



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

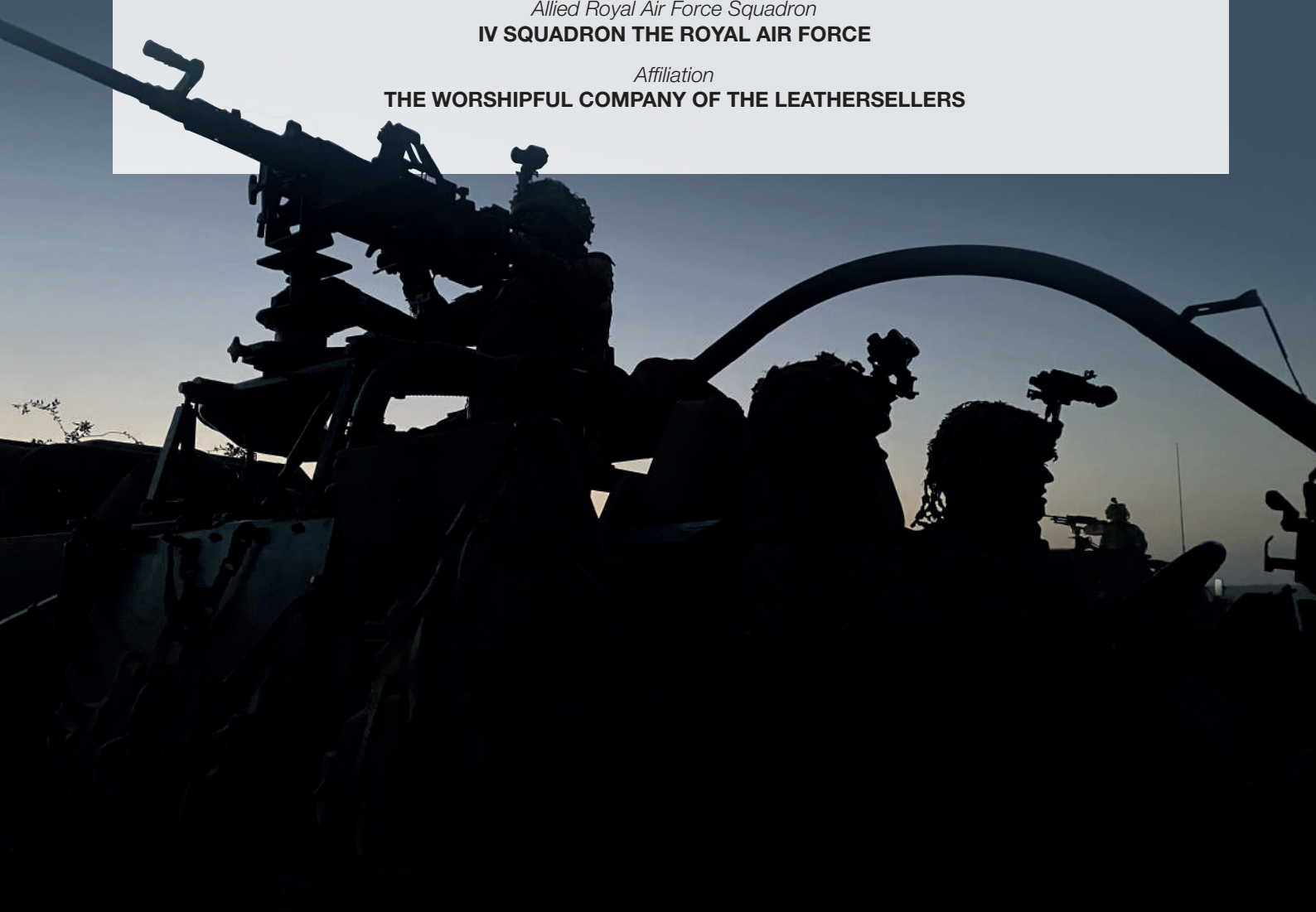
Allied Regiments
THE GOVERNOR GENERAL'S HORSE GUARDS (ROYAL CANADIAN ARMoured CORPS)
THE 11TH CAVALRY (FRONTIER FORCE) PAKISTAN ARMY
1ST/15TH ROYAL NEW SOUTH WALES LANCERS
PANZERGRENADIERBATAILLON 35 (AUSTRIAN ARMY)
1ST RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENT (SRI LANKAN ARMoured CORPS)
1ST SPECIAL SERVICE BATTALION (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 J Curry

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Colonel of the Regiment's Foreword

The year 2020 will be recorded by history as a most extraordinary time in which every aspect of life was dominated by the Pandemic. Rarely does our country face such a serious threat that affects the lives of every citizen, especially in peacetime. It is at such a time that the value of our Armed Forces is brought into stark relief as the nation looks to our Service personnel in its hour of need. We can all feel an immense sense of pride in the way the Queen's Dragoon Guards played its part in Operation RESCRIPT, the military contribution to the national response to COVID-19 as described in this Journal.

Despite COVID 19, the way the Regiment successfully stepped up to the plate to take on an enhanced role on Operation CABRIT and prepared Cassino Troop for deployment to Poland was hugely impressive. The 'Troop' is a squadron size part of a US Army battle-group and is the UK contribution to the NATO-led deterrence force in Poland. Of note, this commitment was originally allocated to our paired Army Reserve Light Cavalry Regiment, The Royal Yeomanry, but the pandemic disrupted their ability to conduct collective training, so QDG was tasked to force generate the bulk of the command element, based on B Squadron. Thus, two thirds of Cassino Troop are Royal Yeomen, which has been an outstanding opportunity for Regular-Reserve integration and bringing our Regiments closer together. The strength of our regimental family was once again highlighted by the efforts of the Regimental Comrades Association (RCA) in raising funds to ensure all members of Cassino Troop knew that they were not forgotten and all, irrespective of capbadge, were sent a present and their families a hamper for Christmas.

Unfortunately, the pandemic removed so many social events from our diaries, including the annual Officers' Dinner, Cavalry Memorial Parade, the RCA Cardiff Reunion as well as Branch events. I joined some of my QDG contemporaries via Zoom to watch the livestream of the Cavalry Memorial service, which was a great initiative by the event organisers.

As we all hibernated and went online, so did most of the QDG social activity but the RCA network of branches enabled us



As we all hibernated and went online, so did most of the QDG social activity but the RCA network of branches enabled us to keep a keener eye on the welfare of our veterans



encourage your mates to join up, it costs less than the price of a couple of pints!

COVID has not prevented us from making progress in our efforts to enhance the connectedness across all parts of the Regimental family, by which we can build a community that will be of benefit to all its members, serving and retired



to keep a keener eye on the welfare of our veterans, especially during the lonely months of lockdown. This demonstrates to me the value of RCA membership and I would dearly love to see more members of our Regimental family join the association. Current membership sits at less than 1/3rd of the membership of the QDG Comrades Facebook group. Please

alike, as well as maximise the power of our network. Our Army Cadet Force and Combined Cadet Force detachments give us a firm link into Welsh society and offer excellent opportunities to improve diversity in our recruit pipeline. It would be good to develop an eco-system whereby QDG Cadets feel part of the family, join QDG and then return as experienced Cadet Force Adult Volunteers to inspire the next generation to make the same journey.

We are also ensuring those serving away from the Regiment are kept close and I welcome the Commanding Officer's initiative to form F Squadron, comprised of all those at Extra Regimental Employment, who will be invited back to the Regiment each year for an annual update, career management and no doubt a drink or two! No longer will the only correspondence with those



Our Welshness has been diluted due to a combination of the RAC and Capita's corps and role-based approach to soldier inflow as well as the impact of being based in Norfolk



at Regimental Duty be confined to an unwelcome mess bill! Harnessing this serving network has enabled us to monitor developments in the ongoing Integrated Review and the news of a significant injection of cash for Defence was very welcome. We can draw comfort that Light Cavalry is cheap, capable, deployable, useable and in demand as it is committed to operations in Poland and now Mali. The Light Cavalry community of 6 regiments (3 Regular and 3 Reserve) is innovative and has a very collegiate approach to capability development and exemplary Regular-Reserve integration. Indeed, the new Welsh Yeomanry troop established in Cardiff is an example of the depth of our relationship with the Royal Yeomanry. For the first time, our soldiers who leave and settle in South Wales can continue to serve as Light Cavalry Crewman with the Army Reserve and operate alongside QDG.

Work is underway to bring the Regiment up to full manning with Welsh and Marches recruits. Our Welshness has been diluted due to a combination of the RAC and Capita's corps and role-based approach to soldier inflow as well as the impact of being based in Norfolk, but we can do more to shape our destiny. We are developing our relationship with Capita's Recruiting staff and educating

them on QDG so that they can better sell the Regiment to candidates from our Recruiting Area. We will also reinforce our physical presence in Wales and are enhancing our social media presence to strengthen the QDG brand in our heartland and broaden our appeal. As our role is to operate amongst the population, to engage and understand the environment and pass back timely and accurate information to the commander, it is vital that we can effectively engage with men and women from all cultures and faiths. Having a more diverse organisation made up of men and women of many ethnic, cultural, linguistic and faith backgrounds is not political correctness – it is an operational imperative.

Our wonderful Trustees have yet again been busy managing our finances, supporting those in need and ensuring that not only does our museum survive the lockdown, but that the cultural heritage of our Regiment is continually enhanced. We should all be grateful for their expertise, generosity with their time

and dedication that enables so many of the fun things that our soldiers enjoy to happen, in an era when the public purse is less forthcoming. I am particularly pleased that the Trust has generously supported the publication of a new Regimental History, which will cover 1959 to the present day. If you want to feature in it, please forward copies of photographs, documents and any written accounts of your service or particular events to our Regimental Curator, Mark Evans at Home Headquarters, 1st

The Queen's Dragoon Guards, Home Headquarters, Maindy Barracks, Cardiff, CF14 3YE ast-curator2@cardiffcastle museum.org.uk.

The year 2021 offers exciting prospects, not least the end of this Pandemic and the chance for all of us to gather once again. For the serving Regiment it promises operational deployments and the chance to do the job it does so well and that will ensure the Regiment remains First and Foremost!

Colonel Commandant's Foreword

It was reputedly the Chinese who came up with the curse 'May you live in interesting times' – a curse because 'interesting' in this context means something between 'turbulent' and 'terrifying' – so it is ironic that the interesting times stemmed ultimately from China. However, the Royal Armoured Corps have risen to the challenges and as always have stepped up to assist in this time of national crisis. We have supported Op RESCRIPT widely, including staff support in HQs, running Testing Centres and units on standby for COVID support forces; we have worked from home without diminishing our operational output and whilst there is always further to go, have become used to doing e-business. As Armoured Commanders we all endeavour to master the ability to monitor two nets, read a map, write a SOC, and direct a gunner all whilst the turret is facing the opposite way to direction of travel. These traits have been tested to new levels as we juggle the multiple technological moderns that we find ourselves currently tied to.

This is not to say, of course, that remote working will become the rule across the board in the future. We remain a people organisation and remote working is a reversionary mode. The camaraderie of the Royal Armoured Corps, as of the British Army in general, is one of its most precious assets. But, as much as we enjoy this camaraderie, we are not inward looking. We are all linked by social media; smart phones enable instantaneous transmission of footage from anywhere in the world. We must be fully integrated with this, and exploit the opportunities offered by social media in a way we have not been able to before. Our plan is to harness our growing social media feeds to improve our message and extend its reach and by so doing, improve both recruiting and retention.

Having mentioned recruiting; our manning is generally good, though there is more to do. As a Corps we should certainly be attractive to those thinking of joining us. There are opportunities to deploy our capabilities – in Mali, Estonia, the Balkans and Poland. There is convincing evidence that we are a popular choice of Arm, with five candidates for every single RAC place at Sandhurst. Those that we do accept have vindicated their selection by their outstanding performance. Recently, the top ICSC(L) student was an Armoured Corps officer, as was the



We are all linked by social media; smart phones enable instantaneous transmission of footage from anywhere in the world



the Western Military District, we must maintain a sovereign and credible military capability, with the power to deter our enemies and inspire confidence in our

Sword of Honour winner at Sandhurst in the Spring. The quality of those we recruit is as good as it ever was. These are all positive factors, but I am conscious that we may well need to change as a result of the Integrated Review.

The lessons from COVID show the impact to a country if not fully prepared for a threat. With ever growing numbers of Russian armour in the Western Military District, we must maintain a sovereign and credible military capability, with the power to deter our enemies and inspire confidence in our

allies. Having recently returned from Gotland, Sweden where I was fortunate enough to see newly delivered and highly impressive Leopard 2A5s; one could not be more struck by their approach to Total Defence. With both the Swedish and Norwegians increasing their investment in Armour, its and therefore our importance cannot be forgotten. This is a matter of balance to enable an all Domain capability throughout the spectrum of conflict. We 'combined arms' and embraced jointery to leverage capability that, as the Israelis found, was wanting during the early hours of the Yom Kippur War. We need a nationally credible armoured capability as part of that balance and can ill afford to be found wanting.

Commanding Officer's Foreword

2020 has been a busy, challenging, fluid, demanding, rewarding, unforgettable, noteworthy year. And like no other. It's actually rather difficult to summarise. It has featured the highs of an outstanding performance on Exercise Wessex Storm and the pride of our soldiers in responding to the pandemic and the lows of having to cancel some training activities and remove so much of the 'fun' of soldiering (sports, adventurous training, social events, overseas travel) to comply with government direction.

