from Niger.

The wet season has been and gone. It is quite serious and ran from July to September. The first early downpour in Bamako in June saw 13 people killed through accidents and flooding. We know our job will be more difficult in the wet season and we try and plan accordingly, but short of saying, 'Rainy season – cancel all operations', we carry on regardless. To do otherwise would look as though we had given up. The terrorists slow-up, they have seen all this many times before. I had one operation running with a company of Bangladeshis (90 soldiers) trying to reach an outlying town to secure the area for helicopters to land. They had already travelled 190kms along terrible roads before they became stuck in the mud. They tried a different route and got 'bogged-in' again. They kept trying. When they were down to nine days of rations left and five days from home, I said we had to pull them back. At the same time, in other areas, we were flying in fuel and rations to a resupply convoy that was stuck 100kms outside a Northern outpost. The fuel was to power the generators that were keeping the frozen food in good order and the rations were for the convoy soldiers. It all worked – just.

“

They tried a different route and got 'bogged-in' again.

”



The view over Bamako



Local engagement

Another fun operation to plan should not have been my job at all, it just happened that way. The Ivory Coast was bringing in a new battalion and before the troops arrived, all their containers had to be transported to Timbuktu. This should have been relatively simple, except for the fact that the road to Timbuktu is no better than a sand track and has a number of areas where the risk of hitting a mine is quite high. All this before reaching the River Niger, just south of Timbuktu, where there is no bridge, only a locally run ferry service. This became a major operation that the military ones amongst you will love – a deliberate river crossing. An added complication was the blockading of the River Niger crossing and the UN camp in Timbuktu by 300 students a week before this operation was about to start. I was in Timbuktu in between a series of protests and the whole thing was getting quite tense.

Enough on operations. I have had an opportunity to explore Bamako and its environs. I have not made it to the famous Sily waterfalls nor have I seen the famous mud mosque of Timbuktu, but I have climbed to the Kamandjan Arch to the southwest of Bamako which gave the most amazing views across beautiful savannah. The story goes that the arch was created by the warlord Kamandjan in the 12/13th century by a single stroke of his sword.

Getting out to the Sectors is hugely important, to understand how the troops live and work. I have got out to a number of outstations, Timbuktu being one of the most interesting and the HQ for Sector East. The old shell of the airport terminal at Timbuktu now houses little more than a tourist shop, as it was attacked in

April 2018 and has not been rebuilt. As we have long said in my family, you know when you have overpaid for something when the vendor smiles at the end of your protracted haggling and gives you a free gift. I did not have much time to haggle and I think I preferred his free gift to my original purchase.

Mopti in central Mali was fascinating. Little did I realise as I was driven in and out of the gates that only two weeks later there would be an 800-strong crowd causing an incredible amount of damage to UN property on the outskirts of the camp as they protested – amazingly – at the UN's inability to protect them sufficiently. It was a funny way of showing that they wanted us to do more for them. Supposedly, what they stole has since been returned.

Gao, in the East, was much calmer. This was my chance to return to where the announcement about UK involvement was made back in July by the Defence Secretary – my first visit. Where once had been pomp and ceremony was now a working hangar for a transport plane. Planning for the arrival of British troops continues and it was fun to have been there with a team that will form the initial UK Long Range Recce Patrol Task Group. It is more exciting to think that this will soon be a Regimental task. The British contingent will be busy when they

arrive into a new camp in 2020. The Force Commander is looking forward to what he sees as an exciting capability.

Sadly I will not be leaving Mali as a safer country to the one I met on arrival last June. The problems in some areas are quite serious and while MINUSMA is okay, the Malian Army is having a tough time. Losses of up to 60 soldiers have been regular since September 2019.

Just before Christmas I travelled with the Force Commander to the southeastern tip of Mali, a town with the most wonderful name of Labbezanga. We were mounting an operation to prevent insurgents gaining control of a main route that was important to us. It was great to be out of Bamako – in helicopters, armoured vehicles, and even on a foot patrol. Travelling with Swedes, flying with Russians, working with Bangladeshis, Germans and Niger soldiers all in one day; the UN is an amazing organisation.

Then suddenly it was Christmas in Bamako which was great fun but I was more focused on the three weeks of leave that started just before New Year with the family. Now, that was fun. Mali's heat exchanged for the chill of the French Alps – bliss.

Now, with only a few weeks to go, I am in touch with my successor and with nine months under my belt here, I am one of the longest serving in-mates in the Mission. I forgot to mention I was extended for a month. COVID-19 has just arrived, I might be here for a bit longer. What an experience it has been so far.

NJF



It is more exciting to think that this will soon be a Regimental task.



Indian Cavalry Visit

In early November, Capt Hind of A Squadron embarked on a two week visit to India as part of an exchange with Indian Cavalry Regiments. The visit was put on by the Indian Cavalry Officers Association, and to say it was an unforgettable experience would be a severe understatement.

After spending a couple of days acclimatising and visiting some cultural sites in and around Delhi, the visit properly started at the National Defence Academy in Pune. Cadets spend 3 years at the tri-service Academy and graduate with one of a number of degrees before they start the second phase of their officer training. Once fully commissioned, Indian Cavalry Officers will start their special to arm training at the Armoured Corps Centre and School (ACC&S) in Ahmednagar, and this was the next stage of our trip. It is uncanny how much the ACC&S resembled Bovington, however on a much greater scale. We were incredibly well hosted and stayed in what



**“...watching a polo match
against the haze of Delhi**



can only be described as a villa reserved for VIPs. During the following four days, we visited the different schools and were invited to “take tea” everywhere we went. On one morning we visited four different schools and had four meals before lunch. All the schools were equally as impressive, however the tactics school stood out most of all – it could have been because of the momos that we were given when we took tea!

After the ACC&S our trip headed north into the Rajasthan desert. Again, we were treated to the best accommodation and unbelievable food and experienced, although briefly, how harsh the Rajasthan

desert is on exercise. Next on the itinerary was a visit to 61st Cavalry Regiment, the last Indian Cavalry regiment mounted solely on horseback. A deeply impressive Regiment and camp, it was no wonder why Prince Charles also visited the Regiment. Again, treated to the most delicious food and the very best accommodation, the stay was unforgettable. Although not asked to play polo for them we were invited to ride out with them one morning, and even managed to get my RTR counterpart on a horse. The trip ended with a visit to the President's Bodyguard and Palace before watching a polo match amongst the haze of Delhi. After two weeks, we had visited a number of different regiments, stayed in some incredible places, eaten some of the best food in India and watched a ‘tanky’ on a horse. It would not be a stretch too far to say that when it comes to hosting, the Indians are some of the best in the world.

EJMH



Capt Hind contemplates Mounted Close Combat in the 21st century

Headquarters 160 (Welsh) Bde – The View from Brecon

It has been a packed and interesting year. It started with the preparation of 1 R Irish and 1 Rifles for deployment to Kabul on Op Toral 8 and 160 Inf Bde stepping up to be the Army's most operational brigade. In addition to the 750 personnel deployed to Afghanistan we also had Regulars and Reservists deployed in Nigeria, Iraq, Estonia and Ukraine and all had to be force generated, trained and prepared. Once deployed, all performed magnificently, which was a great source of pride to us all as was the sight of the brigade flag flying over Kabul city.

With such an operational focus as well as the need to deliver our routine engagement with communities in Wales, firm base support to Wales-based units and the requirement to be prepared to command UK operations within boundaries, there were plenty of moving parts and the HQ staff was running hot. This was not helped by uncertainty over our future as an Infantry Brigade and the pressing need to ensure that the footprint of the Army in Wales was kept at an appropriate level despite the base closures announced in December 2016.

In the Defence Engagement space some great work was being done across our patch of Eastern Europe, Western Balkans, South Caucasus and Central Asia. Our growing relationship with Belarus secured their participation on Ex Cambrian Patrol; the UK sent an enhanced contingent on Ex Platinum Wolf in Serbia and the Kazakhs announced their second rotation of UN Peacekeepers to Lebanon. Ex Cambrian Patrol continued to be an excellent hook for bilateral activity, and we were delighted that more countries including Turkmenistan signed up for the 2019 event bringing a record number



of 34 international participants. My own involvement in Ukrainian Defence reform also turned a corner as we progressed from conceptualising to implementation.

The summer brought significant change as we received the disappointing news that we would revert to a Regional Point of Contact on 1st August. It was a great shame to see such a great team broken up and we said a fond farewell to our battalions who were resubordinated to other brigades. We handed over our Defence Engagement responsibilities to 3 (UK) Div and we then stood up as the re-designated 160th (Welsh) Brigade. Our main responsibilities are support to Wales based units, engage with Welsh Government and society, act as the Joint Military Commander for UK operations within Wales and seek to showcase the Army as icons of the Union and thus highlight the benefits of membership of the UK to a population that, because of Devolution, are increasingly distanced from UK institutions.

Highlights of the year include: the visit of the Zulu King (accompanied by his personal Impi) and a pageant that mentioned the part the KDG played in the capture of his forebear, King Cetewayo, during the Anglo-Zulu war of 1879; promoting LCpl Emrys Jones at the fabulous Royal Welsh Agricultural Show; and a very moving 75th Anniversary of the liberation of the Dutch city of 's-Hertogenbosch in October.

I will hand over at the end of February 2020 to Brig Andrew Dawes (not to Jasper de Quincey Adams as originally envisaged as he has been redirected to 7 Inf Bde) and will leave Wales with a heavy heart. It has been such a great privilege to be the senior resident full time Armed Forces officer in Wales and I will miss living there and working amongst such fabulous people. I leave with the satisfaction that Wales now receives unprecedented attention from a Ministry of Defence that is very focussed on Devolution issues.

ASR



British Army Training Unit Suffield

As another training year draws to an end, the time before Christmas often allows us to reflect on the year's shared achievements for the British Army's premier armoured manoeuvre warfighting collective training environment. This year like many other years before saw UK Brigade formations deploy to western Canada to conduct Collective Training level 4 activity, to prepare units and formations for operational activity in support of the UK wider defensive commitments.

This year BATUS were fortunate to host both QRH and the Fusiliers, with 3 Regt RLC delivering the Combat Service Support to both formations during Exercises Prairie Storm 1 & 2 this year. 2019 started as ever with Ex Prairie Phoenix Ph2, a REME-led exercise that provides the complete remediation of the vehicle fleet, requiring circa 280 REME and attached Combat Arms personnel deploy to BATUS to deliver this requirement.

During this period of activity, the yearly requirement to return to the UK to deliver the pre exercise G1-4 briefs took place in both the UK and Germany. The brief sojourn in Europe was swiftly forgotten as the QM(T) Dept finalised the planning



This year BATUS were fortunate to host both QRH and the Fusiliers...



Challenger 2s

for Ex Prairie Transporter, a twice-yearly activity that enables BATUS to conduct a form of fleet rotation of the armoured vehicles that cannot be repaired in Canada. It also provides the ability for exercising formations to forward load assets or vehicles for the training season that are not currently held on strength here at BATUS.

In all, this should be a very simple process seeing the QM(T) and MT Depts travel 4500 km across country to Becancour, near Montreal, a distance that is three times the entire length of the UK, to

work for elongated periods of time in -40 degrees over 2-3 days recovering vehicles that will not start, from a ship that has been sat off the coast of Canada in near Arctic conditions. Ultimately this means that every vehicle must be pulled / pushed onto road-going assets or onto the back of rail flats that are 20 years past their sell-by date. Not an easy task when there is two foot of snow and ice on the port side.

And to add insult to injury this entire process must be completed within the





A fantastic opportunity for both the younger and the older members of the team.



agreed timeframe, so the greater port operations are not impacted in any way and so that BATUS do not receive a significant fine from the port authorities. Once clear of the port, the 250 tons of munitions and the military vehicles that have been unloaded are moved by road and by rail across Canada to BATUS. An arduous but fulfilling process that also enables the collective team to further experience the sights and the culture of a small area of Quebec in eastern Canada. A fantastic opportunity for both the younger and the older members of the team. If you speak French that is...

As ever, the actual prairie exercise season seems to fly by, which also never fails to surprise me with the level of activity that can be achieved by extremely focussed individuals in a very short time, as battle-groups make the most of the chance to train in a complex manoeuvre warfighting environment. However, I am conversely unsurprised at the significant level of stupidity that individuals can often display during the time on the training area. Who'd have thought that trying to take out the BVA (obturators to the old and bold) from a Challenger 2 with a sledge hammer would have caused £500,000 worth of damage? Needless to say, the individual concerned is no longer a tank commander, nor is he a Tp Sgt.



Warrior and CVR(T)

In all the 2019 training year has yet again flown by in a blink of an eye, which also saw a fellow QDG soldier return to the Regiment after his two-year assignment came to an end. Sgt Taylor's quick wit and eye for detail will be missed and we all wish him and Jen all the best of luck back at Regimental Duty. And I am have no doubt that he will be welcomed back with open arms, especially into the Mess life, where I am confident that he will make his presence 'felt' in no time at all.

But my time as the only member of QDG serving in BATUS is short lived, as it has recently been announced that WO1 Mark Riley has been selected to fill the auspicious position of the Regimental Sergeant Major of BATUS. I am confident that he will follow in the footsteps of his excellent QDG predecessors, who were also fortunate to be given the privilege of assuming this high profile RSM appointment.

JOD



Reconnaissance and Armoured Tactics Division

With two QDG amongst its ranks, the Reconnaissance and Armoured Tactics Division (RATD) finds itself in good health. Charged with delivering the Troop Leaders and Crew Commanders Tactics Phase, the Light Cavalry training team this year has consisted of myself, SSgt Price (a Light Dragoon) and our very own Sgt Panks.

Arriving in January, I found Sgt Panks settled into the role of Course SI already. He has quickly carved an exceptional reputation here and rightly so. This is not only for his excellent sideburns and phenomenal brew drinking capacity but more importantly, for his ability as a first-class instructor. Between both him and the indomitable SSgt Price, the Light Cavalry course has evolved considerably. Under their instruction, experience and the constant revision of course content, students return to the Field Army with as great a depth of experience and understanding as could possibly be achieved within six weeks. Equally, it remains indisputably an arduous course and we hope sets up students well for the future rigours of command in the Light Cavalry.

In 2019, we have delivered three Regular and one Reserve courses. This has included instruction to eleven QDG and I'm pleased to report that QDG have achieved four of six first place finishes out of the three Regular courses. This includes 2Lts Barham and Holland, who achieved top Troop Leader, and Sgt Warley and Cpl Peel, who achieved



Capt Serious and the two stooges



I'm pleased to report that QDG have achieved four of six first place finishes...



top Crew Commander in each of their respective courses. This is a substantial achievement and for our NCOs reflects the unmatched experience they have gained over an incredibly busy few years. Long may it continue.

Outside of course delivery, RATD remains a great place to work. Warminster is a



2Lt Barham and Cpl Peel – top students

hive of activity and with numerous other courses run from here, alongside its close proximity to Salisbury Plain, there is rarely a week that goes by without a QDG of one form or another coming into the office. Lt Col Nick Fenton and Maj Brian Nicholas work around the corner and several retired QDGs based in Wiltshire (including Colonel Pittman and a predecessor in my role, Maj 'Judy' Garland) are also regular visitors. RATD is the only reconnaissance school in the Army and it is a great hub of new thinking. It's notably heavy Royal Armoured Corps weighting, means there is always a kindred spirit to go for a drink with.

It has been a great year at RATD for the QDG, both on and off course. It is an incredibly rewarding job for both me and Sgt Panks and most importantly, a great honour to train the next generation of Light Cavalry Commanders.

MJC

Crew Commanders final exercise



Field Training Unit

When troops see the word BATUK in the Unit FOE, it normally instils excitement – two months on safari, being paid to be in Kenya with promise of affordable and exciting R&R/AT that civvies literally pay thousands for! When troops see the words “Wessex Storm” in the Unit FOE, it makes even the most hardened of them shudder. Associated only with Salisbury Plain, with its own microclimate of permanent wet and cold, civvies might spend a tenner on having a look around this area if the weather is good and the Stonehenge traffic is minimal. Without a similar acronym to put it in the same bracket as its foreign counterparts (BATUSP maybe?), Field Training Unit (FTU) is not often heard of until associated with its main output – good old Wessex Storm.



FTU is also the busiest of the three Training Units...



FTU is also the busiest of the three Training Units, its purpose being to deliver collective training for combined arms light role, mechanised and CSS forces, to support their preparation for readiness and commitments packaged into up to seven six-week iterations of BG level Wessex Storms a year; more than BATUK and BATUS combined.

For a Captain coming out of Sqn 2IC, the SO3 Recce position has been a great opportunity to be able to observe and help mentor a variety of Battle Groups and their elements, from BGHQ down to two-man CTR groups, all being tested under pressure from their Brigade and often in arduous conditions. As part of a four-man Recce team (2x Lt Cav and 2x Armd Cav) our role is to plan and coordinate the Battle Exercises and subsequently observe and record the recce elements of the BG as they are tested throughout the exercise.

It has been an interesting and informative few months so far with two exercises done already, and with the QDG return-



Capt George Jackson

ing next for their own run out in February 2020, it will be great fun seeing it all from this side of the fence.

GESJ

RAC Training Regiment

Waterloo Squadron Update

Recent changes in Waterloo Squadron have seen WO2 Andy Smith move on as Waterloo SSM and onto SO3 Training and Development for ARMCCEN. The change has seen him go from 44 AGAI 67s a day to five feet of paperwork on his desk and the ability to make a decent brew for staff officers.

This year the Squadron has had an influx of fine Dragoons. Sgt Casey has taken over Ajax Troop with Cpl Hicks as his Troop Cpl and Cpl Peel is new in post in Jackal Troop. Daily they deal with a range of G1 issues, discipline and general administration of the initial trade trainees (ITTs). Ensuring the ITTs are adequately trained before they depart for their units is no easy task and involves running ACMTs, dismounted close combat (DCC) exercises, LFTT, L7 Theory and



SSgt McKinnon and the moustachioed
LCpls Flower and Sims

ranges as well as basic Mounted Close Combat skills theory.

Cpl Gurung and Cpl Pine are also now in post as PTIs at Bovington gym and ensuring the ITTs are pushed to their limits by planning and conducting structured PT lessons.

Normandy Squadron (JCC Update)

SSgt McKinnon has replaced WO2 Ruddy as JCC Troop Leader and has been tasked with implementing change to the JCC Course. The course has changed dramatically over the past few years from a physically arduous course where it was mostly testing and not



This year the Squadron has had an influx of fine Dragoons.





Building character



The Gun Run

teaching (pointless thrashing), to now a physically and mentally demanding course where NCOs will leave more qualified and with qualifications that will not only benefit them, but also their Regiments.

On the previous course students would cover career leadership and management (CLM) and mounted close combat (MCC) followed by a two-week basic

“The course has changed dramatically over the past few years from a physically arduous course...”

close combat exercise phase (BCC). Students will now still cover CLM, MCC

and BCC, but they will also be assessed on the Royal Armoured Corps Trainer Assessment Cadre and will also conduct M Qual, both of which you need to post to any training establishment as a JNCO. This will mean not only can they qualify for their substantive rank of Cpl, but they will also get RACTAC and M Qual, so they can plan and conduct blank firing exercises upon return to their unit.

HM

Modelling: nothing to do with Airfix or Victoria's Secret

Initial Training Group & ATC Pirbright

It has been a busy year for Phase 1 training, with ATC Pirbright feeling the effect of a successful Snowflake campaign and a 40% increase in numbers through the door, the Basic Training cycle is ever busy and rewarding. Captain Will Simpson has passed over the mantle of Woods Troop that has remained in continuous QDG command for over six years to Captain Charlie Byrd, and for the first time in far too long Sgt Warner has posted to Pirbright as a Troop Sergeant providing an excellent QDG SNCO presence.