What is clear to me, as it will be to you as you read this journal, is that against a maudlin backdrop of tremendous uncertainty and a febrile national atmosphere Queen's Dragoon Guard soldiers have delivered. Every time. Without fail. Being 'at readiness' has, undoubtedly, helped. But I attribute our successes far more to the unerring quality of our soldiers and officers. They go about all tasks with characteristic professionalism, humour, humility and care for others. That approach is underwritten by pride, camaraderie and the unstinting support they receive from family which includes, in no small measure, that of the wider regimental family.

The year began (seemingly a lifetime ago and in a different world) with the build-up to Exercise Wessex Storm. The exercise lived up to its name; we met Storms Ciara and Dennis head on. This was the first time since 2013 that the whole Regiment had exercised together – from tooth to tail – and the first time since operations in Afghanistan in 2011/12 that all three sabre squadrons had deployed together. It was important then to get back into the battlegroup business and enhance our reputation as an operationally-ready regiment. The brigade-led exercise put 5000 soldiers into the field. We had realistic frictions not only of tough environmental conditions but of genuine battlefield congestion, flanking force fratricide and follow on forces who acted (or not) on the intelligence we provided. The QDG battlegroup was 'validated' as early as possible and came away with a strong training report that sets us up for operations in 2021. We were also able to leverage the exercise to conduct low level experimentation. We are grateful to several retired QDGs in defence industries who supplied us with early prototypes and joined us on an industry visitor's day.

Shortly after Exercise Wessex Storm we refocused our efforts on supporting the national response to COVID-19. Queen's Dragoon Guard soldiers operated throughout the east and north-west of England on discrete tasks in



support of Operation RESCRIPT. This ranged from ambulance driving and delivering personal protective equipment to establishing mobile testing stations and supporting mass testing in both Liverpool and Manchester. Additionally, we supported local government departments with planning officers. Each a bespoke, unique and short notice task it demanded much from our people; you will not be in the least surprised to hear me affirm that our soldiers excelled, displaying compassion and innovation in equal measure.

In the summer we were able to resume more familiar activity, having adjusted working practices to account for new norms. We conducted regimental firing alongside our paired regiment - The Royal Yeomanry - in Warcop in July. Concurrently we force prepared a hybrid regular and reserve squadron - Cassino Troop - for its deployment to Poland. Led by Major Ben Matthews, Cassino Troop was something of a first. All arms, majority Reserve (including all attachments) but led by a Regular QDG command spine, it deployed on Operation CABRIT in September for six months. Operating as part of a US Army battlegroup, the Squadron is contributing to the NATO-led deterrence on Europe's eastern flank. Its inception raised challenges, but it has served as an accelerant to our relationship and highlighted mutual dependencies and benefits. The relationship continues to thrive, evidenced in splendid fashion by the support of comrades from both regiments who so generously gifted hampers to the families of every soldier deployed.

During the autumn we ran a superb Mullens Cup (this year a two-day mounted and dismounted patrol across Salisbury Plain) and a hugely demanding survival patrol across Otterburn. Both

have helped develop resilience and robustness which are essential qualities of a reconnaissance soldier, particularly as we aspire to increase our reach.

As I look ahead, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards has the best forecast of events in the British Army. Bar none. In 2021 Queen's Dragoon Guard soldiers will continue to deliver operations in Poland, train in Cyprus and Louisiana and deploy - twice - to Mali on Operation NEWCOMBE. Operating as part of the United Nations-led peacekeeping force our soldiers will bring their reconnaissance expertise to bear by operating across vast areas of challenging terrain to deter violent extremist groups from attacking the local population. Following a coup the situation remains precarious and the military contribution vital.

Upon recovery from operations we intend to - and we must - double-down on sport, winter sports, adventurous training and overseas activities to recoup our losses from 2020 and recuperate and retain our people. Alongside this we have a coherent plan to bolster Welsh and Marches recruitment and better nurture those in training.

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards remains at readiness. We are on operations now. We are preparing for operations in Africa. We are living with COVID-19 but neither letting it define nor restrict our non-discretionary outputs. We are institutionalising our relationship with The Royal Yeomanry. And we are reinforcing our recruiting efforts. We, the serving regiment, have the privilege of service at home and abroad and the opportunity to add to our great regiment's proud history. I thank all members of the regiment - from soldier to spouse, comrade to family member - for your support in helping us remain 'First and Foremost'.

Honours and Awards



State Awards

MBE WO2 Dave Evans (160 Bde CTT)



Service Medals

Nil

Commander's Awards

Chief of the General Staff Commendation - Corporal Gwilliam (REME)

Commander Field Army Commendation - Sgt Wilkins

Training Awards

Light Cavalry Crew Commanders Course Top Student: Cpl De Jongh

REGIMENTAL AWARDS

Queen Elizabeth Trophy

Sgt Wilkins

The Leathersellers' Trophy

Cpl Pugh

The Mann Trophy

LCpl Murphy 611

Diary of Events 2020

January

06-17 CSTTX Germany
26-02 March Ex WESSEX STORM

Feb

Throughout Wessex Storm

March

23-03 April Ex AFRICAN LION

April

18-7 May CSF Support to East of England
Ambulance Service
27-4 May Nottingham Regional Testing Centre
(RTC)
28-5 May Lincoln (RTC)
29-17 May Mobile Testing Units

May

4-17 Javelin Operators Course
18-22 Javelin Ex on STANTA
18-5 June Panther Comds and Drivers Course
22-31 Easter Leave Block 1

June

1-26 Jackal Drivers Course
3-7 7x Comd Visit
1-9 Recce Skills Concentration
10-11 ACMTs
15 -17 Leadership Development
15-26 Lt Cav Reserve Tactics Pre Course
20-28 Easter Leave Block 2
25-8 July PNCO Cadre
26-12 July Ex Yeomanry Venture



Ex WESSEX STORM – Sgt Edwards helps his Tp Ldr with map reading



Sunset over Salisbury Plain

July

12-31 Regimental Ranges
6-31 August MTUs

August

8-31 Summer Leave

September

1-11 Ex CASSINO KING
9-13 Mullens Cup Prep
14-18 Mullens Cup
21-25 CASSINO Tp Leave (PDT)
23-25 Sniper Ranges
28 CASSINO Tp Deploy
28-2 October Ex EVASION EAGLE

October

5-23 Inflatable Wall Training System
5 - 11 Dec HCR Basic Sniper Operator Course
(Bulford)
10 -12 Long Weekend
13-14 UKSF Brief
24 -29 Ex Slims Stand
24-1 Nov Half-term
26-11 Nov Jav Op Course

November

10-21 Ex Dynamic Victory
9-19 Crew Commanders Pre Course
(Scots DG)
2-23 Ex Cerberus
20-9 Dec PNCO Cadre
21-23 Long Weekend
22-27 Ex Bald Eagle

December

7-11 Cold Weather Course CASSINO Tp
8-9 Sharpshooter CQM
12 Christmas Leave

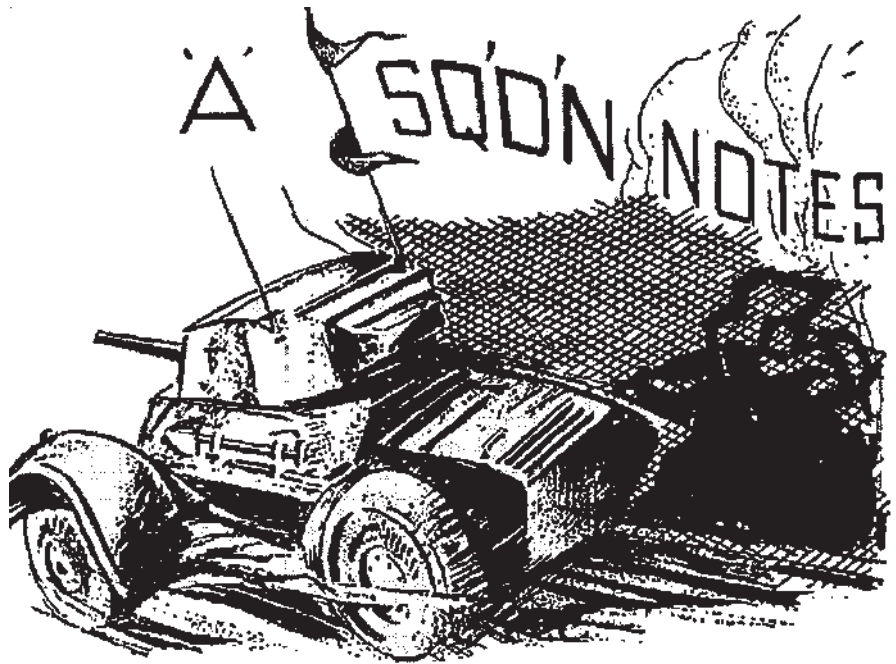
A Squadron

Throughout all of recorded history, mankind has had one common goal. It has always sought to gain an insight in the thoughts and actions of the gods. From the Oracle at Delphi to present-day megachurches, the mere mortals of the world have used whatever means available to gain a glimpse of exactly this. Within this fine regiment, it is no different, albeit the means are of a less spiritual nature. Yearly, all eagerly await the publication of the journal article of the first squadron of the 'First and Foremost', A Sqn QDG. This year is no different, and I hope it sates their hunger for another year.

2020 has been a year to remember. When my predecessor, Charlie Ruggles-Brise, wrote in the 2019 iteration of this journal of 'another busy year ahead', I suspect that he did not know how prescient that statement would be. It will of course come as no surprise that the activities of the Sqn have, much like the remainder of the UK, been focused upon the battle with Coronavirus. Nonetheless, I hope to illustrate that despite this tumultuous period, we have managed to achieve a plethora of other activity whilst also making the most of the hand dealt to us.

In what would unwittingly turn out for many to be the only overseas 'holiday' of 2020, the year began with a number of A Sqn personnel acting in a supporting capacity on CATT/CAST in Sennelager, Germany. This was a major event prior to Exercise Wessex Storm and saw LCpls Diamond, Protheroe and Murphy well-rehearsed in setting up tents and sitting behind computer screens, skills in which every soldier should hone their expertise. Significantly it offered the opportunity for members of the Squadron to reacquire themselves with the ancient town of Paderborn, with the best cultural insights apparently to be found inside of Triangles Nightclub.

For the remainder of the Squadron, "2020 proper" started with all hands-on deck in preparation for Exercise Wessex Storm, which would see the QDG validated for operations. Having returned from Christmas leave, there was undoubtedly a sharp change in pace



from the New Year's festivities as the requirements for a major exercise swiftly came to the forefront. The Tp Sgts in particular must be commended for turning this around succinctly but thoroughly, with the Squadron departing in good order to the Plain.

With arrangements finalised, we subsequently rolled out the door in late-January for the exercise proper. Wishful hopes of a mild winter were immediately dashed as the Squadron faced weather more reminiscent of the Eastern Front circa 1942. Fortunately, at this stage of the exercise, some luxuries were afforded, with indoor sleeping and warm showers in the best accommodation that 1950s Britain could afford. Sgt Hatton was particularly fond of the accommodation, reminding him as it did of his childhood in rural Wales.

The initial exercise period was a steady one. Hard groundwork on the tank park set the conditions for the Squadron to deploy on low-level refresher periods on the ground. In this time, the Tp Cpls were fundamental to training their subordinates, and to them the credit must go for how well

this was achieved. This training was rewarded with a periodic night in-camp, with all the afforded comforts, which had many saying 'this isn't so bad.'

The higher powers, however, decided that they would punish our arrogance, namely in thinking that we could escape their reaches. This was done, of course,

by means of the weather. The instant that the Squadron's ability to freely return to camp was removed, the sky opened in Old Testament fashion. With three weeks in the field upcoming, the first two named storms of 2020 were unleashed to ensure that not a moment of this would be spent dry. Indeed, in a cruel twist of fate, Storm Dennis coincided with a 70km road move throughout the Salisbury AO. This was undoubtedly a low moment for many, not least LCpl Protheroe who had some interesting opinions to share on the utility of open architecture vehicles. It is testament to the spirit of all the soldiers that they persevered through in the face of the adverse conditions.

With the end of Wessex Storm, the Squadron eagerly anticipated a few weeks in camp prior to some well-earned leave, and perhaps a bit of travel to warmer climes to forget about the past few months. In particular, ten individuals looked forward to a rock-climbing expedition in Oman organised by Sgt Sudlow and Lt Martel, in what would no doubt have been a welcome reward for their time on Salisbury Plain.

Meanwhile though, China's experiments in unusual cuisine were beginning to be noticed. Few could have even contemplated even at this late stage that the news reports of a new version of Coronavirus would have such sudden nor far-reaching implications. Nonetheless, with just two weekends at home under our belts, a sudden and sharp lockdown placed the entire Regiment into an imposed self-isolation period in RBMS.

It is at this point that the Prime Minister called for the aid of the military in tackling the new enemy, and he of course turned to his right-hand men, the 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. With notice to move timings apparently carrying no



Charlie Ruggles-Brise, wrote in the 2019 iteration of this journal of 'another busy year ahead', I suspect that he did not know how prescient that statement would be



tangible meaning, we were stood up to prepare for numerous MACA taskings, wheresoever we were required.