Sgt Warner has immediately set his renowned high standard, bringing Cavalry swagger to the Drill Square and tactical professionalism in the field. He has jumped between regular and reserve courses and has already personally trained over seventy recruits through Pirbright fuelling the Field Army with new potential. Captain Byrd is now delivering his second CMS (the regular course) and will see through command of Woods Troop to its disbandment in April 2020 when he will post in to 2 ATR RHQ.

Overall the training has provided a fantastically rewarding new challenge for them both, all under the continuous watchful eye of Maj Tim Jones from the Initial Training Group Headquarters ivory tower in his capacity as SO2 G3 Ops. The number of QDG at Pirbright is higher than it has been in a considerable time, hopefully having good effect in sending recruits on to Regimental Duty. If anyone is in the area, do pop in for a brew, we are always here to host!

CAB



Capt Byrd escorts CFA



Capt Jones, Sgt Warner and Capt Byrd



Sgt Warner overjoyed to have an inspecting officer shorter than him

Royal Military Academy Sandhurst Support Unit

I have been at RMAS for 2 years now and it has been an absolute honour and a privilege to serve at the Academy as the Station RSM. Getting to understand Household Division rules and regulations has been very interesting, while showing them some true cavalry swagger on the parade square.

My role at RMAS predominantly deals with all Permanent Staff and civilians of the Sandhurst Support Unit. This is a very diverse unit and even though I have served 24 years every day here is a learning day. We deal with all security coming in and out of the Academy, discipline at



Daily there are over 2000 people working here from training staff to MPGS on the gate.



Major AGAI level for all PS, 44 Sqn RLC and Gurkha Coy (Satang) G4, G7, both Colleges New and Old and Group HQ are all supported and administered by SSU. Daily there are over 2000 people working here from training staff to MPGS on the gate.



Undergoing the rigours of exercise



Smart as a small handful of carrots

As some of you may be aware there are many major events here at RMAS from major conferences (CGS, CFA, RSMs) to the World Youth Skills day to the Army Sports Awards. Everybody wants to use Sandhurst and it is seen within the Army as the 'jewel in the crown' for Defence Engagement.

Whilst being at RMAS I have had a few visitors including a large QDG group at the Sovereign's Parade lunch in the WO's' and Sgts' Mess, it's a good job there were no photos taken later! Maj Jones



The Sovereign's Parade is the culmination of a year's training for a young Officer Cadet



had a few issues the day after with a set of car keys – if you catch him in the bar he is always happy to explain the story.

The Sovereign's Parade is the culmination of a year's training for a young Officer Cadet and all the hard work they put in truly reflects on this day. The leadership code is important for success of our young officers and although experience counts for an awful lot within the Army, I have nothing but admiration for every

young officer cadet that walks through the Grand Doors of Old College. Even the 'young men' of the Chelsea Hospital love coming to see them pass off.

For 14 weeks Soldiers from 44 Sqn and GC(S) support all exercises at the Academy, from Brecon to Thetford and Grafenwöhr in Germany they spend a considerable number of nights out of bed ensuring every cadet has the best form of training and preparation to lead soldiers in the future. From transporting cadets through the hills and mountains of Brecon to various check points and locations, to section and company attacks in Thetford, they all work hard to ensure a successful exercise with all training objectives reached. The routine at RMAS is set in stone for the year: three terms of 14 weeks and a three week leave period

between, four in the summer. This gives all PS the opportunity to book holidays and plan more easily than in a hectic Field Army front line unit.

Finally, I have had the honour and privilege of working alongside some fantastic people at RMAS. Lt Col Chris Boryer RGR, my current CO, has been an inspiration to me in the way he delivers his leadership quality across the whole unit. And the AcSM Carl Taylor Welsh Guards also led by example and was fantastic to lean on and work with. I would highly recommend working at RMAS – it gives a completely different outlook to the Army within the training, defence engagement and recruiting environment.

RAJ

Royal Yeomanry

Over the last year the Royal Yeomanry has been busy with conversion to Jackal, a BG level FTX on Salisbury Plain, support of Normandy 75, sending officers and soldiers on a number of operational deployments and most excitingly being stood up to deploy a formed squadron to Poland on Op Cabrit 8. During this period the RY has also seen significant changes in regimental personalities: Lt Col Tom Bragg took over command in July 2018; the Band's Director of Music Major Roy Falshaw made his departure after a hugely successful 22 years in post; and replacements for the OCs of five of our six squadrons have recently been announced.

Jackal Conversion

At the end of 2018 the RY began conversion from RWMK to Jackal (JKL). Despite challenges spanning training restrictions following a tragic accident involving the SNIY, a considerable training burden for our reserve soldiers and the slow pace of delivery of vehicles, good progress is being made in increasing our number of JKL crews. This effort is ongoing, with focus now turning to those due to deploy on Op Cabrit 8.

Ex Yeoman Overlord

Alongside JKL conversion, significant effort went into the planning and preparation for Ex Yeoman Overlord – the RY's ATP for TY19/20 and the Regiment's

largest FTX for over a decade. This began with Troop Tests, during which the QDG's Sgt Bennett and Sgt Trudgill kept us on our feet as DS, and culminated in a nine-day BG FTX on SPTA with over 300 troops involved including three composite squadrons and attachments from 3 PWRR, AAC, FTCs, RE, US Army Reserves, OTCs and FANY.

Following a brief maintenance period, the Regiment redeployed to France for the 75th anniversary of the D-Day Landings, in which our antecedent regiments were heavily involved. Ninety soldiers from the RY (including 30 from the band) had the privilege of providing the Guard of Honour to HRH Prince of Wales and the Duchess



Silver medal-winning Cambrian Patrol team



Recce section awaiting Heli insertion



Ex Yeoman Overlord – RWMIK
providing support to infantry



Guard of Honour to HRH Prince Charles



Bayeux parade



Sp Tp conducting FIWAF



Sgt Astridge in the Inter Services
Canoe Championships

of Cornwall at the CWGC, Bayeux on the 6 Jun. Meanwhile, the remainder of the Regiment took part in two days of battle-field studies across Normandy, learning more about the roles of our forebears.

To finish our time in Normandy, over 200 members of the Regiment paraded through Bayeux at the invitation of the City, marking its liberation by the Sherwood Rangers Yeomanry (now A Sqn, RY) in June 1944. This was followed by a commemorative football match between the RY and Bayeux FC, again repeating the events of 1944. Unfortunately, despite it being a great occasion, Bayeux won 18-3.

Operational Deployments

It has recently been confirmed that the RY will provide the British Army's Lt Cav Sqn to Op Cabrit 8 in Poland in September 20. The Regiment will be deploying over a hundred personnel including atts and dets, with the entire RAC component having already been identified from volunteers within the Regiment. The deployment will support the US 2nd Cav Regt and will be the largest mobilisation of the RY as well as the first mobilisation of any Army Reserve sub-unit as a formed body since Op TELIC in 2003.

In addition to this, the last 12 months have seen RY soldiers deployed on numerous STTTs and Ops, including:

- Op Cabrit (4 pax)
- Op Shader (LCpl Chambers CMT)
- STTT to Sierra Leone (Sgt Smith CMT1)

- STTT to Kazakhstan Ex Steppe Eagle (LCpl Chambers CMT)

- STTT to Nigeria (A/Capt Proctor, BMATT LO).

Sport, AT and Activities

RY personnel have represented the Regiment in a variety of sports and activities over the last 12 months, with notable events and achievements including:

- Operational Shooting – 2nd in 7 Inf Bde OSC (1st AR Unit) and 2nd individual shot (Lt Darlington)
- Cambrian Patrol – claiming a first ever Silver medal finish

- Polo – winning the Captains and Subalterns Tournament and ACG Trophy

- Football – 3rd place in the Army Reserve six a side tournament at Grantham, 4th in the Army Reserve Competition (providing the entire RAC team)

- Canoeing – Interservice Sprint and Marathon Championship

- Hockey – Army Reserve Tournament 12-13 Oct 19

- Boxing – currently training for the RAC Championships in Nov 19

CNH



Sgt Smith on STTT in Sierra Leone

HMS Monmouth

When the last newsletter went out it told of the ship moving into long readiness to prepare for a refit period and that her Ship's Company would join HMS Montrose.

After a gruelling few months of Operational Sea Training on the South Coast, HMS Monmouth had her final hurrah in the town of Monmouth. The Ship's Company marched through the town, exercising their Freedom of the City, accompanied by a Royal Marines Band. This was followed by multiple drinks parties, a whole ship dinner, and a "rig run". HMS Monmouth was then officially put into long readiness and handed over to

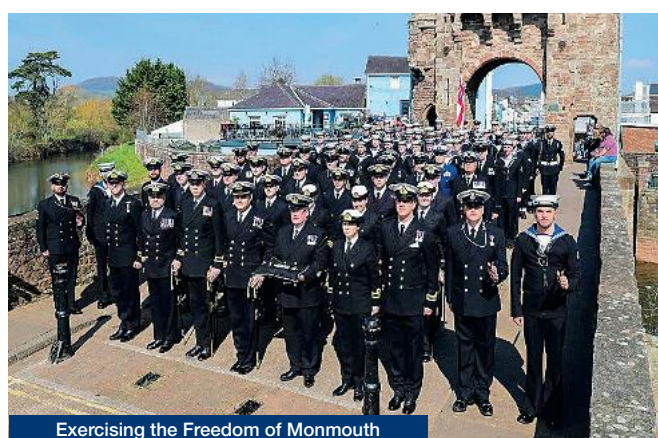
a small crew of Royal Navy and Babcock contractors who would look after her.

HMS Monmouth's Ship's Company flew out to the Gulf, to become HMS Montrose (starboard), where we protected British merchant shipping during a heightened period of tension with Iran. One particular success was preventing the MV British Heritage being seized, where the Ship's Company had to use all their skills learned in HMS Monmouth to manoeuvre aggressively and point our guns to stop the boarding.

During our deployment, we escorted over 5 million tonnes of British merchant

shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and had over 115 interactions with the Iranians.

On returning to the UK, we have once again been reunited with HMS Monmouth, who is providing a platform for UK-based training for both of HMS Montrose's crews. She is a little depleted of equipment but is still better than any simulator. On our final day of training onboard, it is fitting that we will also say farewell to HMS Monmouth's final CO, Commander Will King. HMS Monmouth will now remain in long readiness until her refit in 2021.



Exercising the Freedom of Monmouth



Tension in the Gulf

1er Régiment Étranger de Cavalerie – French Army

For the 1st Foreign Cavalry Regiment (1er Régiment étranger de cavalerie – 1er REC), 2019 began with the deployment of the 1st Squadron to the French Caribbean island of Martinique as part of the reinforcement contingent to the permanently stationed 33rd Marine Infantry Regiment. Dismounting from their AMX10 RC recce vehicles, the squadron knuckled down to a four-month tour of duty as an infantry unit. Exchange training with the Dutch and Dominican Republic armed forces, patrols aimed at ensuring French national sovereignty



The platoon deployed to French Guyana as reinforcements to the 3rd Foreign Infantry Regiment...



and the deployment of one of its platoons to French Guyana were highlights of their mission. The platoon deployed to French Guyana as reinforcements to the 3rd Foreign Infantry Regiment played

an active role as part of Op Harpie. Patrolling the tropical rain forests of the Amazon their mission was to seek and apprehend all personnel, and to destroy or confiscate all material used in illegal gold mining activities, the result being the arrest of illegal miners and the confiscation of equipment and many gallons of highly toxic and polluting quicksilver. Mission accomplished!

For the rest of the regiment, the 1st semester of 2019 was focused on joint operational training with the other units



On tour in Martinique



Jungle training



On the ranges



Close support



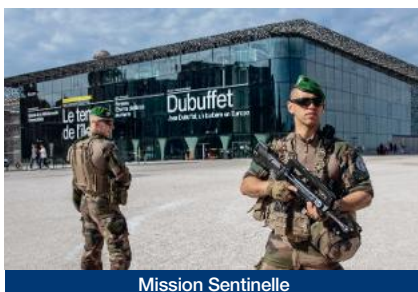
BGHQ



St George's Day



The new CO



Mission Sentinelle



L'indication à quatre-doigts



The end of April the regiment celebrated its twin identities "Foreign Legion" and "Cavalry".

of the 6th Light Armoured Brigade. Deploying in force to the training camps based in Eastern France the first phase was conducted at squadron level aimed at updating and perfecting weapon proficiency and accuracy as well as tactical drills and skills. After this period of "getting back to the basics" phase two saw the regiment conduct a large scale tactical exercise called Epona (after the Celtic goddess of cavalry) in the open lands of the Champagne region, reinforced by infantry units from the 13th Demi-Brigade of Foreign Legion, combat engineers from the 1st Foreign Engineer Regiment and gunners from the 3rd Marine Artillery.

At the end of April the regiment celebrated its twin identities "Foreign Legion" and "Cavalry". An open day was organised at Carpiagne camp in order to celebrate Saint George's day with the local population. Around 5000 of the local population came to admire the military parade, enjoy the fun fair, the show jumping event, and the traditional election of Miss Kepi Blanc. The more solemn com-

memoration of the Battle of Camerone took place on the sea front of the neighbouring town of La Ciotat, followed by a cocktail party on the terrace of the Eden, the world's oldest cinema.

On 5th of July, Colonel Nicolas Meunier became the regiment's 54th Commanding Officer. His predecessor, Colonel Olivier Baudet, joined the headquarters of the gendarmerie in Paris. The summer period was dedicated to national security operations, with most of the regiment's squadrons engaged as part of mission Sentinelle, deploying to the cities of Marseille and Montpellier. For the G7 summit held in Biarritz the regimental headquarters took command of the security mission for the ground armed forces contingent. The 400 men contingent was part of the enormous 13000 strong inner security force operating in and around Biarritz. The relatively peaceful atmosphere of the summit allowed the HQ staff to perform their general operational procedures while working in a complex inter-ministerial environment.

The final four months of 2019 are focussed on the operational preparation for the regiment's deployment to Mali as part of Op Barkhane. This will be the regiment's largest overseas deployment since the 1990 Desert Storm Gulf mission in Iraq. The deployment will consist of the regimental forward HQ, one armored



Martial arts

squadron, two recce squadrons and the combat support squadron. Leaving in January 2020, the buildup period is marked by intense training in operational procedures, as well as all the admin necessary for the deployment to France's primary overseas military engagement.

Once deployed, the legionaries of the 1st Foreign Cavalry will surely be operating in close coordination with British air support units taking part in Op Barkhane, hoping for further and greater exchanges with their brothers in arms of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards.



This will be the regiment's largest overseas deployment since the 1990 Desert Storm Gulf mission...



1st Reconnaissance Regiment – Sri Lanka Armoured Corps

The year 2019 was a relatively rather demanding year for the 1st Reconnaissance Regiment as almost all troops of Sabre Squadrons were deployed for sudden operational commitments. Yet overcoming all the challenges, the Regiment has performed exceptionally well during the course of the year. Lieutenant Colonel KMAP Karunaratne USP psc was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel SJ Samarasinghe psc as the 36th Commanding Officer of the regiment. Major WKSJ Wijesiri RSP USP is the Second in Command and Captain HHKL Hettichchi serves as the Adjutant of the Regiment.

HQ, A and B Squadrons are currently deployed within the regimental headquarters at Rock House Camp, Colombo. C Squadron is located at the strategically important Vulnerable Point at Kerawalapitiya. Being located in close vicinity to the country's economic hub, A and B squadrons are entrusted with the tasks of assisting Commando Troops for the rapid deployment in the High Security Zones and Vulnerable Points of the Western Province. Apart from that, the 1st Troop of B Squadron is co-located with the Special Forces Regiment, Seeduwa, to facilitate deployment of troops to the Bandaranaika International Airport during emergencies.

As a major operational commitment during the year, 1st Reconnaissance Regiment was deployed in the suburbs of Colombo during the Easter Sunday Bomb Attacks on 21st April 2019.



...they were used for disaster relief operations conducted in the southern part of Sri Lanka...



Troops were deployed in general areas of Madampe, Minuwangoda, Warakapola, Wariyapola, Hettipola and Naththandiya on show of force operations. Additionally, using the amphibious capability of the AFVs of the Regiment, they were used for disaster relief operations conducted in the southern part of Sri Lanka during the times of flooding.

While successfully performing the local duties, the Regiment also had

the opportunity to assist International Peace Keeping Operations in Mali. 1st Combat Convoy Company comprising of 11 x BTR 80As from A Squadron were deployed in Mali since November 2018 for United Nation's Peace Keeping Mission and successfully performed their duties, convoying United Nations Personnel. As their tour of duty is to terminate in the month of November 2019, the 2nd Combat Convoy Company is now ready to depart the country.

The Regiment celebrated the 64th Anniversary on 30th October 2019 and the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards trophy which is annually awarded to the best Squadron of the Regiment was presented to C Squadron for year 2019.

Although the troops were engaged in operational and non-operational commitments throughout the year, the Regiment managed to forward march while maintaining the highest standards and practising rich military traditions as the most senior regiment in the Sri Lanka Army.

We congratulate the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards on their 60th anniversary and best regards for the coming years.



1st Special Service Battalion – South African Defence Force

The year 2019 was the busiest and a most unusual calendar year for 1 Special Service Battalion (1SSB) compared to previous years. Usually a calendar year starts from January and ends in December of that current year. However, the 2019 calendar year started in September 2018, because the events from September 2018 leading to December 2019 were interlinked. The Bn HQ, Charlie and Delta Squadrons of 1 SSB were deployed on the Mozambique/RSA and Swatini/RSA border from September 2018 until March 2019. This operation is referred to as Op Corona where they performed very well. With both Charlie and Delta Squadron on the Borderlines that meant that the inadequate man power who remained behind had to carry on with the tasks of the calendar year.

Armed Forces Day was the first task of the year, taking place in February 2019 in Cape Town. This task was led by Alpha Squadron with the assistance of a few members from Bravo Squadron and Support Squadron. On the way to Cape Town about 180 km from Bloemfontein one ZT3 Armoured vehicle overturned causing the death of one person and three critically injured. Regardless of the accident, Armed Forces Day was successfully held and 1 SSB played an integral part in the success. Moreover, some of the members of the unit (1SSB) went on immediately to Bredasdorp to test the new ZT3 Missiles with Denel.

In April the Unit took part in the Bloem Show by displaying the Prime Mission Equipment (PME) and also artefacts from the museum. The most remarkable event was the Retreat Parade exe-



The Battalion on parade

cuted by Delta Squadron. Over the same period some other members of the unit took part in the Rand Easter Show in Johannesburg where the unit won a prize for the best display.

The unit then went to Sand Stone Estates with a Rooikat crew, echelon drivers and a museum crew. 1 SSB members were responsible for the military display and a drive past of the military convoy of the South African and foreign vehicles. Museum members of 1 SSB also showcased and sold memorabilia of 1 SSB Museum. The visitors had various items to choose from, such as scale models of the military vehicles used by SA Army. To mark the end of the event the members of 1 Special Service Battalion took part in the Mechanized column drive past and a general salute to the GOC of the SA Army Armour formation Brig Gen F. Mbotyi.

In August the Unit was part of the Extended Army Command Cadre (EXT ACC) that took place in Bloemfontein.

The unit was task to display their PME at the Bram Fischer Building. During this month the Delta Squadron also went to Odtshoorn to fetch the Armour members of the 2019 MSDS intake and continue their training.

In September 2019 Alpha Squadron left for the Combat Training Centre where they assisted in course support to the students of JCSC and ISUC taking part in Exercises Amabuthu and Ukuthula respectively. While Alpha Squadron was busy at CTC the unit Fittest Soldier team took part in the Fittest Soldier Competition in Odtshoorn where they did very well.

As well as the above mentioned events the unit hosted different courses visiting the unit introducing them to the 'Panzer aksie', showing them the customs and traditions of Armour. The unit also hosted the competitors in the Chief Army Shooting competition.