A Squadron were initially called up to support the East Anglia Ambulance Service in driving Covid patients between hospitals in the region. Cpls Couch and Parsons took charge of over a quarter of the available Squadron workforce and ably ran A Squadron's contribution. Whilst ostensibly under the auspices of Lt Cooper of C Squadron, much authority was delegated to them to run the task. It is a major accomplishment that they were able to take charge of the situation and run it so smoothly.

Despite these efforts though, Coronavirus continued to ravage the UK. The decision was made that further support was required and A Squadron was once more sent into the fray.

The most prominent of these actions was the QDG's assistance to Mobile Testing Units (MTUs), which took place from mid-April. A Squadron complete was rapidly mobilised to the far reaches of the East of England, delivering daily testing to such exotic locations as Lowestoft and Skegness. No element was left untouched, as even the LAD were called upon to make up the necessary workforce. It was a particular baptism of fire for 2Lts Allington, Al-Khamiri and Carter who, having only recently arrived from Sandhurst, were launched straight into leading teams on the frontline. Of them I am incredibly jealous; few new Troop Leaders are fortunate enough to arrive straight onto a deployment without even having completed Phase 2 training. They now proudly join Capt Brockless

as the most operationally experienced officers in the Mess.

It should be noted, however, that even at this, the most severe stage of restrictions, the vision of a number of NCOs within the Squadron enabled some key training to take place. At a low-level, the Cpls and Sgts managed to instigate a series of rigorous fieldcraft lessons on the barracks training area, something that offered a welcome break from in-camp isolation. Particular commendation must go to Cpl Turner who, ably assisted by LCpl Hickmott, managed to design and run a Javelin Operators Course, all in the context of navigating the minefield that is Covid restrictions. A meticulously planned and executed three-week course saw a new generation of operators qualified across the

regiment, with A Sqn's own LCpl Murphy placing top of the cadre.

The easing of Covid restrictions in July saw a return to more usual regimental life. Whilst a number of personnel were again tasked to conduct Mobile Testing, the majority of the Squadron deployed to Warcop on three weeks of regimental ranges. For most this was a welcome return to the normal battle rhythm, and more importantly a chance to see the world outside of Norfolk, even

if they had to settle with the marginal improvement of Cumbria.

It was also at this point that a change in command took place. Charlie Ruggles-Brise, having for two years led the Squadron from strength to strength, handed over the reins to me at the beginning of July. I am immensely grateful to him for the smoothness of this transition. Socrates famously said that 'societies grow great when old men plant trees whose shade they may not make use of.' Whilst I can only apologise to Charlie for the implied slight on his age, it is with this statement in mind that I thank him for handing me an organisation that is so well-prepared for the new tasks that lie ahead in 2021.

Into the post-summer leave period, A Sqn was again immediately thrust into the action with two back to back exercises in September. Mullens Cup

was a chance to shake-out and compete for the title of being the most adept Tp in the regiment. All performed admirably, however of note was Cpl Flower's performance, having last-minute been thrown into leading a team with little preparation or training behind them, achieving a strong performance in the process.

Immediately after this, everyone was again deployed to Otterburn on a SERE training event, which turned out to be even more gnarly than we feared. The highlight of this was watching our trained killers rapidly dispatch and dismember all manner of creatures, from chickens to crickets, in a fashion that would have had even Bear Grylls on the phone to PETA.

The final foray of the year was yet again an unexpected one. November, for A Sqn, promised to be a period of focused

A Squadron complete was rapidly mobilised to the far reaches of the East of England

Charlie Ruggles-Brise, having for two years led the Squadron from strength to strength, handed over the reins to me

Having finished the building on the left, they would soon start on the building on the right



activity. For many, a trip to German stamping grounds of old was looked forward to, courtesy of the requirement to play civilians for a Sandhurst exercise in Bavaria.

Alas it was not to be. Coronavirus dictated the agenda for one final time in 2020. With days to go, the Squadron was stood up to deploy to Pontins Southport to assist in the mass testing of Liverpool. Upon arrival at the camp itself, the mantra of 'civvies pay thousands dozens for this' appeared to be founded. Nevertheless, the anticipated levels of despondency were nowhere to be seen, with the atmosphere being decidedly more cheery than could possibly have been predicted. In part, credit can go to SSgt Comley's tales of his own holidays there, which had many incredulous that they should be so lucky to stay at such a prestigious 'resort'. More significant to morale however was the fact that all were afforded greater luxury than they would receive in-camp, particularly in having their own toaster and hot and cold running water.

Concurrently to our expedition into the wilderness of the Northwest, the cancellation of numerous trawls and exercises meant that further activity could be undertaken in camp. In a time-honoured ritual, A Squadron yet again chose to receive the vehicle fleet for a number of weeks, fixing them in order to hand them over to someone else. The added frictions

of minimal workforce and condensed timelines only seemed to further highlight the futility of the task. Nonetheless, some stellar work from SSgt Reyes-Contreras and Sgts Benfield and Wilkins meant that this was achieved, and to an impeccable standard.

To further add to the list of impossible tasks, Lt Al-Khamiri and Sgt Pitt were also assigned with running the PNCO Cadre on STANTA. A Sqn again performed exceptionally well on this course. Of particular merit were the performances of Tpr Williams 261, who received the award for Most Improved and Tpr Haden who placed as Top Student. A strong showing all round.

In and amongst all of this Regimental and Squadron activity, there have been plenty of individual achievements to note. LCpl Murphy was awarded with the Mann Trophy for best Tpr of 2020, whilst Sgt Wilkins received the Queen Elizabeth Trophy for best SNCO in the Regiment followed swiftly by a Commander Field Army's Commendation. Cpl Hutchings received a note of commendation for applying Basic

Life Support to an elderly man who had collapsed whilst he was on charitable work in Dereham, and not to be forgotten are the eight individuals who volunteered

to return to Poland on Op CABRIT to aid our partners in the Royal Yeomanry.

With 2020 now behind us, I would like to leave a few parting comments. This has been a year in which A Squadron has been relentlessly committed to an effort greater than itself, and one for which we should be rightly proud of ourselves. Our achievements are unique amongst the British Army, and I would like to take the opportunity to give my thanks to a number of people for this. Firstly, to the soldiers who have displayed an indomitable spirit in the face of an uncertain and unrelenting period of tasks. Secondly, to their families, who have had to take an equally stoic attitude and without whose consistent

support my work would have been far harder. We now look forward to 2021, and a year full of unbridled opportunities ahead.

JOMC



Cpl Hutchings received a note of commendation for applying Basic Life Support to an elderly man who had collapsed whilst he was on charitable work



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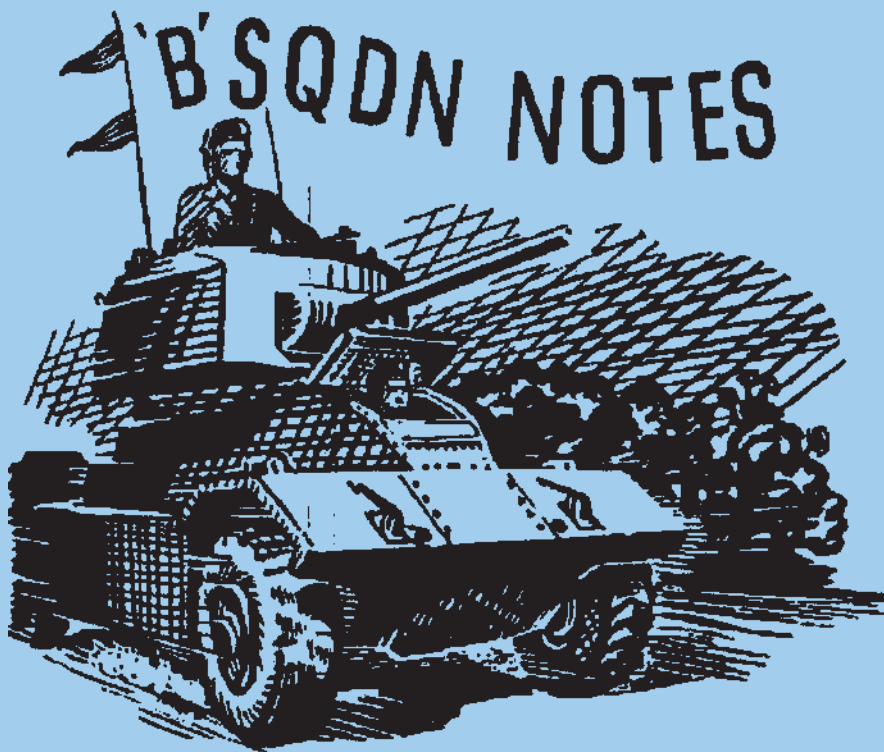
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B Squadron

A fast and furious start to 2020 saw B Sqn prepare and deploy on Ex WESSEX STORM 1/20 this was followed by the challenge presented to all, COVID-19, which changed (but did not decrease) the tempo before a more familiar rhythm in the middle and latter half of the year took hold as the Sqn supported the deployment of Cassino Troop to Poland on Op CABRIT, took part (and won) the Survival Evade Resist Escape (SERE) exercise, competed in Mullens Cup (did not win!) and conducted various other activities before preparing and (just about at time of writing) deploying a Force Protection team to Kenya.

Anticipation was high within the Sqn as we deployed to Salisbury Plain to play our part in the first Regimental CT4 test exercise since 2013. The team was ready for all that was thrown at us having had a good run in the previous year through conducting OPFOR on WS 4/19 and Regimental CAST and CATT. Arguably the biggest challenge we faced was the environmental conditions a particularly stormy February would throw at us, as the vehicle crews grappled with the testing waterlogged and slippery ground – they rose to this challenge brilliantly.

The exercise started with a live fire range package to get us to the start state for the combined arms live fire exercise (CALFEX) which would follow. Lt Seb Maxwell ran the section attack lane with ever growing confidence that he would exploit later in the year and Sgt Glyn Williams led an excellent sniper package. Into the first phase of the exercise proper and we focused on Sqn level activity; a raid, CALFEX and route reconnaissance. With some standout moments this phase helped us iron out some creases ready for



Battlegroup operations. The rain on the CALFEX will be memorable for all who were present, rarely have we witnessed such a volume dropped in such a short

period, typically the OC had taken this moment post raid to not have any Gore-Tex on! The route reconnaissance across Wiltshire was enjoyable particularly for the SSM, WO2 Dale Thomas, whose packet just so happened to find a rather nice farm shop and café en-route, I've not heard the end of how nice the Brie and Bacon ciabatta was since! Tied to this part of the exercise was the magnificent effort of 3rd Troop led by SSgt (now WO2) Rhys Davies, to get themselves (Troop complete) stuck in a field after Cpl Tumpale Mwamulima chose the more scenic route to recce. This would have been fine had it not been a field belonging to a man whose barn had

been destroyed a few years back by a wayward Artillery round and adjacent to a Reserve Officer's house who took great

pleasure in highlighting this mishap to the world via the dreaded Facebook!

Moving into the Battlegroup phase after a freezing night on the Rookery we utilised the whole Plain to best effect as we sought to out manoeuvre the OPFOR. We were joined by a troop of Royal Yeomanry in the R-WMIKs who added crucial additional depth to the Sqn enabling greater freedoms in execution of tasks. The weather throughout was poor and tested vehicle crews to the max both in terms of safe driving and commanding and in sustainability and endurance with the constant rain and wind threatening to degrade the crews if they let their administration get away from themselves.

As the phase began we all enjoyed the opportunity to face a relatively 'free thinking' enemy, no one more so than Sgt 'Q' Laqere of 1st Troop whose excitement and eagerness in taking the fight to the OPFOR was both inspiring and entertaining while no doubt being terrifying for those 'enemy' he came across. A crew that had numerous near misses as ground gave way under wheel, Q's driver Tpr Gambrell, who had only turned up to Regimental Duty the November before as a fresh faced 18 year old now carried a 1000 yard stare and significant



The rain on the CALFEX will be memorable for all who were present, rarely have we witnessed such a volume dropped in such a short period



B Sqn deployed complete on the BDTA

experience, repeatedly stepping back into the vehicle that more often than not had been at a 'sporting' angle.

The pinnacle for the Sqn on the exercise was the Battlegroup hasty raid for which B Sqn had the key part. Supplemented with two Troops from C Sqn, giving a set of 'bonnet brief' orders in under ten minutes, with no time for rehearsals, a 20+km vehicle insertion, at night and with two troops who had not worked with us before was a challenge, but everyone rose to it. It was an incredibly dark night with NVG barely helping as the lack of moon, overcast and rain made even following the man in front a challenge. The C Sqn fire support group got into place in the nick of time led by an A Sqn recce team, Lt George Barham led the assault group through dead ground to the start line (where, miraculously ahead of schedule, we had to wait for 30 mins in the freezing rain before starting the advance onto target), the SSM gripped the CASEVAC with Sgt Yeates RY proving a force to be reckoned with in the CASEVAC dept and Sgt Josh Petre putting his Brecon knowledge to good use brought enough Illum to enable the break in over complex terrain, aggression and coordination took care of the rest. The immense relief of seeing the fire support engaging as we moved in was a relief, in reality this would be pinning the enemy down for now though it ensured a big tick for the QDG Battle Group proving we could coordinate fires and movement. The less said about the Sqn's extraction the better as vehicles got 'bogged in', one vehicle slipped off a track into a precarious position and the biting wind cut through the now sweaty crews after a good 2km uphill extraction.