So despite all the challenges the unit still achieved their goals for the year passing with flying colours. That's why the members of the unit strongly believe in the motto of the unit "Unity is Strength".

Last the unit wants to give their sincere condolences to the family and friends of the following members that passed on during the year: WO1 Diamonds, Cpl Krynauw and Tpr Joe. They are gone but not forgotten.



The Retreat Parade: Gen Mbotyi enjoying a pre-parade sharpener



Maj Nkonyeni and the Colour Party



The Extended Army Command Council



Armour Formation Medal Parade Colour Party



The toast to the horses

Regimental Comrades Association

President: Colonel of the Regiment, Brigadier AS Richmond OBE

Chairman: Mr C T Gibbons

My where has the year gone? It has been extremely busy holding many events to coincide with the 60th Anniversary which I'm pleased to report went very well. Many of the Branches have been hard at work flying the flag in their respective areas and it was encouraging to see many of you attending Remembrance Parades in your local areas. It was pleasing to see the new banner get its first showing and I would like to extend my thanks to the Trust in making the purchase happen along with the new coffin shroud.

A few changes are coming into effect from early 2020 with regards to subscriptions. Please check with HHQ beforehand as many of you are still paying the old rate! You will therefore need to renew your existing Standing Orders to reflect

this. The new rate will be ORs £5 with a soft copy of the journal or £10 with a hard copy. You will still receive your lapel pin regardless which subscription fee you pay. The officer rate will remain at £15 receiving a hard copy journal and lapel pin. Please note that this journal will be the last under existing arrangements. Could we please encourage those who are not yet members to join as we are keen to maintain a network of people who can take an active part in securing the Association's future?

We are also in the process of changing the venue for the Regimental Reunion (2020) as many of you have been vocal in the past stating that it has becoming too expensive with regards to hotels. Well, we have listened and the new venue for

the Reunion will be at the Masonic Hall, 8 Guildford Street, Cardiff, CF10 2HL, on 3rd October 2020. Please support us by attending.

We are looking for enthusiastic individuals to extend our Branch network in South West Wales, mid Powys area and North East Wales. Please let either me or HHQ know if you would like to set up a branch in your area. I shall let the Branches brief you on their exploits over the past year. Many thanks indeed everyone for your continued support to the Regiment and Association over the past year.

Chairman
CTG

Regimental Home Headquarters

Mark Hawtin
Kate Cox
Catherine Symons
Sophie Poeton
Mark Evans
Hannah Searle

Regimental Secretary
Assistant Regimental Secretary
Subscriptions/General Enquiries
Shop/Lottery/General Enquiries
Regimental Curator
Regimental Assistant Curator

What an exciting 60th Anniversary year! 2019 started at a sprint and things didn't really start slowing down till November. Sadly, due to civil service manning cuts we have lost one of our HHQ positions and are now a team of 3 for the foreseeable future. We will still deliver the same high level of service but might be a little slower answering the phones, so please bear with us!

On the 23rd May 2019, after a tenure of twelve years, General Sir Simon Mayall KBE CB handed over the reins as Colonel of the Regiment to Brigadier Alan Richmond OBE. During this time, he worked tirelessly for the Regiment and the Regimental Comrades Association; he was instrumental in ensuring our survival in 2009 and dedicated a large amount of time towards us whilst still serving Queen and Country worldwide. I would like to thank General Simon on behalf of all members of the Regimental Comrades Association and offer our welcome and support to Brigadier Alan during his time in the saddle.

During the month of March, the HHQ team along with many serving and retired QDG's visited the National Memorial Arboretum in Stafford for a 10th Anniversary Memorial Service, of those killed in action from the QDG Battle Group, in Afghanistan on Operation Herrick 15. It was an extremely moving service, especially as we remembered Cpl's Dean and Stiff who were killed whilst attached to A Squadron. I'd like to thank Colonel Botsford and his team for organising the day and Jumbo Harrison for proudly carrying the RCA Banner.

The Regiment held the 60th Birthday Bash in Robertson Barracks on the 29th June, on a beautiful summer's day. Kate and Cath from HHQ along with 88 comrades and their families



made the long trek east, joined by Paul Atkinson and the East Anglia Branch. The day started off with a regimental parade, with Brigadier Alan as Inspecting Officer in his first role as Colonel awarding medals and commendations. The Regiment then showcased its modern kit and equipment, held sporting events, carried out dismounted close combat demonstrations and even held a dog show. The icing on the cake was a regimental party, held in the All Ranks Club, which included a BBQ, live band, disco and several very dodgy dancing old comrades!

Two days later the 1st July saw most of the Regiment mount up and track back west to Cardiff for the Dedication of the Regimental Memorial and Laying up of the old Standard in Llandaff Cathedral. This was Basher's final big project, taking nearly 4 years to complete, with more hurdles than a steeple-chase! Imagine the hoops needed to be jumped through to put a memorial on the wall of a Grade 1 Listed Welsh Cathedral..... this is nothing compared to trying to find a plasterer who still renders in lime and horsehair! However, all Basher's hard work paid off and those who have visited the Regimental Memorial will all agree that it is a striking and fitting tribute to those men of the Regiment who made the ultimate sacrifice. HHQ was privileged to play major role in the planning and liaison of the event, working closely alongside the Regiment, Padre Stephen, the Cathedral, Clarence House, Cardiff Council, The Band of the Royal Welsh and lots of other organisations, everyone was extremely helpful and enabled the event to run like clockwork, thank you all. The day was outstanding, a dignified memorial service of remembrance along with the pomp, splendour and music of a Regimental event. Of great importance to Basher was finding the Regiment a spiritual home here in Wales, what a success, Llandaff Cathedral, a wonderful place in Wales' heart to reflect, remember and celebrate.

It was decided by the RCA and Regimental Trust that after sixty years of use the RCA Banner was looking a little worn, so it was voted in to design and have a new one manufactured. Martin Ruscoe with much computer wizardry and input from many comrades gave us six designs to choose from, after much deliberation and discussion there was a clear winner and we contacted Charles Ashburner, the official flag maker of Wales, to make the Banner for us. Many of you saw the Banner at the Reunion Dinner, with most agreeing that the workmanship (all hand embroidered) was excellent, as well as having a full colour Spread Eagle front and centre we also have the cap badges of the KDG and Bay's in the lower corners, it is bright, stands out and as you can see from the picture has great impact. Its first outing was the Welsh National Remembrance Service in Cardiff carried by Steve Hampson as he led us proudly around Cathays Park with our heads held high, chests puffed out and bellies sucked in! Many of you may be asking what has happened to the old banner? Well, Chris Gibbons handed it over to Mark Evans at the Reunion Dinner and he has accessioned it into our Regimental Archive to join the rest of our glorious Regimental history. On a more sombre note, we have also had a coffin drape made, in heavy ivory cotton, with the Spread Eagle emblazoned, full colour in the middle. So, when it is time to go to the great tank park in the sky and if you want it, please inform HHQ or a close family member, prior to going!

I would once again like to thank all those of you who donate into the Regimental Benevolence Fund either via the 1 Days' Pay Scheme or our Virgin Money Giving page on the RCA website. Your support is vital in assisting those comrades, serving



and retired, or their immediate families that find themselves in times of need. This year we have dealt with 18 general benevolence grants, we also award quarterly grants, annual fuel grants, Christmas grants and have distributed Christmas Hampers. The total value of grants awarded by the Regimental Benevolence Fund in 2019 has been £17,340.50 with in many instances, great support from the ABF, RBL, H4H and SSAFA. If you know of anybody who is struggling, be that mentally, physically or financially then please contact HHQ in the first instance, all information is treated in confidence and with discretion.

To finish off I would like to thank all who have supported the HHQ team over this busy year, it has been gratefully received. If you have any ideas, recommendations or suggestions for the good and benefit of the RCA, or just fancy a chat then please don't hesitate in picking up the phone, emailing or even better if you find yourself nearby pop in to the office for a cup of tea.

MLH

Combined Cavalry Weekend 2019

Officers' Regimental Dinner

On the evening of Friday 11th May 2019, the annual Officers' Dinner took place in the Cavalry and Guards Club, celebrating 60 years of the QDG. What an outstanding occasion, 180 sat down to dine, filling two rooms and raising the roof of the club. The food, wine, company and service were once again superb. Loyal greetings were sent to our Colonel-in-Chief and his reply was read out by the Colonel of the Regiment. A big thank you to

Alix and her team at the Cavalry Club for looking after us so well, David Rosier for liaising between Trust, Regt and Club, ensuring the night ran like clockwork and General Robert Ward and Mark Ashley-Miller for contacting all officers past and present via Royal Mail, WhatsApp and Facebook, ensuring such a great attendance. Those who dined are listed below:

TABLE 1	TABLE 2	TABLE 3	TABLE 4	TABLE 5
SV Mayall	EJK O'Brien	C Peacocke	H Sugden	M Botsford
O Larminie	M Boissard	R Broadbent	T Smart	T McLennan
A Lee	S Stewart	D Swan	G Fearn	A Ledwards
A Roe	G Streatfield	A Wood	R Grindle	W Guck
D Rosier	C Mackenzie-Beevor	D Treasure	D Warner	N Amphlett
A Daniell	E Grounds	J Van Laun	J Brooke	S Parkes
P Holdsworth	R Roberts	A Mockler	E Barham	D Sheehan
J Coleman	T McCallam	C Howard	P Marques	A Edwards
AJ Clay	J Crawford	S Reading		C Cecil-Wright
G Hankin		S Curran		J McLennan
T Bramble		M Richards		
N Higgin		RA Bowden		
J Beatson-Hird		CDS Barclay		
Q Browell				
R Blaksley				
H Macdonald				
SAB Ward				
M Eliot				
WR Brace				
C Hookey				
J Carey				
J Hick				
C Middleton				
TABLE 6	TABLE 7	TABLE 8	TABLE 9	
R W Ward	M Van Grutten	J Stenhouse	S Farebrother	
M Johnston	A Roxburgh	P Bond	J Whelan	
M Thompson	H Bouskell	P Corfield	A Seys	
J Benton	R Parry	M Hurley	B Parkyn	
J Montgomery	R Mannings	D Coombes	C Robinson	
JJ Greenwood	M Ashley-Miller	C James	J Banbury	
A Gibson	A Pittman	D Duff	H Gates	
E Stenhouse	T Wilson	J Tyson	H Lloyd	
J Pocock	N Lykke Dahn	J De Jonge	K McGinnity	
J De Candole		J De Quincey-Adams	B Matthews	
A Gordon-Hall			R Jackson	
M Mates				
TABLE 10	TABLE 11	TABLE 12	TABLE 13	TABLE 14
S Wood	A Richmond	T Jones	J Carroll	M MacHale
J Davidson	R Staveley	DS Jones	W Russell	P Gordon-Finlayson
N Brown	CF Craven	K Thomas	C Roberts	B Williams
A Hulton	D Cole	P Jones	J Hoenich	C Harper
G Younger	D Staveley	S Thomas	C Ruggles-Brise	R Robinson
N Martin	P Wickham	M Hawtin	D Hoey	C Poppleton
A Chamberlain	D Roberts	J N Davies	N Garland	J Cowen
L Roberts	J Barker	J P Davies	H Pilcher	J Lough
D Taylor	J Smith	R Mansel	D Ruck-Keene	J Woodhart
	H Smith	C Homewood	C Beaver	
	G Clegg	M Grundy		
		M Hansen		
		O'Connor		
TABLE 15	TABLE 16	TABLE 17		
D Wiggins	A Campbell	H Martel		
A Dumont	E Hind	J Brockless		
M McKechnie	C Layzell-Payne	W Groome		
C Carter	C Byrd	S Maxwell		
C Carter	N Rixson	E Cooper		
M Carter	T Oakley	G Barham		
E Owen	H Chaplin	T Lewis		
G Jackson		F Holland		



Combined Cavalry Memorial Parade and Service

The Combined Cavalry Old Comrades Parade was held on Sunday 12th May in Hyde Park. As a Regiment we were extremely fortunate that on our 60th Anniversary year we were also the Sponsor Regiment with the salute being taken by our Colonel in Chief who was guarded by the Regimental Quarter Guard, resplendent in their Reds. The Colonel of the Regiment was the Parade Commander leading the whole march with our Regimental Standard Party carrying the CCOCA Banner and Messrs Corfield, Crane, Watson and Wildsmith following close behind with the CCOCA wreath. Brigadier Richmond led the Regiment with Mr Dave Way taking point, bearing the RCA Banner and setting the perfect pace. I believe that the whole of the Regimental March was played as we passed the saluting dais, HRH Prince Charles also pointed out that we were all in step and very good order as we passed him, unlike the HCR!

After the parade the officers hosted the Colonel in Chief at the Cavalry Club, another marvellous affair with over 250 Officers and their families once again taking over the club.

I would once again like to thank Mr John Pragnell and Mr Rob Chubb for representing the RCA and volunteering on the

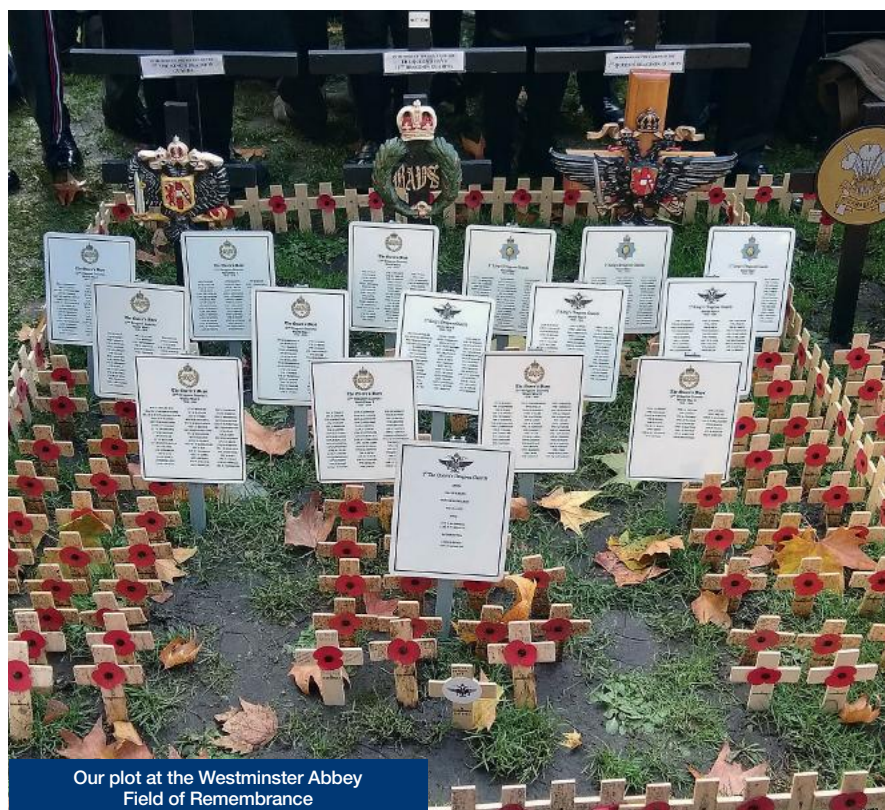


CCOCA Committee. John has been retiring from the role for the last three years so it would be great for another regimental comrade to step into his boots. If you're interested and would like more information, please contact HHQ.

Field of Remembrance Westminster Abbey

HRH Prince Harry and HRH Princess Meghan officially opened the Royal British Legion, Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey at 11 o'clock on Thursday 7th November. There was a great Regimental turnout with sixteen comrades attending the service. The Colonel of the Regiment, Farrier Major Holland and Mr Dave Way were front and centre to greet Prince Harry as he

inspected the plots. Those that attended were the Colonel of the Regiment, Lt Gen SV Mayall, Lt Col Brace, Maj Larminie, Capt Ashley-Miller, Capt Ferguson, Capt Rosier, Lt and Mrs Dickie, Farrier Major Holland, Mr Chubb, Mr and Mrs Crane, Mr Hawtin and Mr Wildsmith.



Our plot at the Westminster Abbey
Field of Remembrance



With the Duke of Sussex

Regimental Comrades Association Dinner, Cardiff – Saturday 27th October 2019

As is now SOP many comrades arrived early for the 60th Anniversary Reunion, on the Friday evening it was great to see loads of QDG filling the Goat Major and spilling out onto Cardiff's pavements, what was even more impressive was how many of you managed to be in Walkabout at 0700 on the Saturday to watch England beat New Zealand! On the Saturday evening we were once again hosted extremely well by The Park Inn, Cardiff City Centre for our RCA Dinner. The food was very good and the service from all the staff was excellent.

Sadly the Colonel of the Regiment was unable to attend the dinner, as Commander Wales he was represent-

ing the Army at the Remembrance of the 75th Anniversary of the liberation of s-Hertogenbosch, many of the soldiers who fell were from the 53rd Welsh Division. However, through the medium of modern technology he was able to wish us a great evening and give us an inspiring speech on the importance of our serving and retired Regimental network, how it benefits us all whilst also raising our Regimental profile within Wales and the Border Counties.

Loyal greetings were sent to our Colonel-in-Chief and the Prince of Wales' response was read out by Lt Col Hugo Lloyd the Commanding Officer who then gave us a brief synopsis on what the

serving Regiment had been up to over the previous year and were looking forward to in the near future. I think you will all agree that we are extremely proud of those young men and women and whilst they are very busy, they are most definitely 'living in interesting times'.

72 Regimental comrades and honoured guests attended the dinner, however as is usual a far greater number kept the bar staff busy and the seats warm whilst we ate. The following members of the RCA and their wives sat down to dine, there is always space for more:

MLH

TABLE 1	TABLE 2	TABLE 3	TABLE 4
Mr O Larminie	Mr C Gibbons	Maj A Corfield	Mr A Harrison
Gen Rw Ward	Mrs P Gibbons	Lt Col P Corfield	Mrs I Harrison
Lt Col B Bell	Mr S Sullivan	Mr A Wildsmith	Lt Col Thayer
Mrs C Bell	Mrs Sullivan	Mr D Watson	Mrs Thayer
Mr Q Browell	Mr D Way	Mr H Crane	Mr Deacon
Mr M Ashley-Miller	Mrs S Way	Mr D Rash	Mrs Deacon
Lt Col Lloyd	Mr T Evans	Mr M Evans	Mr M Forde
Maj Lloyd	Mrs M Evans	Mr M Hawtin	Mrs Forde
Lt Holland	Mr G Walker	Lt Col WR Brace	
Wo1 Homer	Mrs M Walker	Mrs F Brace	
Mr B Brain		Mr C Jones	
Mrs Brain			
Mr J McDowell			
Mr M Jones			

TABLE 5	TABLE 6	TABLE 7	TABLE 8
Mr D Poulsom	Mr A Yoxall	Maj Parkyn	Maj Matthews
Mrs J Poulsom	Mr K Dicken	Maj Hoey	Maj Ruggles-Brise
Mr D Babb	Mr S Scott	Capt Layzell-Payne	Capt Cowen
Mrs Babb	Mr S Burman	Capt Kite	Lt Brockless
Mr D Clare	Mr D Hallewell	Lt Chaplin	Lt Cooper
Mrs D Clare	Mr Burgess	Lt Maxwell	Lt Lewis
Mr G Wallis	Mr M James	Lt Barham	WO2 Thomas
Mr P Wallis		WO2 Chant	WO2 Davies
Mr Duruty De Lloyd		WO2 Griffiths	WO2 Hughes
Ms M Forse		WO2 Ruddy	WO2 Cubitt



Burgess, Yoxall, Scott



Troop Leaders in 'shock of capture' at their first time in Cardiff

Annual Report of The Firing Line

Museum of The Queen's Dragoon Guards and The Royal Welsh

January 2019 – December 2019

As is customary to say at the beginning of these reports, it has yet again been a very busy year for both the QDG Heritage Trust and the Regimental Museum. The year has been dominated by a variety of exhibitions, visits to the Regiment and Regimental celebrations as we have seen QDG, The 41st Foot and The Welsh Regiment all pass important anniversary milestones this year.