This pinnacle was followed by some less dynamic but equally challenging screening tasks before we were cut to 2 Royal Anglian Battle Group for their final attack conducting Close Target Reconnaissance and supporting the placement of their fire support group. We had played our part well to date not least through Cpl Rich Brown who had found an excellent 'crows nest' with the ability to view across the AO and bring on to target our anti-tank ambushes, they lasted 48hrs before they were dispatched in a chance encounter with the OPFOR. The end



...little did we think that this would be the last time we would gather socially for the next year



was sadly ignominious as the OPFOR tanks struck at the exact point of SHQ while credit was due to the OPFOR Recce Platoon who did well to sneak up on a callsign which only found them when they trod on 'something soft' as they went to relieve themselves! The Sqn celebrated a successful exercise with a trip en mass to the Pizza Hut at Solstice services a well-deserved post exercise meal using the money the guys had spent on tick (mostly cans of Monster), little did we think that this would be the last time we would gather socially for the next year.

As COVID-19 took hold, and with troops confined to RBSM and the blocks our duty of care was to ensure they remained physically and mentally well. The remote work given, although not always appreciated, produced some outstanding results with the raw intelli-

gence of our soldiers demonstrated and their solutions to problems enlightening. Standout soldiers in this regard were Tpr (now LCpl) Tekin, Tpr (now LCpl) Sweeney, Tpr (now LCpl) Roberts. LCpl Duthie-Thomas also produced some outstanding work that stood out for its thought and attention to detail.

To ensure the Sqn personnel were getting out of their rooms we organised socially distanced PT in pairs on Mondays and Fridays utilising the airfield we are lucky to have. Tied to this activity would invariably be a number of stands to develop the soldier's cognitive abilities and improve things such as vehicle recognition and problem solving. Led by the recently arrived Troop Leaders (2Lt Sam Upward, 2Lt Dickie Fulloway, 2Lt Ed Dillon) this proved a good distraction from the lockdown and got some much-needed air into our lungs.

The Sqn initially supported testing through 1st Troop led by Lt George Barham with Cpl De Jongh stepping up as Tp Sgt. They did some sterling work



Something very weird is going on here



The BDTA perfectly replicating the jungle

early on with numerous reports coming back to the Regiment about their excellent 'bedside manner' and engagement with the general public, we were rightly proud of all their efforts.

It was at this time also that B Sqn chain of command was warned off that it would be commanding the hybrid QDG/Ry deployment to Poland on Op CABRIT. And so ensued frequent trips to Bovington to begin integrating the team that was to be known as Cassino Troop (read Sqn). With the total number of people from B Sqn within Cassino Troop small (OC, SSM, SQMS, Tp Ldr & Tp Sgt) the Sqn was then committed to helping train the deploying Cassino Troop. B Sqn 2IC, Capt Joe Kite, led an impressive and excellent training package across the summer months. Perfectly pitched, the support he and the rest of B Sqn gave was impressive; from basic lessons, to supporting mentors, to range support not least from characters such as SSgt Beal (HQ Sqn) and Sgt Chater who dug out blind to ensure the Troop hit the correct start state for operations.

With Cassino Troop deployed in late September the remaining Sqn (50+ people) continued to train and compete in Regimental activity with an additional six RY in the Sqn who were to train up on the Javelin Anti-Tank missile prior to deploying (the first RY to do so).

The first task as B Sqn Rear Operations Group (ROG) was to compete with two teams in the Mullens Cup. This saw Lt Barham and 2Lt Fetherstonehaugh re-ORBAT into two formidable troops ready to tackle the challenges that would be thrown their way. Despite some excellent performances in testing conditions on this occasion the prize escaped the Sqn and we look forward towards the next challenge.

Organised into small teams, B Sqn stood ready to take on the challenging Otterburn hills on the QDG SERE Exercise. After re-organising the Sqn

“
Despite some excellent performances in testing conditions on this occasion the prize escaped the Sqn



“Get in step!”

into equal teams mixed with the Tranche 2 Royal Yeomen the teams set off. Capt Joe Kite set off first with his motley crew from SHQ, followed quickly by Lt George Barham's team from 1st Tp and 2Lt Ned Fetherstonehaugh's team of whippets from 3rd Tp. SHQ found themselves overtaken on the 2nd checkpoint but on the other side of the area, some 60km away, Cpl Donovan De Jongh and the other half of 1st Tp sped off from the pack, going on to eventually win the competition with a mixed QDG and RY team.

As usual in adversity some of our most junior soldiers shone as a young team of JNCOs led by Cpl Leighton Pritchard, they however ran into trouble two thirds of the way round and, thanks to the quick thinking of LCpl Tom Harcourt and Tpr Jordan Moore 443, averted disaster as they CASEVACed their team leader off the hill to safety in challenging conditions.

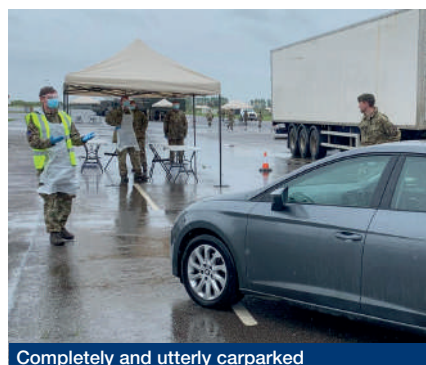
After some well-earned recovery time, the ROG was further re-organised, as the Regiment re-ORBATed for future operations in Mali as part of Op NEWCOMBE. In a drive to retain crew stability and team cohesion B Sqn gave C Sqn its well drilled 1st Troop to bolster their ranks, while also losing significant numbers in less cohesive groups to A Sqn who were also being stood up to a similar strength.

It was a sad end to a strong Sqn but pleasing that so many B Sqn personnel, who had developed lots in the last year, would now be deploying on Ops.

The remainder of the Sqn started preparing for a short deployment to Kenya in early 2021 to provide Force Protection at the British Army Training Unit Kenya (BATUK) in the safe hands of Lt Dickie Fulloway and Sgt Owain Davies (AKA Dav 220). This came with numerous challenges, as we welcomed some volunteers from across the brigade, namely five individuals from our paired Regiment, The Royal Yeomanry, as well as some enthusiastic infanters from 3rd Bn The Royal Anglian Regiment and 4th Bn Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment, a real Regular/Reserve grouping continuing B Sqn's theme of Regular/Reserve integration.

A hastily organised training package was put together, and after receiving a plethora of different vaccinations, the Force Protection Platoon was ready to deploy. The only barrier in the way was Christmas Leave. Thankfully all returned from leave in one piece, ready to deploy. As this article is being written B Sqn are deployed in both Poland and Kenya on Defence Tasks. 2021 promises to be a different year, reconstituting the Sqn post Poland and Kenya, taking on the challenges that will be presented. The Sqn not deploying to Mali are developing their skills awaiting the next moment to add value as a Sqn be it home or abroad.

BM



Completely and utterly carparked



LCpls Hopkins and DT plan their next night out in Dereham



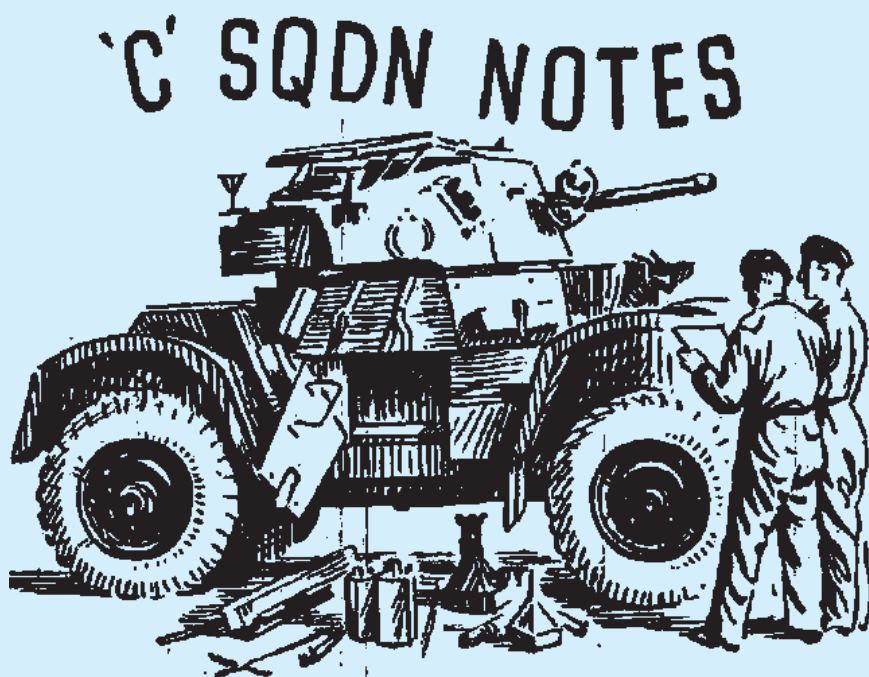
After an epic struggle LCpl Hopkins approaches the finish line

C Squadron

As for everyone, from editor, contributor and reader to the publishers and members of funny club, 2020 has certainly been an odd year for C Squadron, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. It began with real promise when the Squadron took part in the Regimental validation exercise of Exercise Wessex Storm. There was the prospect of a deployment to Nigeria, numerous adventure training opportunities, and the whisper of being the first Squadron to deploy on an operational tour to Mali. However, as with everything in 2020, these plans were turned upside down by the pandemic. From 4^{*} General to Trooper, the Army battled with an unknown and unprecedented enemy on UK soil, and one which transformed the way we interact and operate. As I write this towards the end of the year, it is, however, important to reflect on this most unpredictable of years; not only because of the excellent training which did go ahead, but also to celebrate the work which C Squadron, as with the rest of the Regiment, provided for Op RESCRIPT, the military response to COVID 19. I will therefore touch on these highlights as well as giving a nod to 2021, a year in which C Squadron will be the first sub-unit from the QDG to deploy to Mali on Op NEWCOMBE 2. This will be a momentous occasion and one which the soldiers and officers are thoroughly looking forward to.

New Year, New Me

There was no better way to start the year than with six weeks on Salisbury Plain. Not only did the Squadron have to contend with this touch of reality so soon after the Christmas break but it also



coincided with the three largest storms the UK has faced in recent years. New crews were tested in these arduous conditions, but it provided the Regiment and the Squadron with the opportunity to cement new tactics and techniques and together everyone progressed through the exercise well. As part of the wider Light Cavalry Capability Development programme, termed Project Thundercat, Major Charlie Ruggles-Brise managed to supply each Squadron with a vast array of cutting-edge technology, from new sights, to warm/wet kit and drones. All the kit was tested extensively in the field. Predictably, a considerable amount of this kit was either broken or damaged; there is no better way to test it than in field conditions! Thankfully, the success of these trials means that as we begin our preparation for our deployment to Mali, a lot of this equipment is finding its way

into C Squadron stores, although the thought of a crew heating system in the heat of the Malian desert does raise a few eyebrows.

Exercise Wessex Storm followed a similar format to the majority of British Army exercises, with a live fire package starting proceedings. This was expertly and diligently run by Lieutenant Maltman, a new officer amongst the C Squadron ranks. Once the exercise phase started, the three Troops of C Squadron were tested on a series of battle exercises which were designed to test them on a

variety of reconnaissance skills, to emulate being at the front of a Brigade or Division. For many in C Squadron, this exercise phase was the first time they had operated in a large, combined arms environment which provided the inevitable frictions including off road driving, night driving and trying to hit an H-Hour. The exercise finished with a Squadron raid, which took place at the epicentre of one of the largest aforementioned storms. However, despite the frictions, C

Squadron conducted a successful raid and once all was stowed away, made the welcome return trip back to Norfolk.