2019 has been a greatly positive year for the Heritage and Regimental Trusts, finished off with the Trustees meeting in Swanton Morley in November. A particular highlight for the curatorial team has been the acquisition of a variety of new items acquired this year, including helmets, uniforms, paintings and even a tea-set from 1919! Each object has served to enhance our collection, bringing to life the history of the Regiment and those who served in it.

During this year, myself and the assistant-regimental curator have visited the Regiment four times in order to finalise the hand-over of the Regimental artefacts belonging to the Officers' and Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Messes, from the Regimental Trust to the Heritage Trust. 2020 can expect to see us return to the Regiment a number of times, with a view to completing the transfer of the artefacts from the Corporals' Mess by the end of the year.

In both the Museum and the Archives, we continue to recruit volunteers and facilitate work placements from local Universities – in return we have been fortunate to have the great assistance of many individuals on a variety of tasks, from conservation to presentations.

The museum has once again seen an increase in visitors, with 123,198 visiting the museum between January and December 2019. This number includes school groups, Military groups and local groups who visit to enjoy the talks we put on, such as weapons, helmets, Regimental and historical talks. I have seen a rise in a variety of Units using the museum for JNCO and Leadership courses, they often ask us to run our talks or prepare activities relating to our Regimental history to enhance their sessions. However, we are still low on attendance from QDG Comrades and serving members of the Regiment and I would like to take this opportunity to encourage as many as possible to take advantage of this open invite to visit the Regimental Museum.

In the past year the Museum has recruited a new Education Officer; she will continue to deliver to a variety of groups ranging from Schools, Cubs, Brownies, Special Educational Needs groups, WI's, local interest groups, and Cadet Forces.

The museum has also put on several temporary exhibitions during the last year, they are as follows:

February 2019 – March 2019

The Last Post: an exhibition by artist Carrie Francis

This short-term exhibition used art to reflect on and interpret memories of the First World War as recorded in letters home from soldiers.

April 2019 – August 2019

60 Years of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards

This exhibition was developed, designed and installed by Captain Mark Evans and Hannah Searle. 2019 marked the 60th anniversary of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards (QDG), which

was formed from the amalgamation of 1st King's Dragoon Guards (KDG) and The Queen's Bays (Bays) on 1st January 1959. The temporary exhibition used artefacts from the collection of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards Heritage Trust to explore its rich history.

September 2019 – January 2020

300: From an army of Invalids to a modern infantry regiment. 300 years of The Welch Regiment

This temporary exhibition opened in September to coincide with the Regimental celebration event that took place in the grounds of Cardiff Castle, Saturday 7th September 2019. The exhibition commemorates 300 years since the formation of the 41st regiment of Foot, later to become The Welch Regiment highlighting individual stories from the last 300 years up to the amalgamation of The Welch Regiment and The South Wales Borderers in 1969.

June 1919 – present

KDG in Afghanistan 1919

This exhibition was set up in order to commemorate the last cavalry charge by the KDG in Afghanistan in 1919. There are several artefacts from that time and some very good personnel accounts.

Future Exhibitions

In February 2020, there will be a six-month exhibition covering the modern-day Regiment, the differences between both Regiments and where they have served over the last ten years. In October 2020, the Firing Line Museum will be hosting an exhibition organised by the National Memorial Arboretum and the Royal British Legion looking at how members of the Armed Forces acquire tattoos (the ink kind rather than the ceremonial parade kind) to reflect and remember people and experiences encountered during active service

Wales and West Army Museum Network (WWAM)

The Wales and West Army Museums Network continues to go from strength to strength with more museums in our network area requesting to join. This year we have been heavily involved with the Sporting heritage project, which saw the creation of a travelling exhibition which features Regimental stories that associated with the sports of Bobsleigh, Ballet, Equestrian and Lawn tennis. The exhibition was on display in the Glamorgan Cricket Museum at Sophia Gardens in October and November 2019.

The Firing Line provides in-house training to staff and volunteers and has also placed team members on training courses provided by the Museums, Archives and Libraries Division (MALD) of the Welsh Government.

The management team continue to attend relevant conferences such as the AMOT and Museums Association conferences.

Diary of Special Events & Visits

January 2019

- A new display case was installed to house a collection of machine guns, along with new interpretation.

February 2019

- Museum hosted a Queen's Dragoon Guards trust meeting.
- S4C television programme filmed The Last Post exhibition at the museum.
- QDG Curator and ast curator Miss Hannah Searle visited the Regiment to carry out an audit of the Messes.

March 2019

- Firing Line hosted a training event for the Museums Association Transformers scheme.
- Director and Curatorial team met with Kim de Vries, Curator of an exhibition travelling to S'-Hertogenbosch.

April 2019

- Museum visited by a delegation of 45 people from S'-Hertogenbosch who received a weapon talk from Museum staff.

May 2019

- The Director, Curators and Ann Mansell of The Welsh Government met with Lt Gen Andrew Graham who is carrying out a review of Army Heritage.

June 2019

- QDG South Wales Branch along with other branches throughout June commemorated the Battle of Waterloo.
- QDG Curator and assistant curator visited the Regiment to continue to the handover of artefacts to the heritage trust and attended the 60th Anniversary celebrations.

July 2019

- The Royal British Legion started their annual Poppy walk from the grounds of Cardiff Castle.
- S4C filmed at the Firing Line Museum for a piece about Sir Tasker Watkins, which will be broadcast around the time of remembrance.

September 2019

- Cardiff castle grounds were used for a regimental celebration event to commemorate 300 years since the formation of the 41st regiment of Foot and 50 years since the formation of The Royal Regiment of Wales. The museum also opened its new temporary exhibition titled "300" to coincide with this event.
- Museum Director and Curators met with Andrew Hignell of the Cricket Museum to discuss collaboration on educational outreach events for remembrance in November.

October 2019

- QDG Curator Captain Mark Evans and assistant-curator attended an Archive training course organised by the Army Museums Ogilby Trust at the Gurkha Museum in Winchester.
- Curator and assistant-curator visited Swanton Morley to continue Regimental audit for the Trustees.

November 2019

- Curator, assistant-curator and Trustees visited Swanton Morley for yearly meeting with the Regimental and Heritage Trusts.

In conclusion, 2019 has been another very busy year for myself as the Curator, the assistant-curator Miss Hannah Searle and the museum staff. I would like to thank all at QDG HHQ, the Heritage and Regimental Trustees, assistant curator and the Firing Line staff for their continued support.

Finally, I would like to ask any serving and ex-serving members to look in your attics, garages and anywhere else for artefacts relating to the present day or when you served and donate it to enhance the collections. We are looking for modern conflict items that will eventually go on show in the museum.

Here's looking forward to another busy year in 2020 and seeing more QDG veterans and serving members visiting and enjoying our Regimental museum. Can I just remind you all that the Museum is free to visit for any serving member or veteran of the Regiment – please just inform me of the date of your visit.

I look forward to seeing you all in 2020.

Mark Evans

Curator of the QDG Heritage Trust.

Email: ast-curator2@cardiffcastlemuseum.org.uk

Tel: 029 2078 8369

Regimental Heritage Trust

Since the last journal entry, we have made some fantastic acquisitions. These are all very relevant to our new focus at the Museum. After 10 years of operating as The Firing Line, we are refocusing the Museum to reflect the public projection of our Regimental culture. A programme of designing new exhibits will take place over the next 18 months.

The aim is to build two centrepieces of Regimental history, firstly concentrating on Waterloo and secondly emphasizing who the

Regiment is now. The remaining exhibits will focus on how we developed in between and the great journey which enabled us to be the fine Regiment we are.

In addition to portraying our core values, we will illustrate what differentiates QDG from the rest of the Army, highlighting the traditional cavalry element, WW1 on horseback including Néry and C Sqn The Bays at Montigny Les Lens, the migration to mechanization with tank actions of WW2 especially North Africa, CVR(T) in Germany, recent conflicts and the evolution into our modern role. We will stress the Welsh Cavalry epithet and demonstrate the qualities that our "Dashing Lads" require. This should result in a strong cultural depiction of who we are for the general public and why we are special.

To start this process, we have been collecting some additional artefacts for the Waterloo centerpiece. To that end, we have acquired a collection relating to Lieutenant James Leatham, a veteran of the battle. This includes a magnificent painting which we believe was painted by Henry Perlee-Parker (1785-1873.) He was Newcastle based and came into contact with the KDG in when the Regiment moved to Berwick. He painted another superb painting in our collection, Baggage to Newcastle. This painting shows the KDG baggage wagons outside St Nicholas' Church (now the Cathedral of Newcastle-upon-Tyne). This picture is unusual and significant as it is one of the very few that



Outside St Nicholas' Church





shows the social life of the British soldier in the 19th century with its portrayal of the wives, girlfriends and children of the Regiment. Another interesting feature is the depiction of an officer's West Indian servant. Loveless Overton was born in St Thomas, Bridgetown, Barbados and enlisted in the KDG in Manchester on the 25th March 1800, aged 20 years old.

The Leatham portrait has been on loan to the museum since the early 1990s from the Birley family, who are direct descendants. They very kindly agreed to sell the painting to the Heritage Trust. It was probably painted at the same time as Baggage to Newcastle as the new Roman pattern helmet is depicted in both images.

Lieutenant James Leatham

1805 Commissioned Cornet

1806 Lieutenant

1815 Captain

1825 Lieutenant Colonel

Rank at Waterloo: Lieutenant.

Sadly, we have not yet been able to identify which squadron or troop he was in. All we know is that he was one of twenty-nine Officers including a surgeon and a paymaster, serving with the King's Dragoon Guards in 1815, as mentioned on the 1815 Muster Roll.

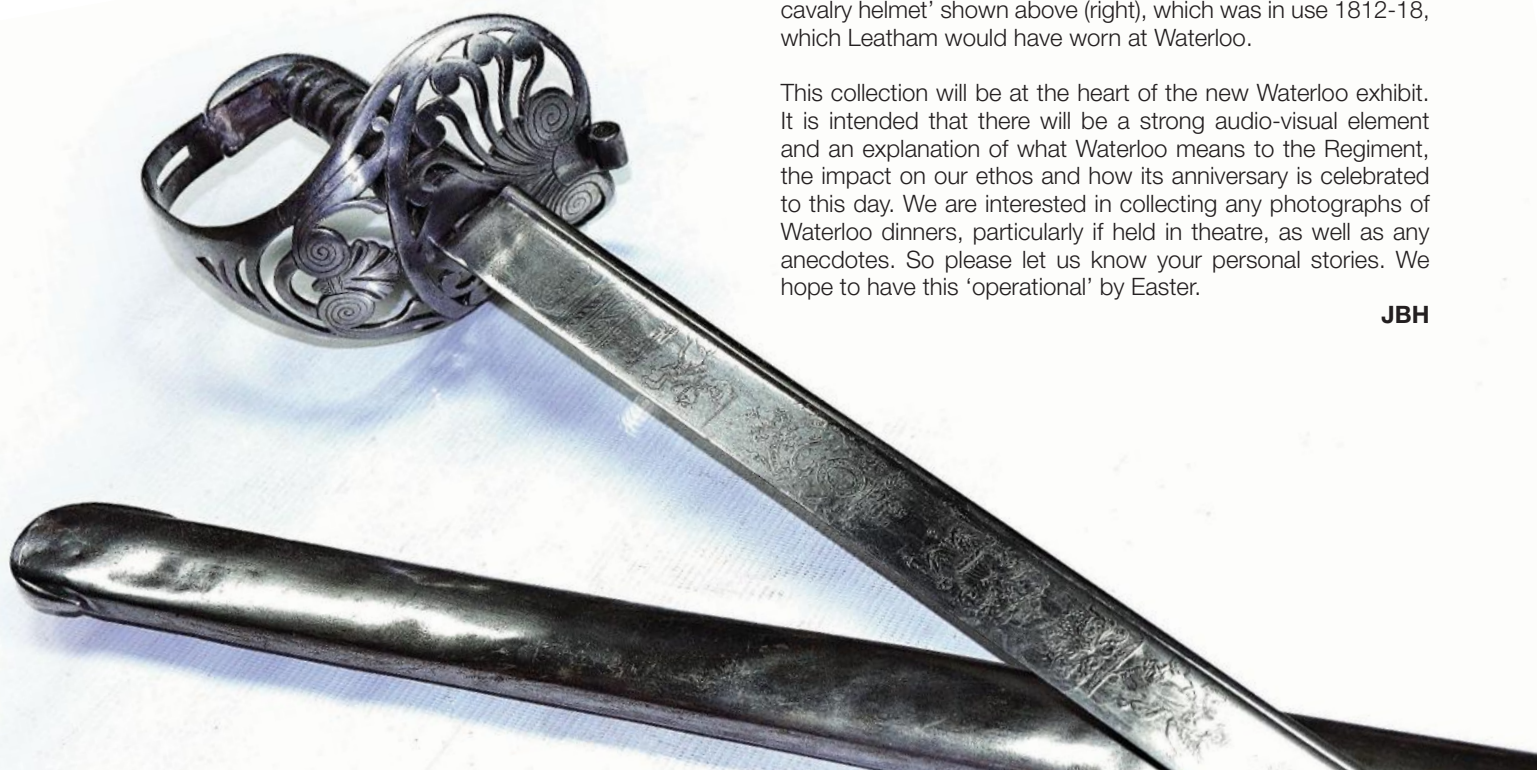
Leatham was not identified as one of the officers still standing, unwounded, at the end of the battle. But history does not relate how extensive his wounds were.

'Leatham's sword' is a 1796 Heavy Cavalry sword. Its bowl-shaped guard with a honeysuckle design shows it is an officer's pattern sword. It is engraved on one side with royal monogram GR and a mounted heavy cavalryman on the other side with the makers name "WILKES" for George Wilkes of St James's Street. It was carried at Waterloo.

The headdress shown in both paintings and depicted above (left) was called a 'Roman' helmet and was in use with the KDG 1818-31. It comprises a metal skull painted black with gilt or brass fittings. It is ornamented with rich gilt: laurel leaves, dead wrought scales and lions' heads. Its bearskin top, whilst imposing, was a nuisance to the wearer. It superseded the 'heavy cavalry helmet' shown above (right), which was in use 1812-18, which Leatham would have worn at Waterloo.

This collection will be at the heart of the new Waterloo exhibit. It is intended that there will be a strong audio-visual element and an explanation of what Waterloo means to the Regiment, the impact on our ethos and how its anniversary is celebrated to this day. We are interested in collecting any photographs of Waterloo dinners, particularly if held in theatre, as well as any anecdotes. So please let us know your personal stories. We hope to have this 'operational' by Easter.

JBH





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Regimental Trust

The Regiment was very busy during the year, however the programme allowed more time than in recent years for activities that could be supported by grants from the Trust. A Family Day for those serving at Regimental Duty plus those members of the RCA that had made the trip to Norfolk was held at Robertson Barracks on Saturday 29 June. This included an evening party and was part of the Regiment's 60th Anniversary celebrations. The event, less the bar, was funded by the Trust. This was followed two days later on 1st July by the Service of Dedication for our Regimental Memorial in Llandaff Cathedral and the laying up of a Standard. This was also supported by the Trust and both events were very successful for the Trust's charitable objectives which include promoting comradeship and esprit de corps, and the welfare of the Regiment.

The Trust makes annual grants for a number of routine items that help improve quality of life for all ranks and keep the Regiment special. These include the soldiers' Christmas lunch. However, this year the Trust also supported a new Christmas event for the families.

On the sporting front, the Trust maintained its support for Alpine and Nordic Skiing, and made grants in support of the successful Football Tour to the USA as well as a lower key Rugby tour in the UK. Ex Waterloo Ride, the cycle ride from Land's End to John O'Groats by medically downgraded or recovering members of the serving Regiment, was also supported.

Time for adventure training has been limited, but as part of Ex Askari Storm in Kenya, A Squadron managed to fit in some adventure training that the Trust supported. Times are changing and emergency extra internet access was also bought by the Trust for members of the Regiment whose return from Kenya was delayed due to fighting in Sudan preventing overflying, and the RAF's inability to re-route at short notice.

It has been a productive year for the Trust's remit for the Regiment's heritage assets. The Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess heritage assets were gifted to the Trust in the same manner as those in the Officers' Mess were previously. It is expected that the Corporals' Mess heritage assets will follow the same path in 2020. Jonathan Beatson-Hird and the team in Cardiff have worked hard to input all the heritage assets of all Regimental entities into the new Timeline database. This is still ongoing, but major



It has been a productive year for the Trust's remit for the Regiment's heritage assets.



progress has been made during the year. The many important items of more recent historic interest that are in RHQ and the Squadrons will also be added to Timeline and incorporated into the overall strategy for heritage assets. Maintenance of the collection is very important, and urgent work on a number of the pictures and some of the silver was completed during the year and paid for by the Trust.

The RCA operates under the umbrella of the Trust and its efforts to improve contact with past and present members of the Regiment is being led by the RCA Chairman Chris Gibbons, with notable assistance from Mark Ashley-Miller who has social media expertise and internet platform business experience. He is also leader of the Officers' Mess alumni group. The Regiment's 60th Anniversary provided the opportunity to pro-actively contact past members of the Regiment. Cavalry Memorial Parade, the Officers' Dinner and the service in Llandaff Cathedral were exceptionally

well attended. The RCA banner was retired after 60 years' service and presented to the Museum. Its replacement was funded by the Trust along with an update of the QDG Website.

For Benevolence, the principal point of contact is the Regimental Secretary, and he coordinates our cases with other mostly service charities. A new software package for service charities has been launched to manage benevolence cases. The majority of cases have a SSAFA case officer and overall the system works well. The Regimental Secretary has a very good working relationship with other service charities such as ABF (the Soldiers Charity), SSAFA, Help for Heroes and Blesma. They are generous in supporting our cases which is much appreciated.

If any members of the Regiment were considering making a bequest or donation to the Trust, these would be gratefully received. The full name of the charity is 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards Regimental Trust, and the Charity Commission Number is 274689. The Trustees would normally apply any gifts for the general benefit of the Trust, although they also maintain a restricted fund for benevolence. This is available for those who might particularly wish to support that part of the Trust's activities.

ORCL

Sadly, the following deaths were notified to the Regimental Secretary throughout 2019

Name	Regiment	Served	Dec'd	Age
R Walker			Dec '18	
WO2 Innes MBE	QDG/RLC	1994 – 1997	Jan '19	56
RJN Booth	BAYS	1953 – 1956	Jan '19	
Maj WR Charleton	QDG	1970 – 2004	Feb '19	69
Brig RC Middleton OBE	KDG/QDG	1948 – 1983	Feb '19	88
R C Kernick CVO	KDG/QDG	1946 – 1963	Feb '19	91
Lt Col C Mosselmans TD	BAYS	1945	Mar '19	
BE Thomas	KDG	1946 – 1948	Mar '19	91
Brig G N Powell DL	BAYS/QDG	1945 – 1982	Apr '19	94
A W Forsyth OBE DL	BAYS	1947 – 1953	Feb '19	
Maj EJJ Hunter	KDG/QDG	1950 – 1986	Apr '19	
Lt Col A Gaskin	KDG	1943 – 1946		
D H Breslin	KDG/QDG	1948 – 1961	Jul '19	
A Chamberlain	QDG	2002 – 2006	Aug '19	39
W J Needham	QDG	1960 – 1966	Aug '19	76
Col PJL Wickes	KDG	1945 – 1951	Oct '19	94
D G Fisher	QDG	1971 – 1993	Oct '19	
R Gartrell	BAYS	1945 – 1955	Oct '19	91
J A Healey	BAYS/QDG	1955 – 1986	Nov '19	82
G J Weatherlake	QDG	1965 – 1985	Dec '19	72

Obituaries

Brigadier G N Powell



November 1945.

Brigadier George Powell died, aged 93, on 2nd April 2019 after a full and eventful life as throughout his military career he, with his inimitable ingenuity, indulged in his passions of hunting, polo and sailing with unrestrained zeal. After Charterhouse, with the help of his Godmother, he decided to go into the Coldstream Guards. After Brigade Squad he then went to Sandhurst but, with a change of heart, he joined the 7th Hussars in

He joined his regiment in Palmanova, Italy and not long afterwards he and two other brother officers were loaned to the Royal Army Service Corps for duties in Venice with the Waterboat Company. As there were no full time vacancies in the 7th Hussars he joined The Queen's Bays.

In 1947 The Bays left for the Canal Zone and he revelled in the chance to sail in the Bitter Lakes. The Regiment was posted to Chester and where Georgie was able to enjoy another of his sporting loves hunting with the Cheshire and Wynstay. It was there that he met Charmian Sparrow. After a whirlwind romance and a posting as Adjutant to the City of London Yeomanry they married.

The Bays were now stationed in Fallingbostal and not being eligible for a married quarter he and three other newlyweds, Smarts, Wilsons and Windsors, shared a house in Walsrode known as "The Main Earth". He hunted the Wessex with a draft of hounds brought out from England by Rodney Windsor. He also played polo and sailed in the Baltic. On returning to England in 1954

Georgie was made Adjutant and continued to do so when the regiment was sent to Aqaba in Jordan. The Regiment moved to Sabratha, Libya and he was appointed C Squadron Leader. In 1956 the Regiment was ready to spearhead the advance into Egypt at the time of the Suez Crisis but was stood down at the last moment when it was discovered that British Troops on Libyan soil could not attack a neighbouring Arab country.

After a year at the Staff College where typically he was the leading light in the pantomime, he returned to the Regiment now in Wolfenbuttel after the amalgamation, to command A Squadron. He was a member of a strong Regimental Polo team with Selby, Harman and Railton which not only won the BAOR Inter-Regimental Cup but also defeated The Wiltshire Yeomanry to win the United Services Cup in 1959.

Between staff jobs Georgie returned to the Regiment, still in Wolfenbuttel on two further occasions as C Squadron Leader and then regimental second-in-command. In March 1967 he took command of the Regiment in Aden for the remaining three months of the tour before a posting to Detmold where he oversaw the conversion to Centurion Tanks. He was also able to renew our affiliation to Panzer Battalion 10 with two trips to Vienna.

His next posting was to the RMA Sandhurst in 1969 initially as AA & QMG and then to command Victory College. After a posting to AG17 in the MOD he was promoted to Brigadier in 1973 and appointed Defence Attaché, Islamabad, Pakistan for nearly three years. A final posting as Deputy Commander, North West District, Preston brought to an end 36 years in the Army. He and Charmian retired to Wiltshire. Both hunted with the Beaufort regularly and he was heavily involved with the Badminton horse trials and other equestrian events locally. He was appointed Deputy Lieutenant for Wiltshire.

Georgie was certainly not lost to the Regiment being an extremely loyal supporter, attending un-numerable events and was chairman of the Museum Committee from 1988 to 1997. During his time the museum's finances prospered through many fund-raising initiatives. He organised Badminton Rides for charities and for the 10th and final time the Duke of Beaufort allowed him to organise a ride for the QDG Museum – probably his most successful with 1,100 entrants and over £24,000 profit. He was also a member of The Royal Yacht Squadron and owned his yacht Wishwells.

He was a true family man, had a keen sense of humour and a natural ability to mimic anyone. Georgie enjoyed two really happy marriages. In 2002 Charmian died after a long illness and he subsequently married Jophy. To Jophy and his sons, James and Simon and their families we send our heartfelt sympathy.

DHGR/RWW

Brigadier R.C. Middleton, OBE



Robin died on 15th February 2019 aged 88 years after a short illness. He commanded his Regiment with distinction, was a fine athlete and horseman, and enjoyed life to the full. Like many former commanding officers he actively supported nearly all Regimental and Association events.

After Harrow and Mons OCS he joined 1st King's Dragoon Guards, stationed in Omagh, in 1949. Immediately he established himself as an all round sportsman representing the Regiment at Rugby and athletics as a middle distance runner, winning the Northern Ireland District Championships at 400 and 800 yards.

Robin went with the Regiment to Neuminster and Malaya. In Germany he successfully competed in Hunter Trials and Show Jumping, often paired with Harold Selby so a formidable team. During his time in Malaya he met and married Liz whose brother, David Ramsey, was a KDG National Service Subaltern.

After the amalgamation he became Adjutant to Harold Selby and Jackie Harman. During our time in Wolfenbuttel Polo in the Regiment was at its strongest usurping the 17th/21st Lancers from top spot. Robin was a member of our teams which won the BAOR Inter-Regimental and Captains and Subalterns tournaments in 1960.

Between spells on the staff he commanded A Squadron in Omagh (1965) which spent 3 months in England training with Yeomanry Regiments and exercising with them from the Belvoir country to the Scottish borders. He also commanded B Squadron in Detmold (1969-71) this time in tanks. On promotion to Lieutenant Colonel he was appointed MA to the UK Permanent Military Representative at NATO HQ in Brussels. He was responsible for preparing documents for NATO military committee meetings at ministerial level, as well as liaising with military and civil agencies throughout NATO.

In 1973 Robin took command of the Regiment based in Hohn. During this period the Regiment deployed to Northern Ireland for a four month operational tour, with responsibility for the Shantallow area and Magilligan prison. It was a large and difficult area. The Regiment's intelligence gathering, well recognised by his superiors, allowed him to maintain a peaceful situation at a very tricky time. Robin was mentioned-in-despatches. During 1975 the QDG Battlegroup went to Suffield in Alberta, Canada for six weeks training and live firing. At the end of his tour in command Robin was deservedly awarded the OBE for his leadership in three theatres. His citation notes that "he had a testing

period in command of the greatest frustration, pressure and difficulty but he has faced these with courage and has succeeded in producing a Regiment whose morale and ability are of the highest order" and "he lifted his whole team up and, by his loyalty, devotion and sheer dynamic personality, overcame every problem in his way. He has never spared himself in the interests of his splendid Regiment." Parties thrived none more so than his farewell which was memorable to say the least!

On promotion to Colonel he held the posts of Colonel AQ, 3 Division (1975-77), Commander BATUS (77-79) and Assistant Military Secretary, HQ UKLF (79-80). Robin ended his military career as Deputy Commander, Eastern District from 1981 – 83 in the rank of Brigadier and so completed 34 years service.

Since retiring from the Army Robin held appointments in the Development Office, Drake Fellowship (a charity running Outward Bound courses for young people), British Commonwealth Ex-Services League and Chief Secretary St John's Ambulance.

Robin was a lay reader and undertook much voluntary work notably Riding for the Disabled and the Army Benevolent Fund. He was a keen fisherman and racegoer.

Liz sadly died in 2008 and later he found happiness again with Rosemary, widow of Jeremy Railton; whom he married in 2013. One of his sons, Charlie, served in the Regiment from 1976 – 80.

RWW

Captain R C Kernick, CVO



Robin Kernick who died on Friday 22nd February 2019 aged 91, was a vintner for over 42 years after his immediate post-war service in the Regiment. After Blundells he enlisted in 1944 and was commissioned into 1st King's Dragoon Guards in 1946 joining the Regiment in Palestine and then in Cyrenaica (Libya) in 1947. There he rode in a number of races at the Benghazi Sporting Club meetings. He was demobbed in 1948 and recalled

to the Colours in 1950 for Korea but, in the end, did not go. Robin then joined the Reserve carrying out his annual training with the KDG and subsequently QDG retiring in 1962 as a captain.

On demob Robin went up to Cambridge to study modern languages. After a five year period with the Bank of England he spent the rest of his career in the wine and spirit trade. He joined Corney and Barrow in 1957 and was the Managing Director from 1965 – 68. He then joined the International Distillers and Vintners again finishing as managing Director before returning to Corney and Barrow in 1976. He served as their chairman from 1983 – 91.

During his tenure he presided over the company with consummate skills and authority. He established rock solid relationships with leading chateaux in Pomerol, Medoc and Burgundy, obtaining the exclusive distribution rights of the great Chateau Petrus. Added to this Corney and Barrow was awarded the Royal Warrant to both HM The Queen Mother and HRH The Prince of Wales. One of his idiosyncrasies was to calculate margins and percentages on a slide rule, not exactly a contemporary instrument forty years ago! Robin was appointed as Clerk of the Royal Cellars 1979 – 91 for which he was made Commander Royal Victorian Order. He was then Clerk of the Prince of Wales Cellars 1991 – 99.

Robin was a long-standing member of The Cavalry and Guards Club committee, naturally looking after their cellars. He was a

regular attendee at Regimental Dinners and advised various Colonels of the Regiment over wine selection for these occasions as well as overseeing our own modest cellar. He was a keen golfer and enjoyed shooting.

He married, firstly, Gillian Burne, sister of Patsy Lidsey, and then Elizabeth White. He is survived by both wives, two children from his first marriage and three step-children.

RWW

Captain J.A. Healey



Alan died on 18th November 2019, aged 82 years. He had unbounded enthusiasm, led from the front, was a great motivator and, above all, lived life to the full and on the edge. In fact "burning candles at both ends" and "sailing close to and into the wind" spring easily to mind. Despite the occasional scars on his service record he rose to WO1 and commissioning which speaks volumes for his many considerable attributes. It was a

mercurial career.

He joined The Queen's Bays, now stationed in Aqaba, in November 1955 and moved with them to Sabratha, Libya in 1956. From then on he rose steadily through the ranks: L/Cpl (57), troop corporal in Castlemartin (58) and also, after amalgamation, Support Troop (59-60) becoming its troop leader as a Sergeant (61). A posting with the Junior Leaders Regiment in Bovington followed.

During the Regiment's operational tour in Aden he was troop sergeant to Tony McCallum and was awarded a Certificate of Commendation. In 1969 he commanded a tank troop in BAOR as a staff sergeant. Rapidly he was made SQMS and, a year later, SSM A Sqn in Berlin.

By this time Alan was a dominant figure in regimental sport and adventure training. He represented the Regiment at Cross-Country, Athletics (holding many long-distance records), Football, Boxing and, notably, Hockey at which he played for and captained the Army and Combined Services Teams. He was also a highly competent rock climber and sailor. In all these activities he led by example being extremely fit and displaying remarkable stamina. He was able to inspire and galvanise all his team members. Nothing was insurmountable as exemplified in Berlin by his willingness to take on all-comers at sport and persuading his squadron leader, Robert Ward, to enter and win the RAC Hockey Jubilee Cup against Cavalry Regiments in both 1971 and 1972. He was a great ally and largely instrumental in many of the squadron's sporting successes.

There followed a long spell at ERE from 1973-78 successively as SSM 658 Sqn AAC, RSM JLR, Bovington and RSM AAC Centre. On returning to the Regiment he was commissioned in 1978. As a Captain he was 2i/c A Sqn in Northern Ireland and of HQ Sqn in Wimbish. His last tour of duty was as Admin Officer for the QDG in Beirut. He retired in 1986.

Alan was an eminently suitable choice to take up an RO Appointment with the Army Sports Control Board to run Hockey and Sailing. From a modest start in open dinghy sailing on the Mohne Sea in 1959 he progressed on to bigger boats achieving the Certificate of Competence at RYA Yachtmaster Offshore. Subsequently he sailed most of the oceans, twice crossing the Atlantic. He was heavily involved with running the RAC yachts at Gosport and with the development of the Army Sailing Association. In recognition of all this and on retirement he was made ASA Rear Commodore and presented with his personal

burgee. He also continued to play Hockey for various military and civilian veterans' teams into his 70's.

So from leaving Ashville College, Harrogate at short notice(!) Alan made the most of his two careers and he deserved great credit for that from the Regiment in return. He was a regular and loyal supporter of QDG events.

Alan married, firstly Kath, with whom he had two children, Mark and Janet, and secondly, Ruth to all of whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

RWW

Captain A Chamberlain



Arthur joined the Regiment in late 2002, having spent an extended period at Sandhurst. Having distinguished himself at Troop Leaders by his Kate Bush impressions and fancy dress costumes, he joined C Squadron during the build-up to Operation Telic. Despite having never even been on exercise before he arrived in Kuwait, aided by his Troop Sergeant, 'Dan' Maskell, he made a rapid transformation and was Mentioned in Dispatches

for: "his gallantry, leadership and example over a prolonged period, in appalling weather and under constant enemy pressure and fire".

3rd Troop was responsible for the western side of C Squadron's frontage, tasked to establish a physical screen to protect 3 Commando Brigade's northern flank. As his citation explained: "On the morning of 24th March, the squadron probed forward to the outskirts of Basra and was soon in contact, 3rd Troop coming under direct fire from 4 T55s and increasingly accurate mortar fire which forced the troop to withdraw. That night the troop tracked an enemy counter-attack by 6 T55s onto the position they had occupied earlier in the day.

By the 25th, the troop had managed to get very little sleep, for the fifth night running, yet throughout the day identified and engaged a heavily defended enemy position. Intelligence sources from brigade later reported that up to 70 armoured vehicles were massing for a counter-attack from Basra after last light. 3rd Troop were covering their axis of advance. Owing to the poor weather, there was no aviation available, limited air and most of the artillery was out of range. Therefore, with only limited direct firepower available to him, 2Lt Chamberlain moved his troop into battle positions in order to detect this advance, conscious of the considerable fatigue that all his crews, and himself, were facing and the knowledge that he had already lost 2 individuals to stress that day. As darkness fell, the MSTAR [the radar section attached to the troop] began to detect armoured vehicles heading in their direction. Encouraging his men by calm and confident orders and sitreps, 2Lt Chamberlain held his troop in position as the enemy advanced. As it was, the enemy attack never fully materialised and what enemy the MSTAR did detect was destroyed by air and artillery. His troop were to maintain the screen until they were withdrawn for refurbishment on 2nd April. Despite his inexperience, 2Lt Chamberlain acted in an exemplary fashion throughout the time the squadron were in contact. By keeping his troop on task he ensured that the squadron achieved its mission and that the security of 3 Commando Brigade units to the south was assured."

What the citation does not cover is how Arthur took full advantage of the ready supply of high explosives to set up an ambush. When a Royal Engineer Sergeant inspected it, he deemed it so impressive it would stop at least three tanks – and advised the troop to withdraw at least a kilometre. Arthur's creative use

of pyrotechnics was a common thread running throughout his military career. Towards the end of the Iraq Tour and bored of compositions Arthur disappeared to a nearby river, and following a large explosion, reappeared with a huge grin and four large unidentifiable fish. Back in the Officers' Mess Arthur regularly integrated pyrotechnics into mess games.

Arthur was often able to make things magically appear, from a never-ending supply of Lambert and Butlers cigarettes to vehicle commanders' meetings complete with Gin and Tonics. At the end of the war he produced an exceptional single malt to toast the Troop's efforts and good fortunes. His Troop knew that they had Arthur's mother to thank for these rare luxuries.

Arthur's relaxed approach to risk taking resulted in a notable Officers' Mess expedition to 'run the bulls' through the streets of Pamplona. Arthur designed the tour jerseys to include a large red panel on the back to attract the bulls. Despite three consecutive mornings running the bulls, somewhat miraculously, all members of the Mess returned unscathed.

Although a very effective Officer Arthur had limited patience for centrally administered Army courses and often passively resisted the intentions of the Directing Staff as far as he could. On one occasion he found himself on an Officer Education day in the field in which he was expected to practise planning operations in unnecessarily uncomfortable field conditions over-

seen and judged by directing staff from the Infantry. He encouraged all the cavalry officers on the course to bring large fishing umbrellas and fold up chairs with them. As he approached the bus which was to take the young officers into the field his way was blocked by a large and imposing Sergeant Major who eyed Arthur's enormous umbrella with disdain. The Sergeant Major sneered "I don't think you will be needing THAT today, Sir!" But as he reached out to confiscate this unmilitary offending item, Arthur looked up at the brooding rain clouds and replied with a friendly smile "Hmm, I am not sure that I share your confidence Sergeant Major" and with that stepped past him onto the bus. The Sergeant Major was left agape, but unsure how to handle this sort of gentleman decided it was safer to play along with the myth that they disagreed about the weather forecast. All the subalterns took their umbrellas with them that day.

After he left QDG Arthur remained in close contact with a large number of his army friends. He was cruelly diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in August 2019 and in confronting a very bleak outlook demonstrated the same bravery witnessed by his Regiment in Iraq. His keen wit, thoughtfulness, generosity of spirit and sense of fun will be sorely missed. He was a wonderful friend and all those who served with him will remember him very fondly. He is survived by his loving wife Deja, their three children, Francis, Evelina and Althea, his mother Benedicta and his brothers Fergus and Bertie.

SDOW/HFAS/JOMB

Valetes

Lieutenant General Sir Simon Mayall KBE CB

Lieutenant Colonel Simon Mayall assumed command of QDG in Sennelager in 1997, following a highly successful career to date as a 15th/19th Hussar and, latterly, a Light Dragoon. The Light Dragoons' loss was QDG's gain and any initial concerns of an "outsider" were quickly allayed. Indeed, in the subsequent 22 years of service (11 as Colonel of the Regiment), he dedicated himself to the QDG cause.

When he arrived as Commanding Officer, he only knew one or two QDGs but he soon demonstrated that he was a Commanding Officer with a real love of soldiering and soldiers. In no time, he knew everyone by name and nickname and was fully aware of the challenges that faced his soldiers and (significantly for a bachelor) their families. He threw himself whole-heartedly into Regimental life, in barracks, on exercise and on operations. A highly charismatic commander, he also added humour and fun to soldiering. He loved nothing better than chewing the fat with young soldiers or officers alike. Indeed he has often reminisced about his first dinner night, when at 2 am in the morning he turned to the PMC and said: "Isn't it wonderful to see so many officers still up having fun?" to which the PMC deadpan replied "Yes, Colonel, they're waiting for you to leave!"

Immediately prior to assuming command, he had studied as a Defence Fellow at St Anthony's College, Oxford. This was because he had to 'mark time' before command of QDG and he was keen to develop further his already deep understanding of the Middle East region. His thesis was 'Turkey: Thwarted Ambition', covering post-Cold War security policy in that country. There were always a number of copies available in his office



and whether you were a defaulter on orders or a visiting General, you would be handed a copy of the book to read!

His command tour was divided in two with the first year's focus being a BATUS deployment. The Regiment was still quite inexperienced in armour after decades in the recce world and he had great credibility in the eyes of all through his previous armoured experience. As the Regiment had deployed on a Stabilisation operation in Bosnia the previous year, he wanted us "to put on our warfighting head" and in this he succeeded. Success on the prairie was only marred by a post exercise din-



ner in the Canadian Officers' Mess where a wall mounted bison was shaved and our Recce Troop Leader was launched through the polystyrene ceiling to enter the (closed) bar area. The following day, the Adjutant reported to the QDG PMC "Houston, we have a problem"!

C Squadron was deployed early in 1998 as the Prison Guard Force in West Belfast and, in the summer of that year, the ongoing dispute over the yearly Protestant parades in Northern Ireland was coming to a head. The dispute centred on the area of Drumcree just to the north of Portadown. As the 12th July approached, the rest of QDG deployed to Belfast. On arrival they were welcomed by bricks, petrol bombs and huge bonfires but thankfully suffered no serious injuries. The Commanding Officer was always one for being 'on point' and, on one occasion, he led the Rover Group forth on a little excursion round the Ardoyne and Divas Flats areas – not known for their tolerance of the British Army. Having 'hard targeted' at speed out of Girdwood Park, he and the RSM held a quick conflagration in the shelter of a doorway in the Ardoyne, breathing heavily. A republican youth of no more than 12 years of age sauntered up and, eyeing two of the Regiment's more senior soldiers, exclaimed "Jesus, they must be hard up if they're sending old b.....ds like you out!"