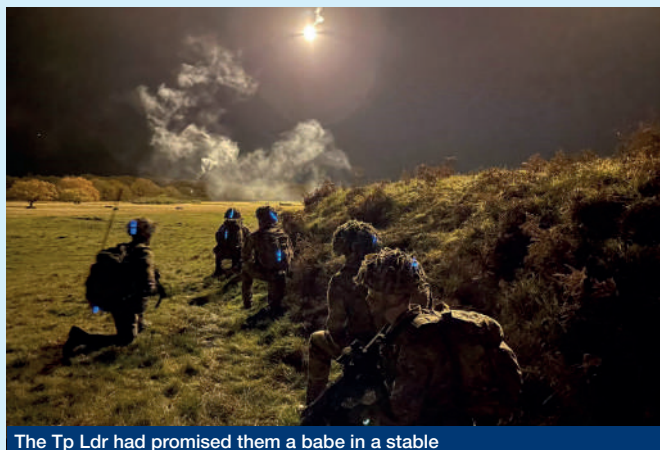
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There was no better way to start the year than with six weeks on Salisbury Plain



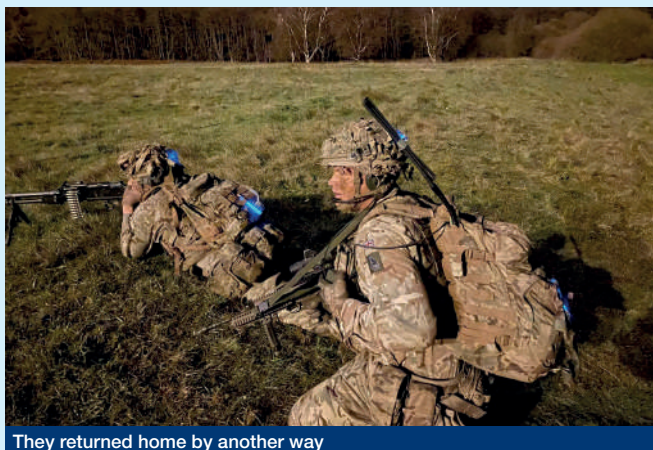
Lt Lewis's team hurrying to beat sweetshop closing time



Crazy new BBQ design



The Tp Ldr had promised them a babe in a stable



They returned home by another way

Unprecedented Times

With heads held high after a successful yet testing Regimental exercise, attention turned to the remainder of 2020 and the many opportunities available. There was talk of a short-term training team in Nigeria, the possibility of deploying to Mali and the exciting prospects of Adventure Training and sport. However, in March, rather than setting our sights on foreign shores, everyone had to start looking inwards at our own domestic situation, as COVID 19 shook the world. As with everything in the Army, the rumours started ahead of the reality. However, rather unusually, the rumours turned out to not only be true but, the situation was also considerably more severe than originally predicted. Everyone was told to stay indoors, stay safe, and wash their hands. Understandably, commanders at all levels grappled with this new reality and tried to understand how the virus would impact on the Army, an Army which prides itself on being proactive and 'out and about.' C Squadron, as with everyone else, lifted their laptop screens and tried to



C Squadron, as with everyone else, lifted their laptop screens and tried to work remotely



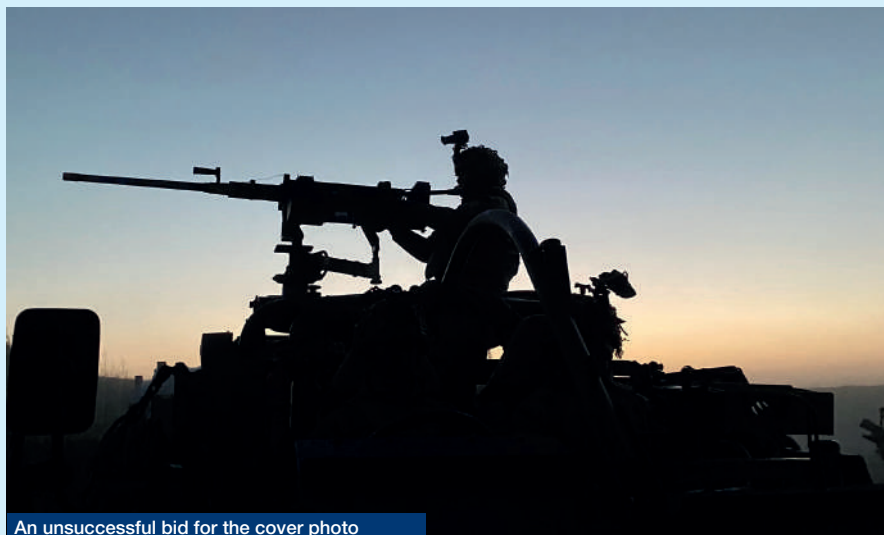
work remotely and remain as proactive and effective as usual. Virtual runs and workouts became the new norm and online courses the classrooms of the day.

The title for the military response to COVID 19 was called Op RESCRIPT, and everyone in the QDG soon realised that they would rapidly be involved in these UK based operations. Lieutenant Cooper commanded a small detachment on Task Force Doogan, which was used to transfer critical COVID 19 patients from overwhelmed hospitals to those hospitals with greater capacity using civilian ambulances. From the comfort of his 'luxury' hotel room, Lieutenant Cooper heroically coordinated the efforts of these ambulance drivers. The commitment lasted 22 days, used 15 ambulances and saw a total of 18 patients transferred. This was vital work and everyone in C Squadron felt proud to be part of the greater good.

A further C Squadron task under Op Rescript, was to provide soldiers for the Nottingham Regional Testing Centre. C Squadron personnel were required to operate alongside their civilian counter-

parts to assist and prevent them being overwhelmed by the vast numbers of tests being conducted. Whilst C Squadron provided only eight personnel, they conducted over 6000 tests in 10 days, with an average of an impressive 1400 tests being achieved each day. Concurrently, Sergeant Humphreys and his 16-personnel team set out with delivering COVID tests to four different care homes. They ensured care homes and vulnerable people had access to tests and furthermore, made sure that the tests were able to get to laboratories quickly and safely for analysis. In total 4196 tests were collected, and 13 200 tests were delivered over an eleven-day deployment.

Towards the end of the military support to COVID 19, C Squadron contributed to the set up and running of five Military Testing Units. C Squadron worked with personnel from 3 Royal Artillery and rotated through the MTUs to ensure the testing was available for as long as possible. The testing units were crucial to the support to the government, with over 16,000 tests being carried out in total. A special mention must go to Sergeant Morgan, who alongside delivering tests to the society, also managed to fix a car which turned up to the testing facility faulty!



An unsuccessful bid for the cover photo



Yet more ranges

Marilyn Monroe

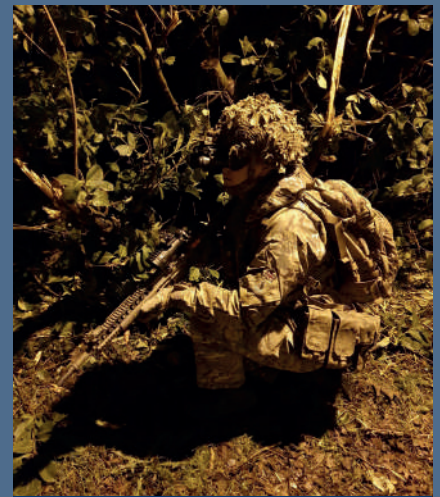
As the world and the UK began to emerge from self-isolation in the summer of 2020, the Regiment managed to head north to Warcop to conduct a three-week Regimental Range Package. These three weeks involved troops progressing from their annual military firing assessment, up to a Section Attack dismounted and from learning how to fire the platform heavy weapons of the .50 cal or Grenade Machine Gun up to a mounted Troop attack. For C Squadron, it proved an excellent opportunity for each rank to build up confidence and their skills on a range of weapon mounted systems. It also provided an opportunity for the Squadron to come together in COVID 19 suitable ways and operate again as a Squadron. A mention must go to Sgt Humphreys, LCpl Fletcher and Trooper Sell who secured the accolade of the best crew in C Squadron; a well-deserved win. As these ranges finished, the Squadron headed back south and prepared for some well-earned summer leave. Just prior to the Squadron going on leave, Major David Hoey finished his two years as Officer Commanding C Squadron and handed over to Major Bryn Williams; a small tank park parade signified the moment before everyone dispersed on leave.

Back to the Plain

In a similar manner to the start of the year, the return from summer leave, saw C Squadron return to Salisbury Plain to conduct another Regimental exercise. Although this time, the QDG Battle Group were not being validated, but it was the turn of the individual troops, who took part in Exercise MULLENS CUP 2020. C Squadron entered two teams into this competition, one headed up by Lieutenant Cooper and Corporal Pugh and the other by Lieutenant Lewis and Sergeant Humphreys. The exercise was an excellent competition which tested both mounted and dismounted skills in a challenging and arduous setting.



Not bogged in, honest



OrKESTREL Manoeuvres in the Dark

The competition was fierce throughout as every troop in the QDG wanted to win, not only for their Troop but also for Squadron pride. In the end C Squadron won the Mullens Cup, with both troops performing excellently and winning the dismounted and mounted competitions. Lieutenant Lewis and Sergeant Humphreys won the overall competition which also included a March and Shoot competition, testing the troops on their ability to shoot straight after a gruelling march.

Onwards and upwards, and upwards, and upwards

After three years of 'flying' a desk, all Staff Officers find themselves rapidly, and often uncomfortably, back in the midst of the fast tempo of a Squadron training cycle. For the new Officer Commanding C Squadron, Major Bryn Williams, this was the week-long Survive, Escape, Resist and Evade (SERE) week in Otterburn. This Regimental exercise took place at the end of September in the hilly training estate in Northumberland

and was designed to be a patrol and survival competition. Initially the competition saw troops master the basics of survival, such as building and lighting fires, designing an improvised shelter, identifying clean water and generally learning how to live off the surroundings. After these lessons, the Squadron split down into four-person teams, centred around crew positions and set off, team by team, on a 45km patrol over the vast hills of Otterburn training estate. This not only tested the team's survival skills, but

also their fitness, stamina and, critically, navigation. Whilst only carrying essential survival equipment, the teams carried around 20kg on their backs and had only 36 hours to complete the patrol. They had to pass six checkpoints and complete four survival related challenges along the route. These challenges were based on the lessons previously learnt and were designed to put into practice their new skills.

It is certainly safe to say that C Squadron had to endure the worst of the weather and the most challenging night-time conditions. That said, it was an excellent exercise and well organised by Captain Charlie Byrd. We will not mention that Captain Hugo Chaplin, the C Squadron second-in-command, did, on numerous occasions have to resort to his blue force tracker for a few navigational prompts; I will leave that for another day.



A cracking squadron photo

Standby, Go!

As the Squadron prepared for operations in Mali, attention was also drawn to the readiness taskings which the Squadron had to fulfil. These included being at readiness for the Joint Expeditionary Force Light Brigade, support to the local police force in the event of a terrorist event and significantly, UK Support Battalion (UKSB). The UKSB readiness requirement initially saw the Squadron Headquarters drive the unspeakably long distance to Edinburgh for a series of lectures, and, thankfully a fairly nice Italian meal, before turning around almost immediately to head back to Norfolk. Once this had been achieved, as well as qualifying everyone on how to construct a flood proof barrier, the Squadron was held at ever shortening readiness timelines. The most likely tasking, if activated, would have been flood barrier construction and providing support to the effected communities, although other likely tasks included support to Fire Fighters or Prisons. The Squadron was maintained at a short notice to move for over three months, which meant that everyone had their bergans packed and vehicles held waiting in the hanger. Despite the numerous false starts and the ever threatening second wave of COVID 19, the Squadron was not activated and in December the readiness tasks were passed on to other Units and Sub-Units.

Per Mare, Per Terram

As many of the readers will know, C Squadron, QDG has a long history with the Commando Brigade, originally from their operations together in Iraq in 2003. Consequently, C Squadron has the Commando Dagger as part of its Squadron ethos and can be seen on the emblem worn by all those who have served in C Squadron, either on a t-shirt, hoodie or a tattoo. It was therefore a significant moment, that after many years of little interaction, 1st Troop, C Squadron deployed on Ex GREEN LIZARD in Sennybridge in Wales with A



"and these are all the vehicles that are Fully Fit"

Company 40 Commando Royal Marines in November. C Squadron supplied the Royal Marines with vehicles and personnel, allowing them to exercise and test their skills on the Jackal 2, whilst also allowing for integration between QDG and Royal Marine crews. The purpose of Exercise Green Lizard was to develop A Company Royal Marines in their mobility tactics and understanding, as well as refining tactical movement and sharing hints and tips on how to live off and maintain vehicles. This focus on mobility skills is a new area of interest for the Royal Marines as they re-role into the Future Command Force, centred around small, mobile and specialised teams operating at reach; very similar to the Commando forces of the Second World War. The secondary output was to test the Future Commando Force logistical elements, putting the Royal Marine logistical chain under realistic pressure and demands; all of which Sergeant Morgan did with excellence!

Under Lieutenant Maltman and Sergeant Morgan, 1st Troop, C Squadron threw themselves into the exercise which gave them the opportunity not only to impart their experience

but also to develop their understanding of using support weapons, such as Javelin, and the use of modern technologies on today's battlefield, including drones and cutting-edge tablets. The troop were asked to carry out numerous tasks, including route security, Observation Posts, Vehicle Checkpoints, and a mounted raid where Jackals formed up as a key part of the ring of steel for the insertion protection and then switching to fire support during the break-in.

All of 1st Troop reported back that it was eye opening to see the similarities between Light Cavalry and the Royal Marine Future Commando Force, and therefore we look forward to working

with them in the future as we both develop our concepts of use. C Squadron are reunited with A Company, 40 Commando in February 2021 when they join us for operational ranges.



Self-important, moi?



Orders: How it started



How it's going

The Desert Awaits

In November 2020, the Commanding Officer informed C Squadron that they would be the first sub-unit to deploy to Mali under the Op NEWCOMBE deployment. They would therefore deploy as an individual sub-unit and come under the command of the 2 Royal Anglian Task Group (The Poachers). November therefore became a very busy month for C Squadron. Not only were we on readiness, but it also marked the start of the pre-deployment training for this forthcoming deployment. The month involved a Squadron range package, which took everyone through their Rifle assessment and then up to a Section Attack at night. Considering that this was the first-time live firing for a number of the newer Troopers to the Squadron, the week-long range package was a real baptism of fire; one in which they thrived; a special mention must go to Troopers Faulkener and Wilson who showed tremendous skill and prowess despite only finishing Phase 2 training a week prior.

Soon after the range package, C



a special mention must go to Troopers Faulkener and Wilson who showed tremendous skill and prowess despite only finishing Phase 2 training a week prior



Soon after the range package, C Squadron deployed on a week-long exercise on Thetford Training Area. This was the first opportunity for the new Squadron to shake out and test itself internally. The exercise was designed to give each troop time to test and adjust during daily troop dispersal, then progressing into deliberate actions at night. These included conducting night-time driving, Observation Posts, and Close Target reconnaissance. The exercise culminated in a complex Squadron raid, which was mounted and dismounted, utilising an anchor Observation Post to provide a live feed back to the Squadron HQs and to the commanders. This job fell to the recent addition to the Squadron, a young 2Lt Dillon and his call sign. They were the unlucky ones who had to occupy the anchor OP in -5 degrees temperatures. Despite a slight communication related faux pas, the team did an excellent job. The exercise was a real success, albeit very cold, and proved to be a useful training opportunity prior to starting the formal pre-deployment training in January.



"so, this is how we're going to run the testing site"



No PPE shortage here

Poacher turn Game Keeper

As 2020 drew to a close, the Squadron went on some well-earned Christmas leave. When they return, it starts pre-deployment training for Mali, where we hope to deploy in June 2021 with the Poachers (2 Royal Anglian). The Squadron is excited and ready to go. Watch this space for updates on this deployment and I hope to write to you this time next year with all our adventures and experiences.

BW



Cpl Kaikadavu leading from the front

HQ Squadron

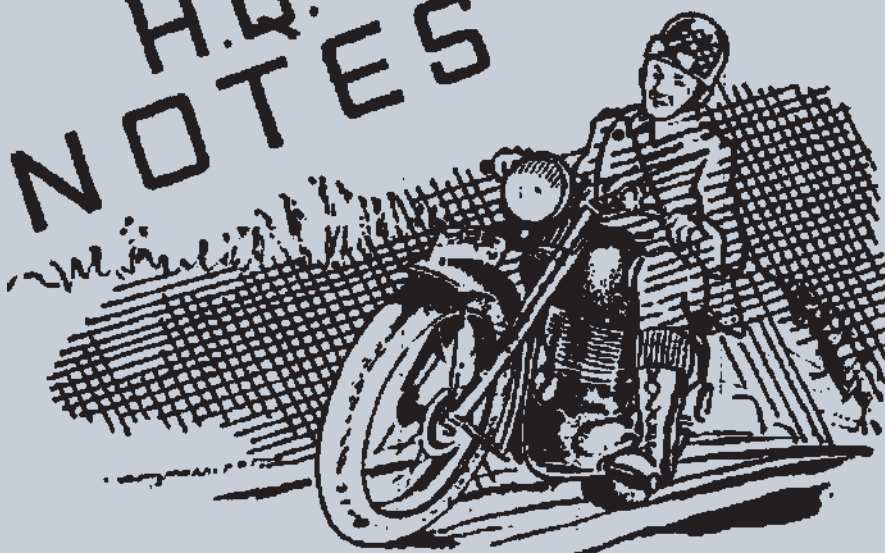
So, where do I start for the year 2020...

Last year's journal told you what was planned for the future and how we were going to be tested as a regiment on CSTTX in Germany and Wessex Storm 1/20 on Salisbury Plain (SPTA). Luckily, we were able to get all of this done before the mighty COVID -19 changed the world...

So how did we do it – The year started with us driving to Folkestone and then Calais to Sennelager – to which many reading this would have experienced for many years- via the Tunnel La Marche. The journey was boring as ever spending far too much time on an army bus with no toilet. Luckily with today's drivers' hours policy we often had to stop, if we didn't then Capt Matt Hansen MTO would throw his teddy in the corner and like every MTO they become masters at reciting policy back at you. Having endured the taunts of that journey we arrived in good order for what would be a long and testing two weeks. The Regimental Second In Command at the helm Maj Trigger Time Tyson (TTT) cracking the 7 Questions whip. After erecting the Drash tent under darkness we were ready for the first Frago...

Long days and even longer nights ensured our orders processes and execution processes were improved to a decent standard, which took us to where we needed to be for Wessex Storm 1/20. That said, we did manage to get one night off to revisit the old haunts of Sennelager – The Senne Eck bar which has seen many brawls and shenanigans over the years. It was also great to see one of the Regiment's characters Sgt Minty Kendal who has now settled like many other QDGs in the area. The return journey started well when the Adjt couldn't find his passport – but hey that's DE admin for you... With a short turn around in RBSM, we soon departed for SPTA which would see the regiment be tested in the conventional environment on Wessex Storm 1/20. Many legends reading this article would think 'What is

H.Q. NOTES



all the fuss about' - A1/2 Ech deploying – well, due to the OP HERRICK (Afghanistan) era this has not been exercised for several years and the SQEP experience was lacking, the last time this concept was tested was in 2013. However, after some night-time reading and conceptual study periods, we were soon back in the game. This saw the BGLO (me) pulling my hair out ensuring the Battle Group (BG) was 'Fit to Fight' replenished, recuperated and organised within the Echelons. The QMs department on both sides worked tirelessly to ensure we were set up for success, whether this was taking over vehicles from the Land Training Fleet (LTF) to ensuring all soldiers had the right kit and equipment to deploy. Our accommodation was in West Down Camp (WDC) and believe me when I say, it has not changed its infrastructure from when it was built -post World War 2. The QM as B Ech ensured all our needs were catered for – however, what he couldn't sort out was having to run across open ground with a towel and flip flops for a lukewarm shower...

We hit the ground running straight into the All Ranks Briefings (ARB) and then the TES training, which was headed up by HQ SSM, Mr Gavin Griffiths - this was the second time he was assigned in this role, previously on WS 4/19, but it was better than being ROG SSM. We spent

a week conducting Battle preparation and getting the vehicles camouflaged (covered in scrim) – cutting up vehicle cam kits ensuring that the QM(T) did not see us. On the day of the races we all deployed and endured a challenging exercise which tested QDG BG to its limits – the weather not being on our side as we experienced the worst weather for years with three storms making SPTA even more exciting, and very much testing our driving skills. This exercise was the first time we trained closely with 7 Bde Headquarters, we were able to operate in our core role as reconnaissance soldiers whilst exercising the echelons in all its functions including the Casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) and the Medical evacuation (MEDEVAC), using our own Regimental Aid Post (RAP). During some of the serials on the CASEVAC procedures QDG RAP were highlighted as best practice, the regiment had to get to grips with ground MEDEVAC unlike Afghanistan where it was all done by helicopter. Well done Sgt Lee and her team. Communications were becoming challenging throughout the exercise, this tested then BSM SSgt Hamilton now RSWO and RSO Capt Campbell, only those two individuals know exactly how they succeeded guaranteeing that we had communications throughout. After gruelling weather and two weeks



In the rear with the gear

of vegetarian ration packs, we polished our orders processes, rehearsed and rehearsed with conducting the rehearsal of concept (ROC) drill many times we were successful in achieving our CT 4 validation for operations. The recovery plan for this major exercise was equally challenging both on an ES perspective and recovering the vehicle fleet to LTF and RBSM. As most of you may not be aware the regiment only own a certain number of vehicles – this is called the Basic Unit Fleet (BUF) a squadron's worth only. When we deploy or exercises as a regiment, we then loan vehicles from across the field army – this brings its own challenges. Of note the RQ(T) WO2 John Davies was instrumental when liaising with Bde to get the vehicles back on train, something we have not done for years.

Unfortunately, on our return back to sunny Norfolk COVID-19 hit the streets. The advantage to Robertson Barracks Swanton Morley (RBSM) being in the middle of the countryside allowed us to continue with some small margins of training whilst committing troops to help in the response to the pandemic. Testing sites and Ambulance driving to name but a few of our commitments. The future was uncertain and did look pretty bleak, everyone was asking when it will get back to normal – I would have never thought that when I was writing this article for the 2020 journal, we are still no further forward to getting back to normality and spending Christmas with our families. Nevertheless, the regiment did manage to secure ranges in Warcop for a three week Dismounted and Mounted range package. The RLS team which was headed up by Capt Bongo Davies ensured all the regiments needs were catered for. The ranges were superbly organised, big thanks to SSgt Hartt and Beal. These ranges ensured that the soldiers were still current with their skills and were not sitting at home during the pandemic. Post summer leave BGHQ supported the hybrid Sqn of QDG and our paired reserve regiment the Royal Yeomanry (RY) on the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) on SPTA in preparation for their deployment on OP CABRIT. This saw Capt Chris Homewood (QM) deploy in the role of NSE Comd, covering all G4 aspects of the deployment working with RLC Logisticians, he handed over the role to Capt Matt Hansen, who will see the tour through until April 21. The



The future was uncertain and did look pretty bleak



Squadron then quickly bounced into supporting the Mullens Cup competition – this was organised by Capt Hugo Chaplin and Sgt Welfoot- a mounted and dismounted regimental competition over one week on SPTA. This year's competition comprised of Handover takeover of the JACKAL vehicles, route march, advance to contact, Troop hide where OP orders were given and an OP that evening. Moving into the dismounted element of the competition following a set of orders covering roughly about 40KM over SPTA via a series of manned and unmanned checkpoints with AFV recognition, CBRN, CIED, CTR and finished with a small arm contact scenario with a 2km CASEVAC serial. A tough and testing competition enjoyed by all.

The training didn't stop there. HQ were then to move to Otterburn to support a weeks Survival Evade Resist and Extract (SERE) training, organised by Capt Charlie Byrd. We even had the privilege of members of the Regiment currently serving in Hereford assisting us for the week, great to see them return so thanks for all their advice and guidance. The exercise RLS was run by myself as the BGLO and the RQ WO2 Dai Chant- a busy time due to the stretched lines of communications. The last element of training during this pandemic was EX CEREBERUS- elements of BGHQ were deployed to CAST(S) Warminster, this was a 3DIV exercise which allowed 7X to be validated. We spent two weeks living in an 18 & 24 and as you can see in pictures this was an emotional time with the tent often blowing about in the wind.



PAYD took a weird turn

A call had to be made back to RBSM for blankets and heaters- the RQ saved the day. The exercise was running on ABACUS, a computer-generated system which required a JNCO to operate it. Cpl Cope and LCpl Phillips soon grasped the system running the battle which saw LCpl Phillips nicknamed ABACUS Phil...

As we closed 2020 down we were looking forward to our traditional Christmas Day within RBSM – no such thing this year as the pandemic has put a stop to that- we did however have a service on the PNCO pass off parade (More detail on this PNCO cadre can be found further in the journal) followed with a Turkey Trot – this was for regimental PT, the RSM volunteered to dress up as a Turkey and was set free on a 4km route. The rest of the regiment were in Christmas fancy dress and had to beat the RSM in to be selected for a raffle prize. This ended the year and at least we did it with a little bit of Christmas spirit.

On behalf of HQ Sqn, I would like to wish you all the very best and look forward to seeing you all hopefully in Cardiff for the regimental reunion 2021.

PDJ



HQ Sqn's screen had one vital flaw

Cassino Tp

In early May B Sqn chain of command (CoC) were told to stop thinking of Sub Saharan Africa and start considering how to pull a hybrid Sqn group together built predominantly of Army Reserves from the Royal Yeomanry (RY) and 103 REME Bn who themselves were pulling together from locations across the country. While disappointing to no longer be taking B Sqn complete on Ops the challenge was pronounced. There were plenty of 'known unknowns'; What level of ability would the Reserves be? How many would pass their upcoming Crew Commanders course? How would they take the regular CoC, how many QDG would be required to step in at varying degrees of notice? And how would we manage that mindset and people's expectations?

Initially we needed to understand the situation better which resulted in multiple drives from Swanton Morley to Bovington where the RY were based for their initial mission specific training (iMST) under RY RHQ. The group of reserves that greeted us were intelligent, enthusiastic, switched on people and receptive to our arrival, it was immediately clear we had a team that could be moulded into a good Sqn but there were many hurdles ahead before we could consider ourselves a formed group ready for operations.

The name of the Sqn was to be Cassino Troop (Tp), an appropriate title given the area we would be deploying to (Poland) and the ally we would be working closest with (US) all of whom played significant parts in the Battle of Monte Cassino. Much like the battle itself the Sqn had a mountain to climb to get

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Acclimatising to the winter tour

on Ops in good order.

RY RHQ focused on bringing the group into line with the skills and qualifications of their regular counterparts, a significant challenge. With each visit we got to know each other a bit better engendering trust that would underpin the Tp. The team was diverse; from a nuclear engineer and management consultants (Officers) to hugely experienced ex-regulars, a 1* civil servant, postmaster, cyber analysts and a lobbyist (soldiers), not to mention the regulars, the Tp could run a small town!

The Crew Commanders course was a resounding success, with Lt Courtenay Hallwood, 2nd Plt leader, earning top student. The RY success meant that B Sqn would only need to supply one crew commander, this would be Cpl Gaz Hugo who willingly stepped into the breach. The next target for the Tp was to complete up to Annual Crew Test and dismounted section attack day and



In perfect harmony

night in Warcop, alongside QDG ranges. A non-stop programme with some standout performances from Sgt Biddlestone (RY) and SSgt Beal (QDG) plus a lot of hard graft from the RY element ensured the target was met enabling the Tp to focus on mounted manoeuvre live firing on the final range package. The RY had a group of reserve chefs from 167 RLC supporting them, they served up some incredible range food that quickly became legendary. Luckily one of them, SSgt Lee Whitely would be deploying with us.