Colonel Simon Mayall was a highly successful commanding officer and, when his tenure came to an end our reputation as a well-trained, motivated, professional regiment was truly established. He led by example and from the front, and his soldiers, without exception, would have followed him anywhere and everywhere.

Unsurprisingly, he was promoted out of command to a key role in the Ministry of Defence as Colonel Army Plans. From then on, his career alternated between the strategic level in Whitehall and operations – it was these two environments which gave him a buzz and played to his strengths. In 2002, as Commander of 1st Mechanised Brigade, he deployed to Kosovo and then returned as Director Resources and Programmes in the MOD. He was then Deputy Commanding General of the Multi-National Corps (Iraq), based in Baghdad, during the period of the fight against Al Qaeda, the Sunni 'Awakening' and the 'Surge' before becoming Assistant Chief of the General Staff and then, in 2009, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Commitments) with policy responsibility for global operations, particularly in Afghanistan.

In 2010 he was appointed as the first Defence Senior Adviser Middle East (DSAME), responsible for re-energising the UK's

security relationships with partners in the Gulf, the Near East and North Africa. This was a position which absolutely played to his strengths. He has a love for the region and an understanding rooted in the study of its history, politics and religion. He operated semi-autonomously and was able to engage with the great and the good of the region to further UK interests. On one occasion, he was requested to attend the House of Commons Defence Select Committee with the Secretary of State Bob Ainsworth. The political diarist Quentin Letts reported he was "top brass from central casting. Smooth, posh manner. Buttery as a crumpet. It helped to pass the time by imagining that he was actor Rik Mayall's older brother."

He retired from the Army in 2015, and, besides being Lieutenant of the Tower of London, he has worked as a Middle East consultant and expert with roles ranging from Coutts Bank to a guest speaker on Cruise Ships (Cunard only, of course!). He has also been able to pursue his wider interests: travel, sport, public speaking, politics, The Garrick Club, writing and Balliol College, Oxford. This breadth has served to reinforce the fact that here is a senior Army Officer who has achieved success in spite of (or because of) having a hinterland – something lacking in many.

General Mayall has given truly exceptional service to Queen and Country but we should all be indebted for the service he has given QDG. From the day he pulled on the brown pullover in Sennelager he has made the Regiment his own. His first five years as Colonel of the Regiment coincided with him being in some of the most demanding appointments in the Army. This period also coincided with the reduction of the manned strength of the Army to 82,000. The writing was on the wall for QDG, Scots DG and 9/12L to disband or amalgamate as the only regiments who had not done so in 1992. General Mayall's strategic understanding, sage counsel and 'behind the scenes' lobbying (sometimes to personal detriment) unquestionably helped us avoid either amalgamation or disbandment. But as Colonel of the Regiment, he has done so much more. He has recruited a generation of officers, provided sound counsel to commanding officers, overseen our successful Trust and Museum activities, strengthened our links with the Colonel in Chief and his office, visited the Regiment regularly and provided support and comfort to the injured and bereaved as a result of service in Iraq and Afghanistan. He is a great personality with a huge heart. We owe him a debt of gratitude for all he has done pro rege et patria and he leaves a happy, successful and secure wider Regiment to his successor as Colonel.

TRW



Colonel Guy Deacon CBE

Guy Deacon first visited the Regiment in Hohne in 1980. Even at the tender age of 18, he was committed. In those days it was normal for Potential Officers to join the Royal Armoured Corps as a trooper and attend Phase 1 Training in Catterick, along with other trainees. Well before the days of Dhali Blake, the course was brutal and most people fell by the wayside, but Guy survived and passed RCB before going to University for three years as an Undergraduate Cadet. During that time, he spent each summer on exercise with the Regiment, being guided by the likes of Lt Browell, Sgt Brace and LCpl Gibbons. Following the advice of his father (a former Gunner) to arrive on exercise with a case of beer under his arm, his future was secure.



Thoughtful, tough and unflappable, he was very much his own man and never afraid to speak his mind; often either in support of his troop or to challenge the perceived norm when few other junior officers had the courage to do so. He played rugby for QDG but it was Adventure Training and expeditions that really excited him. Mark Joyce and he hatched a plan to travel overland to Kenya with ten other soldiers. Ex African Eagle over 4 months in '87 will unfortunately be remembered for the tragic loss of Cpl Greatorix rather than anything else – such as Capt Deacon being arrested by the President's Bodyguard dressed only in his boxer shorts; his bout of amoebic dysentery or his love of his driving music, especially the Aussie group Redgum, which would blast out

through African villages where local kids would chase after the vehicles clapping and shouting.

Arriving from Sandhurst in 1984 as part of the record-breaking batch of seven mixed graduate/non-graduate officers, he was soon given the nickname 'Beefy'. Opinion remains divided as to the origins of the moniker, perhaps a reflection of being tougher and more warlike than his batchmates, perhaps a throwback to his rowing and rugby days at Durham or maybe a reflection of his penchant for beef-flavoured crisps. Whatever the inspiration, it is likely that Dickie Goldsbrough was involved as he gave everyone nicknames!

Guy joined B Squadron at Wimbish and soon found himself on his first (eight week) exercise in Germany. Issued two rounds per Scorpion of 76mm blank, he fired one to great effect in a town square at about lunch time. As well as signifying to the enemy that they were now in contact, it broke every window in the square and spread a fair bit of despondency among the Germans who were sitting outside and in cafes having their lunch. It transpired that there were two flavours of 76mm blank, one that was for show at public events such as The Royal Tournament and the other, which the Squadron had been issued, was full charge.

He deployed with B Squadron as the UN Scout Car Squadron in Cyprus. Operating in Ferrets on the border between the Turks and Greek Cypriots, he was in his element with more independence than he was to have for many more years to come. So much so that when he rolled two Ferrets in two days, he managed to keep it a secret from the Squadron Leader for many years. In Cyprus, probably following some pomposity about dress in the mess, he had the Nicosia tailor, Mr Osman, knock him up a fetching double-breasted affair made of the thick hairy QDG Blue nylon that the Cypriot taxi drivers had on their car dashboards. Mr Osman refused to put a label in it, but it fitted like a glove and although it made Guy look like Chewbacca from Star Wars, it was subsequently much admired by Johnny O'Brian and Dozey Gates at one of the duty (landowners and local great and good) drinks parties in Wimbish. Guy was always up for a party and if it was fancy dress, he wore his hairy blue suit, regardless of the theme, for many years.

On return from Cyprus he attended the RGO Course, securing a B Schools and was Regimental Gunnery Officer for a firing period at Castlemartin. As such he was the first of his Troop Leaders peer group to have a responsible job and the others thought he was very grown up – and rather officious about it all. In truth, he had never been on ranges before and as a very inexperienced Gunnery Officer was probably feeling under pressure and was wholly reliant upon Fatty Williams's advice.

This passion for travel was to influence him in the jobs that he took for the rest of his career. As a Captain he spent a year in Belize from which he explored Central and Southern America and was lucky enough to be posted to Mauritius to teach the Mauritius Defence Force map reading for three months. This was a perfect job as he absolutely loves maps and like a 19th Century explorer pores over them for hours debating the route and flicking through the well-worn Lonely Planet edition of '...on a Shoestring' that he had carefully fablon'ed. He also found time to drive the commander's speed boat, but no doubt the idyll was tempered by the fact that he was missing out on deploying with the Regiment for the First Gulf War.

He then spent eight months in Kuwait on the monitoring force that operated on the Iraq/Kuwait border after Operation Granby. During that tour a wounded Bedouin nomad was brought into Beef's far flung outpost with his lower leg hanging off as a result of a mine strike. Rumour has it that Guy and his fellow observers amputated it with a penknife and the Bedu was then taken off in a pick-up by his very chuffed mates!

Regimental Duty at Tidworth followed, taking over command of A Squadron during which time the Regiment fired 76mm for the last time then began to re-role onto Challenger 1 and moved to Sennelager. The first year on Challenger was indeed a challenge as we all got used to the size and scale of the new equipment. Division 2 at Shrivenham followed and then on to Staff College where he was very popular and certainly not a thruster! He played rugby for the Owls and shot but his greatest achievement was to marry Tania.

He loved his next two years at Bovington as SO2 O&D, during which time he got into stalking and this was followed by a return as Squadron Leader, this time in B Squadron which had been broken up to backfill other squadrons in Bosnia. He maintains that the two years with B Squadron on Challenger 1 was perhaps the most enjoyable two years he had in the Army. It also proved to be his last at Regimental Duty.

His later career saw him in the Army Personnel Centre three times (where he proved to be a real natural as a Career Manager, being compassionate and thoughtful), Edinburgh once, MOD Main Building once and in command of the Army Foundation College Harrogate, but throughout all of this he still hankered for an overseas adventure which resulted in him being in Afghanistan immediately post-command, and the Congo for 18 months, disarming rebels and keeping the peace between the

various factions of the UN as well as the various rebel groups. For his efforts there he was awarded an OBE.

On return from the Congo however, he was diagnosed with Parkinson's which rather cramped his style for the remainder of his service and brought to an untimely end the interest in field sports which had consumed much of his time for the previous 30 years. He has faced his illness with great stoicism, dignity and amazing resilience and approached his final appointment, Colonel Royal Armoured Corps in Bovington where he spent four years, with great energy and thought.

In his keynote speech at the 80th anniversary of the founding of the RAC, he spoke passionately about the importance of the RAC, how it has served our regiments in so many ways but has lacked a collective focus. How it needs to be professionalised and be put back on the Army's centre stage. He has done more than anyone to reinvigorate the Corps following the Infantry

focus of Afghanistan and Iraq through his RAC First initiative, to professionalise the RAC's management and put the Corps back on the Army's centre stage. Despite some initiative that gave Regimental ground to the RAC, he closed the same speech by saying: "Despite all I have said and that we are RAC First, you would not have to cut me too deeply to discover that I am QDG through and through and immensely proud of the family I am lucky enough to have joined." His efforts were justifiably recognised by the Palace with his CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours 2019.

He describes his plans on retirement as 'spectacularly unambitious' and all he wants to do is travel and be happy while he still can. Most of us wouldn't consider a drive to Sierra Leone via places that are quite literally not on the map, unambitious, but that is Guy Deacon for you!

ASR

Lieutenant Colonel Alf Alford MBE

Alf joined the Army on 9 Sep 1980 arriving at JLR RAC, Bovington, as a fresh faced 16 year old along with certain other Regimental characters such as Ivor Morris, Ian Moore, Chris Teasdale, Steve Way, Killer Rompf and Paul (Hogg) Williams to name a few. After overcoming shock of capture and being away from home for the first time Alf knuckled down to 15 very memorable months of basic and crew training. He reached the dizzy heights of J/Tpr and joined the 9th/12th Royal Lancers in Dec 1981. He remains fully conscious of his place as a 're-tread' and has been reminded of it for 35 years!



In Jan 1982, his first excursion out of the UK, he arrived in a very wintry Hohne. It wasn't long before he was a fully qualified CVR(T) crewman and an enforced keen socialite having been introduced to famous institutions like Mic Macs in what was from his viewpoint a 'very crazy time' in the early '80s. He deployed on his 18th birthday to NI for a tour of the Maze Prison and Belfast. An eye-opening and very exciting time for a young Tpr, where for his troubles, he was to receive a brick to the head on his first venture into the Ardoyne (some say this explains a lot). He soon passed his driving test, where within hours he was seen driving at speed around the city in a two-ton armoured land rover with the top cover looking very nervous.

In 1985 and promoted to LCpl, Alf moved to Wolfenbuttel to take over from 2 RTR who were re-rolling onto a shiny new fleet of Challenger 1 tanks. With an arms plot move two years later with some Welsh blokes called QDG from Wimbish, he decided that the Lancers was not the Regiment for him and importantly a move to the UK was going to seriously interfere with his busy Germany social scene. Alf made the conscious, but very easy, decision to transfer to the Regiment in 1987. A day of very mixed emotions on arrival at the Regiment, Alf joined 1st Tp B Sqn led by Lt Guy Deacon on exercise in Soltau where he was also to meet up with an ex Sapper Paul Corfield who had also transferred that day to the same Tp. Unbeknown to the pair of them, this was to be the start of a lifelong friendship where they were to finish off their careers as LE Lt Cols together stalking the corridors of the Armour Centre. After a month on exercise as Alf Garbutt's gunner (who still reminds him that there's only one

Alf in the Regiment) teaching him life skills such as making compo pilchard bombs to be thrown in the turrets of unsuspecting enemy attempting to sleep or eat (childish but extremely funny), it was clear that he had definitely made the right decision to transfer where he has never looked back.

After an orbat change, Alf joined 2nd Tp D Sqn where in quick succession he attended a Signals Instructors course, and on promotion, a Crew Commanders cse. A highly competent reconnaissance soldier, a couple of years ensued of graft on the tank park, with large scale exercises interspersed with range periods. A great memory for most of us is the length of time the trains took to get there! It was at this time he, along with the

likes of Tony Evans and Kung Fu Williams were to put a young 2Lt Alan Richmond through his paces in Grafenwohr (it clearly paid off!). Alf also deployed for two months to Berlin within a combined Tp from C & D Sqns to relieve the Light Infantry. He describes a surreal experience living next to Spandau Prison where Rudolf Hess was still an inmate and patrolling the British Sector of the city in a Scimitar, including driving to the Brandenburg Gate for a memorable photograph. The socialising on both the East & West sides of the wall were also hugely memorable.

1990 was interrupted by Saddam Hussein invading Kuwait. Everyone was extremely jealous of A Sqn deploying on Op GRANBY. However, along with a chosen few, Alf was to deploy as a member of Canary Tp commanding a German Fuchs Chemical Recce vehicle. Weeks of training followed at the German NBC School in Sonthofen, learning how to use the vehicle, along with chemistry lessons from German scientists which clearly did not even register in the small squaddie brain! Ironically, they did learn how to detect German chemicals that had been sold to Iraq! On arrival in theatre, the Tp of four Fuchs were attached to 32 Armd Engr Regiment, an amazing experience to witness the might of the Coalition Forces. A slight anti-climax followed with Saddam capitulating within 100 hours but a highlight being able to take one of the vehicles for a swim in the Persian Gulf.

After a fond farewell to Wolfenbuttel, Alf assumed the role of acting Tp Sgt in Tidworth. During this time, Y Sqn (a combined QDG Sqn) were to deploy to NI with 1 RRF to secure the routes to the Golf towers allowing them to be refurbished. A hectic period, linking up with Paul Corfield in a patrol multiple commanded by Sgt (Mazzo) Thomas. The multiple conducted patrols out of North Howard Street Mill in West Belfast to the RUC Station in Newtownhamilton in S Armagh. Here, Alf recalls one incident where his team nearly shot the SQMS, reputedly geographically embarrassed in S Armagh but wouldn't admit it, who appeared out of thick fog brandishing what looked like a pistol! On return from NI, the Regiment was to re-role to MBT finding itself back in Sennelager within 14 months. During this whirlwind period, he was promoted to Sgt and importantly, was to have his wings severely clipped by marrying the love of his life Sarah.

Two eventful years as an MBT Tp Sgt and being the recipient of the Queen Elizabeth Trophy in 1993 after conducting numerous range periods, exercises and memorable trips to BATUS, he was to be posted to the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst as an instructor in the Signals Wing in 1996 teaching Britain's finest. Alf returned to RD a year early where he was promoted to SSgt and appointed as 2IC Recce Tp for a tour of Bosnia (the best Recce Tp ever!), which seemed to be full of the Regiment's rogues and ably led by WO2 Benny Bennett. Alf's half Tp was attached to C Sqn in Bosanski Petrovac which was an amazing part of the world with very unforgiving terrain. It was an eventful tour with many stories to tell and many fantastic opportunities for the younger Commanders to confirm their recce skills whilst spending several days at a time on patrol. The Tp came together in Bihac for the final third of the tour which had witnessed serious fighting during the war. It was home to the Muslim 5th Corps where the Tp forged strong relationships with military units from all sides and NGOs alike.

Returning home from Bosnian snowdrifts late in the year, Alf took over as B Sqn SQMS deploying to Cyprus for a 'John Smith' style exercise in Ex LION SUN and later for a tour of the Maze prison where again, John has a lot to answer for. During the handover to the RA unit, he decided to hold a function for the Officers and SNCOs where during a little overzealous banter, he reputedly instructed the guard to paint their cannons yellow (allegedly captured in the Crimea). Unbeknown to Alf, John returned to Germany the next morning leaving him to deal with the repercussions!

Catterick late 1997, Alf was promoted to WO2 taking over as SSM D Sqn and then A Sqn with a deployment to Kosovo in 1999. With RHQ located in a hotel and B Sqn sunning themselves, A Sqn deployed with a full complement of MBTs located in Podujevo sharing the metal factory with a company of Royal Highland Fusiliers. They had a permanent guard on Gate Two on the overlooking mountain bordering Serbia and patrolled the town from the local police station. A very diverse tour, one night Alf decided to escape to Gate Two for some peace and tranquility. Unfortunately, this was to be very short lived as during the night a young Cpl 'Pobs' Owen had woken suddenly and hit the SSM! Rumour control in the morning had spiralled in that Pobs had beaten up the SSM! During the same night, only an hour later the Tp found themselves in thick fog and the cross fire of a fierce gun battle between the Muslim and Serb forces. Later on Alf, supported by Sgt Mark Waterall, attempted to negotiate with the Serbs who were a little rattled having lost soldiers in the ensuing fire fight, but they sensibly withdrew when the Serbs attempted to encircle and grab them both at gun point. The next time we would have seen them would have been state TV in a boiler suit and Alf sporting a black eye!

The proudest moment of his career, Alf became RSM in 2000. After being firmly stitched up by John Smith (again) he attended an All-Arms Advanced Drill Instructors cse. As an English RSM he enjoyed every moment of baiting his Welsh brethren. More



importantly, Alf took being the senior soldier and voice of the rank and file extremely seriously where behind the scenes he continually stuck by the soldiers whatever the consequences. He recalls frequent disagreements with the CO, Gil Baldwin, even on whether or not the Regiment would celebrate St David's Day or Waterloo. He was clearly being tested!

In June 2002, Alf commissioned and assumed the role of 2IC HQ Sqn. On Op TELIC 1 deployment he also was appointed RSO in BGHQ living at what was Chemical Ali's former palace. He also says he spent time keeping Col Gil and the 2IC, Spook Pittman, apart! Alf still says he is disappointed with Basher Brace (HQ Sqn Ldr at the time) for not filling the swimming pool! The war seemed to be over in a flash, and planning began for the homecoming. Alf was to be QM, and he returned sharply to plan the forthcoming Arms Plot move with the Queen's Royal Lancers from Catterick to Osnabruck. Before the Regiment had time to unpack, it was back to the UK for NI trg in preparation for the marching season. After 14 months he finally found time to attend his QM's cse. Thankfully he had three outstanding RQMSs to look after him in Paul Morrissey (who never slept), Karl Dakin (who didn't stop smoking) and Ian Coles (who the lads said didn't stop sweeping up). That said, he did have to ask one Monday morning where the Sgts' Mess had gone! The reply was true Dakin fashion "Oh that, the lads burnt it down over the weekend but I didn't want to disturb you!"

It wasn't long before the Regiment was back in Iraq on Op TELIC 5 with Sqns deployed in several locations. During the tour it was announced that the Dutch were to pull out of theatre from the Western desert and QDG were to assume control of their area. Centred on a QDG Battlegroup "Task Force Eagle", Alf masterminded the logistic plan to take over the camp in Al Muthanna Province which was some 11 hours drive from Shaibah Logistic Base. For his significant contribution, he was awarded an MBE of which he is justifiably proud.