After a short consolidation exercise back on STANTA and a long weekend the reserve element of the Tp was



"To those that have done well, well done"

handed over to the B Sqn CoC proper. Gathering in Westdown Camp on Salisbury Plain for the all ranks brief this was the first time the majority of the Tp had gathered together from both the core Tp and the National Support Element (NSE). The Tp personnel from across the army impressed with their engagement and positive outlook, this was reassuring and a good sign of things to come.

A week on the Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (CATT) was the first serial, an excellent tool for building trust across the team, engendering confidence in tactical application and developing basic communication. Unfortunately, we managed only two days over the week, interrupted by a potentially COVID-19 symptomatic soldier (they tested negative!) and the resulting action. The short time on CATT had confirmed one important thing; the reserve element had a good understanding of the basic tactical actions we were required to do as a Tp indeed compared to B Sqn 6 months earlier. Cassino Troop had far less 'navigational' issues on CATT with the time spent on simulators in their reserve centres seemingly well spent. Confidence grew across the team.

In early August Cassino Tp and B Sqn stepped onto Salisbury Plain. This was the first time the hybrid Tp, some of who had had limited time in their crews, had deployed together, it was an apprehensive time. During the first week the Tp focused on the basics; a lot of time spent on driver training (off road day & night under NVG). 4th Platoon (Plt) led on delivering lessons to the Tp from Observation Posts (Cpl Turner), to hides (Sgt Glyn Williams), to obstacle crossings (Sgt Sandy Rai RE), all in the searing heat of mid-summer. The second week was spent on practising tactical actions, another COVID-19 scare isolated our REME Recovery asset meaning we had to re-plan the final two days of serials focused on CTRs and a raid all of which



Prize for the shortest Gurkha goes to the QM

would now be dismantled. An excellent trio of CTRs was conducted and the raid itself well executed, the sum total being that confidence was increased further across the Tp prior to a well-earned two weeks summer leave and the Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRX) to come.

Returning to Salisbury Plain on 30 August for the final two weeks of pre-deployment training it was pleasing to see confidence high in the team. Capt Joe Kite (B Sqn 2IC) had produced an excellent plan to work us hard but continue us on the developmental curve with Cassino Tp team now starting to function really well. Capt Rob Joles RY as 2IC was proving highly capable slipping into the 2IC role with apparent ease, Sgt Kiri Yeates RY had re-formed with the SSM, WO2 Dale Thomas, the highly effective CASEVAC team from Ex

WESSEX STORM with the Plts themselves now starting to fire on all cylinders.

For the MRX we switched to the East of the Plain. The Tp advanced to screen, conducted an obstacle crossing and a raid and then withdrew. Some excellent moments occurred; Sgt Sandesh Rai RE led a monumental clearance of a bush line (Khukri not quite drawn) before proceeding to throw casualties over his shoulders to extract them, inspirational. Lt Joe Wightman RY gave some 2 Para Snipers the fright of their life when he challenged them from under 1 metre away from a particularly cheeky OP. The words 'are you our enemy' spluttered out of the 2 Para lad before Joe responded 'no, we are the RY' a bit of the Para was then seen to break inside at this news and they scurried off.

The final target we needed to hit was the live firing start

Sgt Sandesh Rai RE led a monumental clearance of a bush line (Khukri not quite drawn) before proceeding to throw casualties over his shoulders to extract them, inspirational



Top secret new laser weapons



Looking for Mr Turniss



Another picture of the snow

state and getting the vehicle crews up to LFX 8A (Plt mounted live fire at night). The ranges went smoothly due in no small part to SSgt Beal QDG (again!) and Sgt Chater who led the mounted and dismounted elements. A close call occurred at the last moment as 2 Para Mortars did their best to drive into the OC and 2IC's vehicles on the southern transit route missing them by centimetres but rolling their Land Rover and writing it off, thankfully none of them were seriously injured.

With pre deployment leave interrupted by the mandated COVID-19 test before we knew it we were on our way to Poland via Nottingham Reserve Centre and RAF Brize Norton. After a delightful 8 hour

coach ride from Poznan (RAF not Ryan Air?!) we arrived in Bemowo Piskie Training Area (BPTA) in North East Poland 70km from Kalinin-grad and Belarus. We were greeted by the sight of our tented home (the 'ISO FAC') where we would serve out our two weeks mandated quarantine time. Our stay there proved a good time to bond as a group. We caught up with the NSE Commander Capt Chris Homewood QDG who was already setting about the camp like a rottweiler. From touch rugby and football to scrap heap challenges,



We caught up with the NSE Commander Capt Chris Homewood QDG who was already setting about the camp like a rottweiler



PT and professional and personal development we made the most of our time there. Before long the Tp was released to the relative freedom of the main camp to takeover from the Light Dragoons.

The first few months were focused on integrating to the US Battlegroup, building the all important relationships and focusing on how we would work together.

Cassino Tp had been given the US Scout Platoon to command (5th Plt) which gave an additional dimension to the Tp. The majority of the first three months was



Gunnery Gods or 'Old, Older, Oldest' still setting the standard on PT



Scrapheap challenge SSM



Sgt Brown contemplates an invasion of Kaliningrad

spent on exercise and understanding our area of operations, a more attractive prospect than being restricted to camp which was now the battlegroup commander's direction in response to rising COVID-19 cases in Poland. The Plts made the most of this time, conducting a comprehensive route and area recon adding value to the battlegroup. It had become clear that there were significant knowledge gaps that the Tp could fill and indeed shape battlegroup activity to ensure the most was extracted from each training exercise. Cassino Tp is fortunate to have 10 Gurkhas from across the RLC, Royal Signals and Royal

Engineers and so we made sure we celebrated Dashain appropriately. The night was brilliant with the chefs led by Sgt Hodgson RLC producing incredible food and with numerous musical acts providing great entertainment, the talent within the troop was impressive not least with the Gurkha community while the Tp 2IC and Lt Ali Coombe, having trained hard, completed the Khukri dance.

The Tp progressed through first Plt then Tp level exercises all focused on understanding the new procedures and tactics of working in the Polish terrain and on our ability to communicate at reach and interoperate with the US. The end goal was the major multinational exercise, Ex TUMAK 20, that would take place in late November. Given our



Lt Coombe ponders the merits of a trip to Turkey



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Cassino Tp is fortunate to have 10 Gurkhas, so we made sure we celebrated Dashain appropriately

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Cpl Hugo not dropping an American Football



Tpr Johns and the 2IC Capt Rob Joles RY – before the Paras tried to crash into them

unfortunate circumstances in lockdown it was good to see 3rd Troop in particular under Lt Ali Coombe and Sgt Biddlestone RY set about reconnaissance and driver training that just so happened to take in some of the local 'tourist sights' including; huge Nazi German sluice gates, a castle, and what they thought was the Wolf's Lair (turned out not to be!) this ensured the soldiers were kept busy and enthused.

On Ex TUMAK 20 the temperatures dropped to around 0°C making the conditions for driving and commanding the Jackal and Coyote vehicles particularly challenging. First, we 'broke out of camp' in an Alert Ex before dispersing the force and awaiting orders. Over the next 72hrs the vehicles each covered 150+Km, not one vehicle broke down during the exercise. The dispersed advance on radio silence went incredibly smoothly before we found our pre-designated 'hide' locations which were frustratingly directed and not as tactically sound as one would hope. After 48 hrs having conducted some fire missions and a Rearward Passage of Lines (RPoL) we moved back to BPTA. With the exercise reducing in scope on a



Carp eye is recommended but remember to spit out the lens!



the temperature now regularly well below zero we arrived at our Cold Weather Operators Course (CWOC), taught to us by a Royal Marine Chief Instructor and two army Arctic Warfare Instructors, this was a much anticipated event. Overall we covered 30km+ on foot with weight, learned how to tactically operate in the extreme cold and then in extremis survive learning such basics as building shelters, starting fires and catching and preparing fish and chickens for eating amongst other basics, Carp eye is recommended but remember to spit out the lens! Finally, the Tp had the challenge of

the water immersion the event all had anticipated nervously from the start. Sadly, the lake was not frozen at this time sitting at a cool 2-4°C. Having been taught the process



Having completed their colouring in Lt Seb Maxwell & Sgt Glyn Williams enjoy a bit of 'Spot the Difference'

of controlling oneself and the re-warming drills that needed to follow the course personnel literally took the plunge. Everyone did well though particular credit must be given to LCpl Fearon RY who, being a PTI, got particularly harsh treatment crawling into the lake. The course was a resounding success with lots of smiling faces as we made our way back into camp little knowing what the month ahead had in store for us.

As I write this we have just completed our 6th week in tight lockdown which was enacted after COVID-19 finally breached the Battle-group defences/counter measures hitting the US contingent first with our chefs being the first UK element to be struck, the virus having been contracted from the cookhouse. The impact over the Christmas period was significant but through effort and focus the Tp and those back home (not least the RY and QDG Associations) the

best was made of a bad situation. It was a relief immediately post Christmas to get back to training, keeping the soldiers' minds busy and managing COVID-19 as best we could in a sensible and pragmatic fashion enabling us to do our mission.

The story of Cassino Troop is not yet complete; with half the tour left, demo-



The course was a resounding success with lots of smiling faces



Range Steak Sandwich

bilisation of the Reserve element and reintegration of the personnel to their various regular and reserve regiments there is a long way yet to go before we can call it a true success. Critically it is the legacy which Cassino Troop hopes to leave that is most important helping pull the RY and QDG closer together for future mutual benefit through integration.

BM



Tpr 'Veg' Williams trying not to think about food



Turkey Bowl – Tpr Hellyar-Jones receiver

Command Troop

The year began early for Command Troop driving Land Rovers to Germany for CSTTX. In the cold German winter, the DRASH only went up once, which was a relief to everyone involved, but this only gave more time for building models for the ROC drills, which were soon destroyed by torrential downpours. Sgt Maj Hamilton kindly went home to get a spare TV he had for BGHQ, which lasted a couple of days into WESSEX STORM until the Adj dropped it. On the way back from Germany, only one of the Land Rovers had to be rolled off the train at Folkestone and recovered to camp.

On returning from Germany, there was more driving to be done as several shuttle runs of Land Rovers went between Westdown Camp and RBSM to ferry all the trailers needed for WESSEX STORM. Sgt Hazelwood only thought he would have to manage

a few vehicles as Comd Tp Sgt but was shocked to find BGHQ bulging at 49 personnel and 22 vehicles by the final training exercise.

Vehicles came from all over the country to support the behemoth that was BGHQ. A panicked search for radios on one of the LTF vehicles required us to wake up our sleeper cell of LCpl M and Tpr Y in RBSM. After a diligent but unsuccessful search, Sgt Hazelwood was forced to return to camp and found them in five minutes. Amid numerous instances of vehicles breaking down, switching crews and getting stuck in the mud, Comd Tp pulled it out the bag and delivered BGHQ in frankly horrendous conditions on Salisbury Plain on the first battlegroup exercise for seven years. After a lot of work getting the vehicles back up to scratch, they were sent back to Norfolk by train and the year

finally settled down a little.

After what had been almost back-to-back exercises since April, Comd Tp did not know what to do with itself when faced with a quiet spring and summer. The incoming Sgt Welfoot and his cage of justice soon put an end to this, and spring cleaning began for every corner of the compound. The RSO's weekly stables parades paid off when the QM(T) dropped a four-Panther CO's stables parade at short notice and the Troop pulled it out of the bag.

After support to Warcop ranges and summer leave, the pace ramped up again as Comd Tp became masters of EXCON for CASSINO Tp's MRX, Mullens Cup and SERE, playing enemy and sitting on top of mountains when required to supervise Officer Cadets.

After driving SVs and playing computer games for a few weeks on Ex CERBERUS, Comd Tp finally got a well-earned day out after countless failed attempts. Exercise SPLATTED EAGLE finally gave the Troop a chance to give Sgt Welfoot a taste of his own medicine by pelting him with paintballs. LCpl Phillips proved himself as a terminator and LCpl Matthews received a suitable pelting to send him on his way in civvy street.

The Troop finished the year with some great achievements under its belt and with a clearer battle rhythm and structure. A challenging 2021 will be another great opportunity for Comd Tp to prove itself in supporting the Regiment behind the scenes in its essential work.

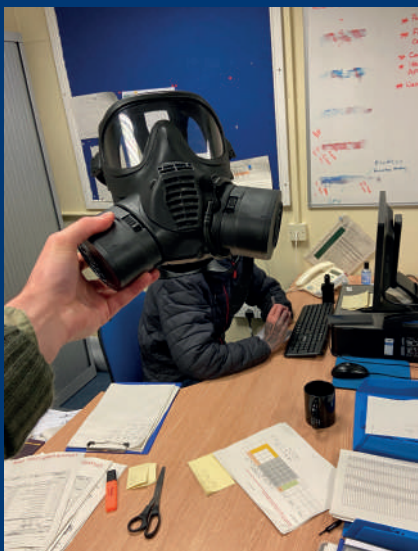


It made a change from Airsoft

ADC



Hear no evil



Smell no evil



Speak no evil

Training Wing

The Training Wing was a place of great mystery and uncertainty in 2020. You could go in on a Monday and see one set of TrgO and TrgWOs, and then be back on Tuesday and see a completely different duo. Despite the fluctuating manning however, the team has managed to convene and assign an impressive array of courses and training, despite all that Corona Virus threw at it.