In 2006, Alf left RD to try his hand at being a staff officer at 143 (West Midlands) Bde, Shrewsbury, in the role of SO3 O&D. In 2008, he was to be one of the first RAC LE Officers to attend the Intermediate Command Staff Course (Land) at Shrivenham which he describes as a daunting but rewarding experience. His initial grade two staff job was SO2 G1 Pers, HQ 4 Div, Aldershot. A great opportunity to confirm his staff credentials working directly to a very feisty and demanding DCOS! He finally returned to RD in 2009 as OC HQ Sqn, he describes his time as a very busy two years preparing the Regiment for operations

to deploy on Op HERRICK 15 whilst at the same time exhausting keeping Col Jasper in check! He deployed to BATUS as COEFOR BGLO for the whole season and before he knew it he was deploying himself with 20 Bde HQ as SO2 Log Sp responsible for the logistical resupply and assurance of the Bde.

In 2012, Alf was posted to Brecon as DCOS 160 (Wales) Bde, an incredibly diverse role where in the morning he could be discussing Reserve unit equipment shortfalls, to in the afternoon, briefing the First Minister on veterans' matters. An amazing and varied experience, traditionally for a DE Officer, he was very sad to leave but had cemented lasting friendships. Another tour of Afghanistan in 2014 followed initially on Op LANSBURY and

then as the PJHQ UK Liaison Officer to HQ Regional Command (South) in Kandahar. The latter being in a very grown up environment briefing the Chief of Joint Operations (CJO) directly on many issues. Thankfully he survived to tell the tale.

After a brief spell within the Recruit Selection Centre, Lichfield, Alf would conduct his fourth and final takeover from John Smith finishing off his career as DCOS ARMEN & Bovington Garrison. His new chapter as a civilian is working for Landmarc Support Services as an Estate Manager in the W. Mids. We wish Alf, Sarah and his two sons Christian & Dominic all the very best for the future.

PC

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Corfield

Lt Col Paul Corfield transferred to the Regiment in 1987 having spent a 3 year stint in the Royal Engineers as a Combat Engineer and Construction Materials Technician. It was the latter trade that made him wish for a more exciting military life (although there is a rumour that he left his final posting in the Royal Engineers with a surplus of 57 'extra' duties! His wish was certainly granted swiftly on arrival into the Regiment in November 1987 as he deployed on to his first exercise the following day. His arrival also coincided with a LCpl Alf Alford and they both joined 1st Tp B Sqn under Lt Guy Deacon and Sgt Clive Lenderyou.

Paul lasted 12 months before being seconded to SHQ and promotion came swiftly. He led an existence of working in short sprints in the Tp before going off to do something more interesting. He deployed to N Ireland in 1989 to HMP Maze where the boredom of guard was broken by fortnightly 'breaks' in West Belfast! During 1990 he was part of the hugely successful Regimental Boeselager team, winning two of the NATO reconnaissance competition's eight events. Paul was back in SHQ Tp for ten minutes before deploying to Australia on Ex Long Look. Paul's time in Australia, starting in early August, began with a Crew Commander's conversion course on to the LAV 25 vehicle which took 4 weeks, an exercise which took 5 weeks, and the next that is known is that he returned to Germany 9 weeks later. It is rumoured that he, and Cpl Kev Owen, saw much of Australia in that time.

On return he was sent to the German NBC School in Bavaria to learn about the Fuchs NBC vehicle which was to earn him and the newly formed Troop a trip to a war zone on Op Granby. Sadly for him deployment didn't happen and I heard him explain that he 'didn't want to go to war in a wagon without a gun anyway!' A gunnery instructors and crew commanders course followed, on the latter of which he was best student cementing his place against his RAC peers.

Next was an infamous NI tour within the Regiment. Y Squadron deployed to South Armagh in the summer of 1991 for a rebuild of the Golf towers on the border with the South. The troop initially being 'dug in' to protect the logistics convoys followed by a stint at Newtownhamilton where the OC described it safer to be out on patrol rather than waiting in here to be mortared on an almost daily basis! Before returning, his Tp re-deployed again to West Belfast for a month. As a young soldier Paul felt very much at home on operations and he relished his time there.

On conversion to armour and with the Regiment back in Germany after a Tidworth posting of barely a year Paul remained in B Sqn SHQ. His first BATUS exercise was slightly curtailed by having the tank known as 'Christine' after the famous car



in a Hollywood film. His tank continued to break down almost daily and when it didn't he usually lost it to the Sqn Ldr or 2IC, Richard Parry and Alan Richmond respectively! Post another NI deployment Paul was promoted to Sgt and moved to 2nd Tp under Lt Charlie Craven, the Tp having a very enjoyable and successful BATUS exercise. On the next Regimental orbit change the following year he moved to A Sqn. Paul liked to be ahead of the game, on arriving in 1st Tp he spent most of the first night organising the Tp administration. Someone must have been impressed as the following day he was transferred to C Sqn!

His time in C Sqn saw another BATUS deployment before Bosnia on Op Resolute. 3rd Tp were allocated individual tasks for large amounts of the tour; the house at White Fang; on the boundary between the Serb and Muslim population and, the

town of Kulen Vakuf; between the Croats and Muslims, which he described as 'having its moments!' There are also a few members of the Tp who will never forget him standing on the rusty 100m long bridge across a fast-flowing river where his statement 'I think we'll paint it' probably still sends shudders down the spine!

1997 saw Paul as Recce Tp 2IC under James Barker, a Tp like all QDG Recce Tps of this period, performed superbly in a Regimental Battlegroup from simulation through to the live in Canada. He promoted shortly afterwards and transferred to A Sqn as SQMS. Another NI tour followed and he then took up post as Operations WO and BG Liaison Officer for the Kosovo tour.

It was during this deployment that he was asked where he wished to go on posting away from the Regiment. He volunteered for many posts and the Adjt, Charlie Craven, assured him that all would be done to get him to one if his preferred choices of West Africa, Cyprus or other UN location. He took up his post as DSM of the Reconnaissance Division in Warminster(I) in mid 2000. Whilst not wearing a UN beret he described his time there as a huge learning experience where he served with many quality instructors from SF, Royal Marines and Pathfinders to top class Infantry and RAC instructors. He said afterwards that he wished he had known as a young commander what he had learnt there. His time there was shortened somewhat as he needed back at RD to be SSM C Sqn where at least he was able to pass on his knowledge.

In Jun 2002 Paul became RSM. An amazing period to be so in the lead up to and during Op Telic 1 in 2003. In doing so he and Alfie Corfield became the first QDG father and son who had achieved it. Let's hope there are more in the future. As RSM his reputation was 'exceptionally' firm but fair and self-discipline being something he always referred to as the Regt prepared for the Iraq deployment. Commissioned in Jun 2004 Paul remembers the moment well. 6 months before he had arranged with the CO Tim Wilson that a short sabbatical for a few weeks would be perfect in order to readjust to his future career. After that conversation the Regt were stood up for Op Telic 5 in short order, and his break ended up being the walk between the Regimental square and the MT office! Paul speaks very fondly of his time in MT, describing time in Iraq as eventful with a great team of characters who very much kept him on his toes! His next role was as QM(T) which included another Iraq tour, this time as Battlegroup QM in Al Muthanna. He was exposed to 'real logistics' as he spent much time liaising with US counterparts to acquire combat supplies as well as UK assets hundreds of miles away. Our Sqns were at times resupplied by air assets as they were frequently on long range patrols in the desert and border areas.

He was then posted to 12 Mechanized Bde in Bulford as SO3 G4 but also managed a long stint as SO3 Ops. Deployments included BATUS, USA, Kuwait and a few 'hops' in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is without doubt that his reputation grew massively in this period and many of us who knew the units in that Bde will have frequently been informed of his support and reputation. It was during this time that he really developed a thirst for learning, and with the next stop the Intermediate Command and Staff Course (Land) at Shrivenham he certainly got his wish in spades. Like all LE Officers, he found the course hard work at times, but with a proper programme of sport he fitted plenty of football around his studies and also received Defence Academy colours for his efforts.

Post ICSC(L) he returned as HQ Sqn Ldr. This he describes as one of his favourite times in the Regt. He thoroughly enjoyed being OC ROG and the responsibility that came with it. Although his Olympics deployment in 2012 he describes as 'the greatest

thing I have ever been shafted for!' The deployment warning of 'you're on the first flight out in the morning Corfield' from the CO Lt Col DQA paled into insignificance when the non-volunteer Sqn were given the task of providing security to the Olympic Village, and the experience and opportunities which clearly resulted, and luckily to be 100 metres from the finish line on the now famous 'Super Saturday' where three GB golds were won within an hour on the athletics track.

Post Sqn Leader he moved to be SO2 Training Operations at the Army Recruiting and Training Division where he was responsible for the planning of operational trg and supporting RAC/Inf/AAC trg. He also planned the delivery of bespoke training for the Permanent Joint HQ, an example being Op Vocate, the training of the Libyan forces in the UK in 2014 which he does not recall as his crowning glory!

His next post was not one he relished. After requesting to go to Army HQ as an SO2 he ended up as QM in Bovington. It turned out to be very different in comparison to his more recent experience but having two QDG RQMSs in Russ Kimsey and Rob Lockyer he said that they 'kept me sane!' He can thank being in Bovington for the opportunity which presented itself when he promoted. A new post being created needed someone who was prepared to travel extensively to Army HQ in Andover and the Salisbury Plain area due to the nature of the work. As he had recently bought a house in Salisbury he saw an opportunity!

On promotion to Lt Col Paul took the role of SO1 Future Plans at ARMCCN. Knowing nothing about Programmes and Projects, he said that it sounded ok and would be good to learn something new! Having said that, his reputation and network grew massively in this time having been involved with many of the Army's new programmes such as the new and future AJAX, Warrior, Mech Inf and Challenger vehicles. The Commander wrote of him that 'we are very lucky to have a knowledgeable officer who is not afraid to speak truth to power and is sticking up for RAC interests'. He also led a training transformation programme for Bovington which potentially sees massive changes out to 2028, the construction of some which has already begun. Finally, it is important to note that Paul's final posting in the Army at Bovington coincided with Lt Col Alf Alford and Col Guy Deacon being based together.

On the sporting front Paul was known as a 'Sport Billy' and turned his hand to almost any sport representing the Regt in many sports. However, it is rugby and football that he will be most remembered. He captained the Regimental Football team for many years, and is currently the only QDG football team captain to have lifted the Cavalry Cup. He also captained the RAC Corps team for over two seasons and made a couple of appearances in the Army team. His final match before finally retiring from playing at the age of 49 was for Upavon Station in the Army Minor Units Cup Final, the team won and Paul was very much at the heart of the team as player/coach.

He has had many positive things written about him over the years, always setting the right example both internally and externally. He has been an excellent Regimental ambassador and his relationships with senior Officers outstanding. 3 of his reports state '...He is the best LE Officer I have met'. Paul's mantra has been to 'put his head above the parapet' when it has come to taking on roles or postings, particularly as an officer. It is up to the reader to decide if it has been successful.

Paul has retired to Salisbury with Linda and their teenage sons Tom, Will and Ollie. They remain a hugely sporting family and can also be seen regularly on the slopes during the ski season. We wish them a long and happy retirement.

Major Harry Pilcher

Harry Pilcher commissioned into the Regiment in August 2006 to our good fortune after being convinced by Jimmy Carroll that the Parachute Regiment was not a suitable option. The Regiment was already in the midst of OP Telic 8 and Pilcher along with Carroll and Reynolds joined the deployment some five days after commissioning. This was to be a short and sharp baptism of fire in the true form of reconnaissance on the Iran-Iraq border and all three young subalterns found themselves attached to Dom Roberts' B Squadron. High jinks and pranks by the other officers in the Squadron meant that the first night was full of action.



After a brief stint on tour and collecting the first of his operational medals, Harry attended the Troop Leaders course and excelled at all elements. This shy and unassuming officer started to find his way and after years of abstaining from alcohol at Durham University in the quest of sporting excellence he made it very clear that it was time to catch up. Weekend jaunts to London as a young cad certainly put Harry on the map. His return to Germany was an epic love affair with a country that had heralded so many blond haired, blue eyed men that Harry instantly found his maternal home. Fully embracing everything that the German culture had, Harry certainly played hard but while he did this, he also worked hard and this would be proven later on, on numerous tours and job postings.

However even with the excesses of numerous self-inflicted sporting (lunging the PFT) or food-eating (attempting to eat 56 sausages) challenges, drinking competitions and women, Harry always found time to continue working on sculpting his physique and this would earn him the nickname of ORBAT (Other Ranks Body And Torso) when he joined up with the Regiment again. He was the model athlete and would ensure that all those around him and especially his troop lived to these same impeccable standards. Harry needed no encouragement in preparing his troop for OP Herrick 9 as part of Charlie Waggett's A Squadron in a reconnaissance role based from Garmsir.

Herrick 9 was a lively tour for A Squadron and Harry found himself in the thick of it on multiple occasions. He was a much-favoured troop leader and had the respect of his soldiers but also fellow officers. Even in hairy blue on blue engagements Harry kept his cool and facilitated a safe passage for his troop. Tour life suited Harry down to a tee and the intensity of operations, mixed with a heavy protein diet and gym time, focussed the mind for what would be his next big escape from Regimental Duty.

Watching two or four men cram themselves into what can only be described as a coffin and throw themselves down an ice track somehow appealed to Harry and when he found out the more muscular you need to be the better, it ticked all his boxes. What followed was a career in the GB Bobsleigh squad that saw him narrowly miss out on a place at the Winter Olympics.

Having spent a considerable time away from the Regiment, Harry ensured this continued and found himself posted to New Zealand on Exercise Long Look. Curiously, although he was a huge sports fan he had never played rugby until this point. Initially, the Kiwis weren't quite sure of what to make of Harry and his enthusiasm but eventually embraced it and he made many close friends, also picking up one or two traditions that he would act out when back in the Mess, some of which could be seen as gentle encouragement to the junior subalterns to not retire early to bed.

After many a year dodging a real job Harry succumbed to the role of Adjutant and found himself in the perfect job to influence those

below but also above him with the top cover of Lt Col DQA. His Masters in philosophy would prove useful explaining the reasoning behind many decisions and the intensity of the man grew with the role. Harry proved an exceptionally capable Adjutant who managed a challenging period of Regimental camp life, pre tour deployment training and the mental demands of spending Herrick 15 in Camp Bastion as Adjt Brigade Troops Echelon. After serving almost 3 years as Adjutant, Harry was then pardoned and allowed to leave for a 'plum' role in Army HQ as SO3 BatCIS. Thankfully this didn't last long as he promoted on first look and headed to ICSC(L).

For his first job as a Major, Harry was appointed Equerry to HRH Prince Charles. This would prove to be the calling he was looking for and he easily found his ground standing alongside the future King of England. The opportunity to work with civilians was cherished, what Harry didn't realise is that the staff had seen it all before and the enthusiastic young Major hadn't factored that they were not soldiers. Never one to be out of the lime light meant that Harry was rapidly being photographed in his best 007 outfits whilst guarding HRH, the Mess certainly enjoyed this time and the fines for champagne were nearly a weekly occasion. During his time the Regiment benefitted hugely with having an inside man so close to the Regimental Colonel-in-Chief and multiple visits by HRH showed the influence that Harry had. His loyal service to HRH was duly rewarded and he was awarded the MVO by HRH Prince Charles himself.

Unfortunately, during his time serving with HRH and in recognition of some long-term injuries, Harry decided it was time to look at a new challenge and the lure of consultancy and big rewards meant the wider Army and Regiment would be at a loss. Harry made a huge contribution to Regimental life and was the life and soul of the Mess. He was intensely drilled, highly professional and hugely respected by all that came into contact with him. We wish him every success and no doubt will see him setting new achievements across the sporting fields and commercial board rooms.

JAC

Major Chris Beaver

Christopher Beaver arrived at the Regiment at Imphal Barracks in Osnabruck in January 2007 to join a Mess still roaring in the aftermath of Op TELIC 8. Tall, almost supernaturally pale and with a habit of closing his eyes while talking, Chris's enthusiasm for using long and preferably Latin words in casual conversation was not the only thing that drew the curiosity of his more gung-ho fellow members. Never one to compromise, he found himself swiftly becoming the 'subbie's friend' collecting forfeits and extras regularly. It was an intense introduction, but he soon found time to draw breath by disappearing off to Troop Leaders – via a quick course to learn to drive first.



After a hugely enjoyable time in Bovington, Lulworth and Warminster, he returned to A Sqn to take over his Troop in time for Ex Druid's Dance and the start of pre-deployment training for Op Herrick 9. This soon took a different direction as the Sqn Ldr, Charlie Waggett, decided that Chris's particular set of skills made him the prime candidate for an advisory role attached to the Afghan National Army. Chris has an insatiable appetite for learning and engaging with other cultures and a handy tongue for languages, not mention a romantic streak so that one suspects he laments not being with Lawrence in 1917. His diplomatic talents weren't much use in the back streets of London Victoria but were more appreciated in his Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team in the Upper Gereshk Valley. Luckily his WO2 was from the RDG, so was used to officers with archaic dress sense and appalling admin. Chris also took the opportunity to develop very close links with Danish intelligence on this tour, scotching rumours that he relied on a chai boy instead.

This taste for adventure won him first prize in the trawl lottery after tour: a three month trip to Somaliland, all expenses paid. He was part of a small team conducting the initial liaison and reconnaissance for an enduring training team project for the nascent Somaliland security forces – a really cool task working out of Addis Ababa and Hargeisa. There is an air of mystery around this deployment that Chris has made absolutely no effort to dispel – presumably that means it was mostly dull logistical work rather than swash-buckling Boys' Own stuff, but one can't be completely sure.

His next step was into RHQ as Intelligence Officer. A natural fit, one might think, but Chris was always more interested in real people than imaginary tank brigades and he found the confines of Genforce and the Combat Estimate process in the artificial BATUS environment stifling. Or the timelines at least. He frequently had to test his quick reactions by avoiding Col Jasper's knife when he yet again used his finger to point at something on the bird-table map. Chris came more into his comfort zone when preparing the troops for deployment on Herrick 15, laying on classroom and practical lessons in language and cultural awareness that would stand them in good stead on tour.

It would not be his tour though – he handed over IO at the end of 2010 in order to become a full-time Cultural Advisor. Via the gentle delights of a long Pashtu course at Beaconsfield and an Afghan culture course at RAF Northolt and SOAS, he eventually deployed to FOB Price in Gereshk on Op Herrick 17 as part of 40 Cdo BGHQ. The bootnecks admired his fondness for Prince of Wales order (with combat cravat) and even insisted on adding a few touches of their own. You'll have to ask Chris exactly why he was made to carry a stuffed parrot around with him everywhere, but no doubt the local village elders and

smuggling powerbrokers appreciated it. On return he landed a plum situation in Defence Intelligence Human Factors which was not only interesting work itself, with a chance to influence strategic planning and work across Whitehall, but came with a fantastic two bedroom flat in the centre of Victoria.

With his CV already strictly following a theme, it was no surprise that Chris was selected as Assistant Military Attaché in Islamabad (a role previously held by Henry Gates). This was probably the highlight of his career, with an enviable degree of independence and immersion combined with the joys of moving and shaking on the diplomatic circuit. He also continued to amass his enormous collection of cultural objects/tat/memorabilia

from around the globe. Alas, his good reports meant he beigned first time which cut this post short and brought him back to the UK for the staff course alongside David Hoey and Jerome Tyson. Once again, Chris stood out a little for his dress sense (use of Regimental greatcoat – who did he nick that off?) but mostly for asking more questions that the rest of the course put together. Highlights include accusing a retired RM Lt Gen of racism and CGS of hypocrisy. Shortly after being roasted by Chris, Gen Carter then had to present him with a prize for being the course 'question master', a task he performed with gritted teeth!