In recent years Ex WESSEX STORM had begun to feel like familiar territory, with Tps and Sqns periodically rotating in and out to support it or to play enemy. But 2020 saw a step up. In January the QDG deployed as a battle-group to Westdown Camp, a chance for individuals and tps to understand their roles and challenge themselves but also an opportunity to gain validation ahead of operations next year. Under the guidance of Capt George Jackson FTU, the Sqns tackled a number of Battle Exercises and CALFEX lanes. The current TrgO, Capt Oakley, was particularly impressed with the heroic leadership of the handsome and adored C Sqn 2IC throughout.

Upon return from Ex WESSEX STORM training looked as if it would pause due to COVID-19 and a nationwide lockdown. This threat of a lull in training was met by an underground resistance, led by Cpls Canning and Gurung who made the most of everyone being restricted to camp and went about convening level BCS and driver training. This was of course all

carefully managed and coordinated to ensure a COVID secure training environment.

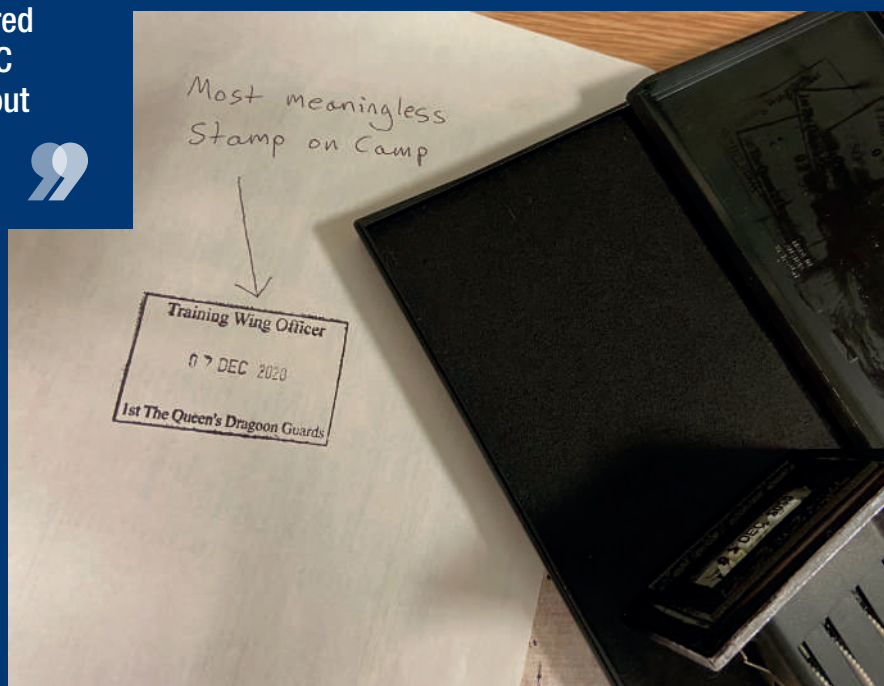
As the summer drew to a close the regiment saw one of its busiest periods. The March and Shoot, Mullens Cup and EVASION EAGLE SERE exercise (organised by the famed Field Marshall Charlie Byrd rtd), putting Troops through their paces and reminding them that despite lockdown – they were combat arms soldiers and offered a taste of the high intensity training awaiting them in the run up to Op NEWCOMBE in 2021.

TO



Evil

“The current TrgO, Capt Oakley, was particularly impressed with the heroic leadership of the handsome and adored C Sqn 2IC throughout



Welfare

2020 has been an extremely busy year for the small Welfare team, we are currently working through our 3rd lockdown along with the rest of the Regiment and juggling another deployment on OP CABRIT. Working alongside our local schools and our very own Noah's Ark preschool, the team, coupled with the Padre (Maj Stephen Wilson) and Bill McNiven from our WRVS, has tried to support the soldiers and their families as best we can.

The first few months of 2020 saw the Regiment deployed on WESSEX STORM relying on the Welfare staff to pick up the extra support needed back at camp, we used the PRI minibus to take children to school and those that required transport for medical appointments. The weather was good to us at this point, and this allowed families and single soldiers time in their gardens to catch some rays or to enjoy a bit of fresh air.

Shortly after this we went into the first lockdown which saw the team helping families adjust to isolation and fetching essentials. When the Government announced you should self-isolate if you had symptoms Sgt Green and Cpl Watson jumped into action conducting Tesco trips on what seemed like an hourly basis. Unfortunately, at this point the decision was made to close our precious preschool and the youngsters we care for had to stay home. We quickly adjusted the Welfare complex into a COVID clear zone with one-way systems and interviews

conducted outside when the weather permitted. The nail in the coffin was closing the Dragon's Den café and not knowing when it would open again. On the plus side, the Welfare Officer lost a bit of weight.

Noah's Ark preschool has recently opened again and is now thriving with some 24 children on their books. Rebecca and her team are doing a fantastic job constantly recruiting to keep the nursery vibrant and full of life. We now also allow children from outside the wire from the local village adding to our local engagement.

All in a great year for QDG Welfare team and the community group that supports us daily on all that we want to deliver. 2021 will hopefully bring new challenges, with the Welfare Officer Capt Jason (Butch) Davies now moving on to QM(T) and Capt Trevor Homer armed with funding from the Armed Forces Covenant can arrange an out of isolation/lockdown party that will bring the Regimental family together once again. We have also said goodbye to Sgt Louise Green and Sgt David Watson who have both left the Regiment for now but have left the running of the Welfare complex to Sgt John Hinton who brings a wealth of experience in this role and will add massive value as we gear up to our Regimental deployment.

JPD

Light Aid Detachment

A busy year for the LAD has seen tradesmen & tradeswomen supporting the Regiment on a broad range of training. The LAD provided essential equipment support throughout the exercises, ensuring the punch was kept in the QDG's fist.

On Ex WESSEX STORM, a 25 strong LAD maintained a fleet of over 150 platforms above 85% availability for the entire exercise. Main Assembly repairs and replacements were completed with no shelter through two named storms. The Recovery Mechanics were in constant demand, with miserable conditions on Salisbury Plain causing considerable problems for vehicle manoeuvre. Junior tradesmen rose to the challenge, coming up with innovative expedient repairs and exemplifying the 'Soldier First' mantra. In the rehabilitation phase, the Fitter Sections cracked on tirelessly, even when much of the Regiment enjoyed a night out in Warminster.

As the UK went into lockdown, the LAD was tasked with raising an Op RESCRIPT

fleet. This involved mainly green fleet, which was turned around in short order. As most of the LAD repaired the broken fleet from Ex WS, A Sqn Fitter Section deployed as part of the Mobile Testing Units across various areas of the UK.

Despite Covid-19 FHP measures, the LAD persevered to maintain production and output. Briefs and training were conducted virtually, with JNCOs continuing to mentor Cfn on trade principles and procedures.

In September, the LAD deployed a composite Fitter Section to support Ex CASSINO ROYAL and Mullens Cup on Salisbury Plain. LAD personnel provided SME assistance to a Reserve Fitter Section from 103 Bn REME in their preparation for Op CABRIT. The Reserve Fitter Section performed extremely well on the MRX and are doing an excellent job in Poland which has proven the value of the REME Reserves and enhanced pairing activity.

Following the second national



Cfn Murphy competing in the St Eligius Engineering Challenge

lockdown, the LAD completed a gruelling charity event to celebrate St. Eligius Day, the patron saint of the REME. The charity event saw LAD personnel complete 588 Push ups; 588 sit ups; 58.8 miles on a treadmill; 58.8 miles on a bike and 58.8 miles on a rowing machine in teams of seven. Concurrently, they undertook a series of engineering challenges. Cfn Cheetham's team was victorious and £320 was raised for the REME Charity.

The LAD now looks ahead to deploying Fitter Sections on Op NEWCOMBE 2 and 3 which promises to be the most challenging deployment currently available to any REME soldier.

SD



B Sqn Fitter Section deal with a bogged in Land Rover on Ex WESSEX STORM

SPS Detachment



2020 has been a busy yet unique year for the SPS Detachment, providing continued support to the Regiment in all exercises and deployments.

At the onset of the COVID 19 pandemic in March some of the Det were in Austria on the annual AGC Alpine Ski trip, this was cancelled after just a few days on the slopes. Our skiers were then held in self-isolation, coupled with many more members of the Det also having to isolate, meant that at one point the Det was down to critical manning with just four Det members in camp to conduct the all-important RACs (Readiness Administration Checks) ready for the Regiment to deploy on various COVID taskings.

Cpl Ashley Greenwood, LCpl Robyn Purvis and Pte Katherine Clough all deployed on MTU tasks with their Squadrons. Cpl Greenwood organised two golf events; the golf Luck Cup and 'The Longest Day' golf endurance event, raising funds for the Macmillan Cancer Support charity. LCpl Purvis deployed on navigation training in the Peak District and the SERE exercise, which she



Twins, the remake



LCpl Hodgson enjoying Op CABRIT

put in a great effort to complete. Cpl Carly Bernard co-hosted a Macmillan coffee morning in the Dragons Den. In November the Det also took part in an 11-mile weighted march on Remembrance Day to raise money for the RBL and the QDG Benevolent Fund. The Det managed few social events in 2020 and most communication was via Skype however we did manage a games

evening which was enjoyed by all.

In July the entire Det went to Warcop to conduct ranges where the RAWO, WO2 Darren Nicholl finally passed his APWT with the help of some cross-lane firing from the RAO.

We celebrated promotions to Cpl for LCpl Martyn Hodgson and LCpl Hari Bakhem. LCpl Hodgson deployed on Op CABRIT and continues to provide excellent HR assistance for the operation until Spring 2021. The average age of the Regiment plummeted in September when the RAO, Capt Mark Eldridge, deployed on Op TOSCA, Cyprus, to plan his retirement in the sun. Lt Nathan Rixson took over the role of RAO with ease, ensuring that all his fellow officers mess members were never selected for audit.

The forthcoming year looks to be action packed and the Det continue to work hard to ensure the Regiment is 100 per cent ready to deploy.

We said thank you and farewell to WO2 Darren Nicholl, Sgt Shelley-Ann Berry, Cpl Glen Andrews, Cpl Thomas Brownless and Pte Sophie Fisher. We welcomed WO2 Christopher Farr, Pte Suraj Limbu and Pte Ethan Hill.



Catering Department

The year 2020 looked so promising. With our diaries filled to the maximum ready for the annual celebrations, Mess functions and BBQs. Then Lockdown was upon us, and what followed was a first for all of us.

Firstly, the department was deployed on EX WESSEX STORM. Where we split down into two teams with Cpl Reed and LCpl Gitau being sent to work in a busy field kitchen which was met with its own challenges including the weather, where Storm Dennis proved too strong to keep all the kitchen in one place! The rest of the department were deployed to the Regiment's favourite location West Down Camp. This also met with its own challenges with the team having to work with Chefs from India and their great hygiene practices!

LCpl Pun had the pleasure of being the first member of the Regiment to deploy on OP RESCRIPT where he supported the QOGLR Regiment during the national Lockdown. He did this with great feedback and high praise from all personnel involved with the operation.

After a quiet summer with all the functions and celebrations being cancelled, most of the department swapped their ladles for rifles and went up to a very rainy Warcop in Cumbria for the Regimental ranges. Following this LCpl Gitau managed to get himself a long assign-



ment to BATUK and Sgt Hodgson and Pte Watson were deployed on OP CABRIT.

Next came the support of the Mullens Cup, whilst the majority of the Regiment were competing in the competition, Cpl Gurung and Pte Bromley-Morris set up a feeding station serving up some tasty morsels at the EXCON location.

Moving on to late September/early October the regiment deployed on the SERE exercise. In support of this the department had lots of fun handling dead rabbits, trout and making a small temporary home to 30 live chickens. The team of Cpl Gurung and Pte Bromley-Morris were together again in another successful triumph in feeding the

troops before the testing 48hrs ahead. Whilst in location they had a visit from the Commanding Officer and guests including the Deputy commander 1 UK Div Brigadier Yann Gravethe in which a VIP lunch was produced which was enjoyed by all attending.

Sgt Dunn achieved a number of refereeing milestones, achieving a promotion 7-6, the pleasure of refereeing the semi-final and final of the Edwards Cup (Women's Football), Masey Trophy and the REME cup semi-final. He was also appointed 2 fixtures in the FA Vase non-league civilian competition.

NM

We would like to welcome the following from the department:

Sgt Dunn arrived arriving from 35 Engineer Regiment (EOD).

Cpl Akerman from 26 Engineer Regiment and Pte Bromley-Morris from the Scots Guards.

And say goodbye to some members on well-earned promotions:

Cpl Reed promoted to Sgt and posted to 7 Reg RLC.

LCpl Pun was finally promoted after a long 6-year spell at Robertson Barracks.

Congratulations also to LCpl Gitau and Pte Watson who also promoted.

RAP

The RAP's year started on Salisbury Plain in January on EX WESSEX STORM. There had been substantial planning and preparation for this, so it was a great run out for the team. The RAP was bolstered by the RY med Sgt – Sgt