This bold engagement was somewhat encouraged by the knowledge that he would shortly leave the Army. He spent 2016 applying and interviewing hard for a civil service job and eventually landed a post in the Department for Exiting the EU – something of a poisoned chalice, indeed, but it was a foot in the Whitehall door and at least he was at a higher level than his younger brother Tim who was in the same department. Some readers may remember Tim as one of the HAC troopers in the BRF FST on Herrick 15. But first Chris had a few months after staff college working in the Warfare Branch of the Land Warfare Centre as SO2 Counterinsurgency, writing doctrine on irregular warfare among other things.

There are not many in the Regiment or across his cohort in the Army that won't remember 'Beaves'. Like a true eccentric, he doesn't consider himself eccentric at all, but most will. The Army prides itself on breaking people down and re-making them as it wants, but it has utterly failed to change Chris one bit. He added great colour to Regimental and Mess life, whether through his enthusiasm for Regimental history, his forming of the Regimental choir ("ma-ma-ma-ma!") or his difficulties with administration and punctuality. His stubbornness and erudition may have brought him into conflict at the start of his time in the QDG, but the same qualities now elicit fondness and respect. He is also remembered for his generosity – once accidentally spending over three thousand pounds on a KDG helmet – and his terrible driving – a hair-raising trip from BATUS down to Montana springs to mind.

Chris has now moved on to a more appetising role in the Cabinet Office and also thankfully got rid of his horrific beard. You'll see him at CavMem singing Sospan Fach at the top of his voice in the middle of a restaurant or swanning round Fulham in an astrakhan hat. He hasn't been spotted picnicking in his mess kit at Glyndebourne for a while though so perhaps he is changing a bit.

DCMH

Major James Lough

Major James Francis Lough, known by several nicknames during his service, from Lightning to Loughy to Lurky, commissioned into the Regiment in December 2009, alongside Rupert Robinson. These two new officers arrived in the hazy days following Op Herrick 9, with most of the Regiment spread around the snowy parts of Europe, honing their winter sports prowess and keeping the bars of Verbier busy. Naturally they were immediately brought to Dempsey Barracks to spend 6 weeks getting very good at Orderly Officer before moving onto the Troop Leaders' course. In between lessons there was plenty of time to relive student days as the course quickly became familiar with Bournemouth's nightlife. It was during this time that 'Lurky' was born, always able to track down his fellow troop leaders on the dance floor and yet conspicuously absent when it was time to buy a round.



antique Scimitar. It was this context where the Classic Tank Club was born and for the next three months, the young officers tended to and cared for these classic vehicles which invariably broke down on the line of departure; four vehicles in a Squadron leaguer was considered a pretty good effort.

As a reward for his hard work during the Regimental deployment to Canada, James was to lead the Nordic Ski Team for the winter season. Whilst James was sad not to be joining the Alpine team, he led the Nordic team with distinction.

James deployed on Op Herrick 15 in October 2011 and from the very outset was crucial to the Squadron's main effort of

providing route security and support to the more static battle-groups. James was a reliable and well-liked troop leader who would routinely help out his fellow officers, both in and out of contact. However, we all have our flaws. For James, it was a dislike of the primitive ablutions in our Forward Operating Base at Price; he disliked the facilities so much that he would avoid showering or washing at all costs. Whilst this was not so much of an issue when deployed on operations, his operator, Cpl Nick Maunder, could regularly be heard complaining from inside their turret. There was one exception – toothbrushing. James was routinely spotted walking to the ablutions with his toothbrush and a bottle of Fanta which, according to his Troop, was his preferred toothpaste. James' Troop also revealed that he not only loved a selfie, but specifically a war selfie. This fine leader of men would stop patrols, splash some dirt in his face, ruffle up his hair, grab the biggest gun he could find and then spend ten to fifteen minutes crafting the perfect, 'at war', look.

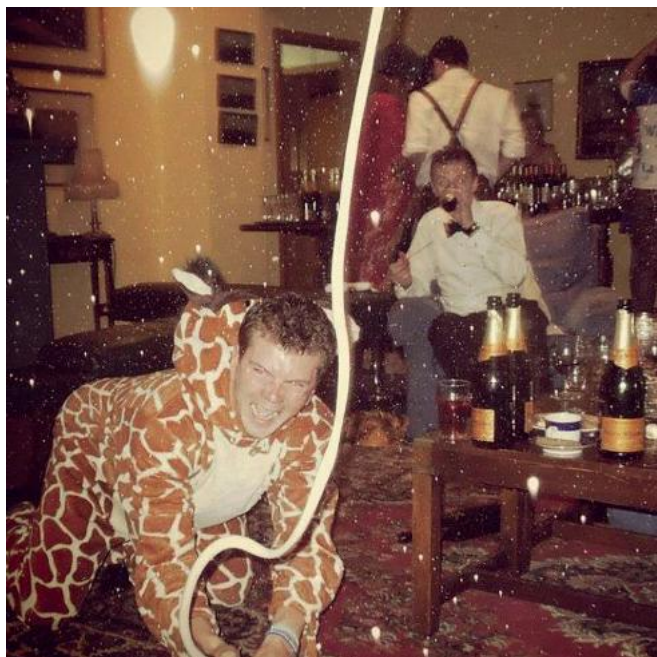
After completing this arduous course, James returned to Dempsey Barracks to begin the adventure as a fully-fledged Troop Leader. It was during these first few weeks where the mighty pigeon-chested 'Lurky,' showed his true colours. As a new officer, keen to earn his spurs in the Seniors' Mess on Waterloo Dinner night, James was eager to get involved. The Sgts trembled with fear as this Adonis of a man entered the playing field. The cabbage was released into the melée and James got stuck in. Five seconds later he was limping off with a broken foot – a great start! And so, the young officer began his career hobbling around camp in a set of Her Majesty's finest Silver Shadow trainers. It took the arrival of DQA as CO to lure Lough out of trainers and back into boots.

Things improved for James when, in July 2010, he deployed with the rest of the Regiment to Canada for three months. It was here that the troop leaders of B Squadron grew close to one another and their vehicles. Specifically, after the first rotation on the prairie the officers remarked that they were less combat officers fighting their vehicles at the forefront of the battlefield, but instead they were armoured vehicle enthusiasts who enjoyed playing with the

In late 2012, James moved to the role of Support Troop Leader in B Squadron and was enrolled on the Jungle Warfare Instructors Course. He successfully completed it and returned to the Mess ensuring everyone knew of his time in 'the salad.' He was then ideally placed to organise the B Squadron deployment to Brunei at the beginning of 2013, Ex Rukh Eagle. This half Squadron deployment involved a full jungle training package and a final exercise; testament to his diligence, hard work and ability to be comfortable while filthy. While the field craft of the Squadron was executed perfectly, it was Simon Farebrother's recreation of an old Squadron deployment photograph which was the real highlight of the exercise and can still be seen around the lines today.

From the salad to the plain; his next move was back to the Canadian prairie as part of the Temporary Directing Staff. Alongside Capt Toby Mossop, he was ran the Formation Recce ranges and acted as an observer mentor. This deployment involved many hours spent either on the prairie mentoring the Squadron or driving to and from it. It also involved numerous trips to dubious parts of Canada including the infamous 'Cowgirls,' in Calgary.

James returned from Canada and took over as A Squadron 2IC for Major Ed O'Brien as they conducted pre-deployment training for Op Herrick 20. Just before deploying, James did the same as every other grown adult – he developed chicken pox. After recovering from the pre-pubescent disease he caught up with the rest in Camp Bastion as they began the task of mentoring the Afghanistan security teams alongside the Americans. This deployment was more sedate than his first. Weekly, the QDG officers would meet up in the NAAFI for a coffee and snack whilst sharing stories from the week and relive moments from Mess life in Germany.



As a consequence of the Prime Minister's withdrawal timeline and a successful tour, A Squadron's deployment was shortened. It was with this early withdrawal that started a sequence of events which would change the fate of Loughy's love life. It was in the twilight years of his face potting chicken pox that James met his now wife, Caroline, at a friend's engagement drinks. It was with this that James entered the next phase of his Regimental career.

James returned to the QDG as the Operations Officer in March 2015 under Lt Col Dan Duff as the CO. James thrived in this role and despite sometimes enjoying the ivory tower a bit too much, he ensured successful regimental deployments to Malaysia, Sierra Leone and California. This success saw him promote to Major in July 2017 and with this promotion, a move to the Ministry of Defence where he worked on the Iraq desk, pro-

viding strategic advice and assisting with the coordination of high-profile engagements.

James finished his career with a short stint as the Executive Officer for the Royal Yeomanry. As the XO he oversaw the conversion of this unit to Jackal and their mobilisation on numerous Short-Term Training Teams. This Fulham-based role was ideal for James with it providing a suitable transition to the civilian world.

James has stood by many brother officers over his ten years in the military; a true blue, although he has miraculously escaped his service without ever having bought a round for any of said brother officers. It is only fitting to finish with a quote from one of his soldiers which sums him up perfectly: "Major Lough, a great officer, but walks like he has a pint glass on his head."

BW

Captain Ed Wilks

Eddie Wilks (recently rebranded Ed) began his affiliation with QDG in the dimly lit student halls of Exeter University after a brief flirt with the Rifles: forgivable – so many do. Following in the footsteps of Exeter giants like Mike Groves, Dave Boyce and (average sized) Duncan Wiggins, he was inspired to join the Regiment following a textbook Germany PO visit and 'confirmed' QDG well before Sandhurst. You might think this would have afforded him an opportunity to kick back, relax and perhaps enjoy the Commissioning Course. Not for our man Ed. Thrashing himself into the ground, he managed to achieve a remarkable feat: he secured the title of the Academy's 'most injured man', with more days on the biff than any other cadet in the intake, and yet still managed to win the Queen's Medal (the Officer Cadet who achieved the highest scores in military, practical and academic studies). To this day he insists this reflects his tactical acumen but we all know the Queen's Medal goes to the biggest nerd.



Quickly recovering, this time from squash-related temporary blindness, he moved to Troop Leaders and under the legendary tutelage of Judy Garland was whipped sharply into shape as a Formation Recce Troop Leader. Ed 'Wilcox' as the then Adjutant Harry Pilcher saw fit to introduce him, arrived at the Regiment in Paderborn in 2013, and joined B Sqn just as it was preparing to deploy to BATUS. Full of enthusiasm for his first appointment as a Troop Leader it was with a little surprise that Ed discovered he was in fact appointed as a Troop Corporal, this time under the (equally legendary?) tutelage of 2Lt Howard DG Paine. Cursed with the single least reliable CRV(T) in the fleet Ed spent a thoroughly rewarding two months suspended upside down changing gearboxes in the ECCP. However the real kick in the nuts was yet to come. Finally finishing the exercise, the B Sqn officers were looking forward to a spot of R&R over the border in the US. Excited murmurings of soon to come cav officer heroics in college town America filled the BATUS officers' accommodation block, but not for our man Ed. Range clean up party commander it was for him, and a week counting rogue portaloos on the Canadian Prairie was his reward.

Back to Germany and over to C Sqn (the Brigade Reconnaissance Force) and Sqn Intelligence Officer as the Regiment was spinning up for Op HERRICK 20. This was a role Ed had a chance to firmly sink his teeth into. He rapidly earned himself a reputation

as 'a bit of a brain' and was unsurprisingly the winner of Col Will's Golden Pen – as just about the only officer capable of writing a coherent essay. His last-minute assistance educating fellow subalterns in the correct use of the semi-colon; is appreciated; to this day;? Ed deployed early to Afghanistan and by the time the Sqn arrived was firmly in the seat. He truly excelled as IO, relentlessly working to steer the Sqn onto 122mm rockets threatening Camp Bastion and keep them away from the worst of Helmand's IEDs – or as then SSM Dan Brown would put it, "punching holes in the insurgency". It was testament to the OC's confidence in Ed's assessments that he agreed to return, on Ed's advice, to the same 5x5km patch of 'Rocket Box Echo' quite so many times. The

poor Helmandi farmers were quite bemused by the seventh time two CH47s loaded with 62 multicam spacemen descended on their back gardens. Never passing up a chance to get out of the ops room he was drafted in as a ringer in the troops – normally dicked to carry both the ECM brown and GPMG.

Post Herrick, Ed moved onto a brief stint as A Sqn 2ic before heading off to the nascent 77 Brigade and a posting in industry (yes that is a thing). He spent six months learning the trade secrets of Vodafone in Newbury and London around heading back to PJHQ as the 77 Bde LO. After bouncing around 77 Bde for one more year in the ops centre, and not forgetting some particularly brutal reconstructive ankle surgery, he came back to the Cavalry as Adjutant of the Royal Yeomanry in Fulham. Here he was reunited with a few old QDG faces: James Lough as XO and Jason 'Butch' Davies as RSM. As is often the case with QDGs, Ed's time in Fulham proved a launch pad for his transition out of the Army. Leaving from his role in the RY, and after disappearing off on a very typically Wilks overland journey across Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia, he has landed back in London.

Ed will be sorely missed. In the Mess he is remembered as one of the infamous TBOs (Tall Boring Officers), rarely seen without a refreshing glass of orange and lemonade in hand facing down the Mess bully across the bum warmer. The Regiment is less without him, and probably slightly more alcoholic. We wish him the very best.

REMF

Captain Charlie Carter

"Mr Carter" ... "Which Mr Carter?" ... "Charlie Carter" ... "Which Charlie Carter?" ... "Charles Edward Carter" ... "Which Charles Edward Carter?" ... "BIG Charlie Carter!" "Ahhhh ok, got you – big tall one, looks grumpy, funny bloke?" ... "Yes, that's him!"

"Big" Charlie arrived at 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards in July 2015, as part of the first batch of Troop Leaders to know only Robertson Barracks, Swanton Morley. The son, grandson, great grandson of a long and distinguished line of Royal Engineer Officers, it was inevitable that Charlie, always one to see sense, would choose to join the QDG.

Charlie's path to the QDG, took him via Hong Kong, Queen's College Taunton, a brief stint in the City and that well established breeding ground for all Cavalry Officers, Newcastle University. He also arrived minus one kidney, thanks to a nasty Rugby tackle, and in many ways this is symbolic of the single-minded Charlie we have all come to know so well: determined to join the Army and to beat the system, despite all the inevitable blockages this put in his way.

Upon arrival at Regimental Duty, Charlie became one of three (unrelated) QDG Officers to share the surname Carter and perhaps rather more remarkably, one of two Charles Edward Carters. The pre-existing Charlie immediately took on the nickname of "Bad Charlie" and by virtue only of being the newest to arrive, this Charlie became "Good Charlie"; despite a lagged mattress's objections.

Posted to A Sqn, Charlie quickly won the friendship, respect and loyalty of all he worked with, most notably building a strong relationship with his Tp Sgt. His first Regimental Christmas will



live long in the memory and after a few, eager drinks with his new Tp Sgt, the brand new Tp Ldr quickly found himself outmatched. Needless to say the Orderly Officer and (then) Sgt Nav quickly found out that a 6ft 3 and equally broad Tp Ldr (complete with crutches and 'moon boot') can actually be quite heavy.

Charlie's next stop was Sierra Leone, where he supported the first Short Term Training Team (STTT) to the country since the Ebola epidemic. He returned to the country for four months as 7 Brigade LO, where he worked directly to the Defence Attaché in the British High Commission.

Following his return, Charlie deployed with C Sqn on Ex Diamondback as Sqn Ops, before moving to RHQ as the Intelligence Officer. It

was around this time that he took up the much-coveted position of Officers' Mess Senior Subaltern, alongside also picking up his trusty sidekick: Haggis, the Border Terrier. As IO, Charlie and Haggis found themselves sharing an office with his namesake: the other Charles Edward Carter and his Cocker Spaniel, Flash. The four quickly became inseparable and have been an excellent team, working exceptionally hard to enable all of the activities the QDG have conducted over the past year or so.

Charlie now leaves the QDG heading to pastures new, more precisely Malaysia and a career farming black soldier flies. However, before he does, he will marry the wonderful Kirstie, his long suffering and equally straight-talking girlfriend throughout RMAS and the entirety of his time with the QDG. Between the three of them, Charlie, Kirstie and Haggis will make an unstoppable team. We wish them the very best as they move on. We have every confidence he will thrive under the many challenges civilian life can throw at him.

MJC

Captain Max McKechnie

I have been given a word count of approximately 800 words to try and encapsulate the enigma that is Max McKechnie. Many would balk at such a task, fearful that they would not be able to do justice to a subject who during research for this valette was described to the writer as the man who; 'became so notorious so fast'. I would like to say that the apprehension most would feel at this task is to me somehow surmountable, that perhaps I alone had tamed the beast and could write from a position of authority. Alas as all will testify, no one has ever tamed the beast nor could they. That notoriety I mentioned we will come to but first some scene setting;

Max entered the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in May 2012, he was bright eyed



and bushy haired (very bushy) and eager, as so many Oxford graduates are, to not let anyone feel intimidated by his intellect but to keep his head down and do as well as he could on the course. I'm told it almost never came up in conversation. The first inklings that the Regiment Selection Board had delivered a truly indomitable character came towards the end of his time at the Academy when he caught a fortuitous glimpse of the Army's FOE for the coming year. Max took it upon himself, against the advice of his contemporary Freddie Woolland, to call up the then Adjutant Harry Pilcher to let him know what was in store for the QDG. Ironical that as a future Adjutant himself, this is exactly the sort of uppity behaviour that would have sent Max reeling with indignation into a fit of incoherent babbling.

Max joined the Regiment, following a blissful summer Troop Leaders course in Bovington, in late 2012, just as MST was ramping up in earnest for Herrick 20. This period of his service I am unsighted to, being a year his junior, so the reader will benefit from hearsay and second hand accounts of the 2Lt who was not just seen (as they ought to be) but also heard and heard often. Holding court in the bear pit of an evening would cement the foundations of his reputation as a boldly opinionated member of the Mess, never shy to throw in his two cents worth on any topic be it within his sphere of understanding or not. A quote from the wagers book written during this pre-tour period reads: "2Lt McKechnie, as ever speaking out of turn, wagers Capt Jackson that he can complete the PFA course on his bicycle quicker than Captain Jackson on his scooter". The wager is concluded on the following page summarily awarding victory to Roly Jackson. This would not be the only time that Max's prowess on a bicycle would be overstated. Years later, this time as a junior Captain, he would assert that he had exerted himself to such an extent whilst competing in a long distance cycle race that he would be 'calorie neutral' should he eat 14kgs of Cadbury's milk chocolate. He had of course misplaced the decimal point in his calculations and had that dose of chocolate not have likely proved fatal then rest assured that the Mess would have forced him to atone for this mistake with a 'can't be done' wager.

I worry that by spending a paragraph, as I am about to, on Max's many very impressive accomplishments that I will disappoint his friends and contemporaries who would wish to see a further twist of the knife. It cannot be omitted however that on leaving the Army the Regiment does lose a very talented officer. A Mullens Cup winner, Max had real talent in the field, he would subsequently take that winning team out to Kenya and gain distinction as a very effective troop leader. When employed in a staff role as a junior Captain during the writing of the new Battle Craft Syllabus he would impress the Fusilier Lt Col leading the team to the extent that a letter would reach QDG offering Max the opportunity to be the Operations Officer of 1st Fusiliers (an



unheard of gesture from the Infantry). As a Mess member he would often delight his fellow livers in with enthusiastic piano recitals and during bouts of 5 minute fancy dress the image of Max as a 5'10" teddy bear (as he always was) while indelibly imprinted on my retinas will be sorely missed.

Max moves on to pursuing his 10 year plan to acquire a house in Zone One, which if you have had to follow his resettlement process as closely as I have, is a very detailed and uniquely boring plan. It will be for the men and women of JP Morgan, his wife Gretta and daughter Isabelle now to attempt to tame the Gak beast and despite the overriding tone of this tribute it really is their gain and our loss.

JPC







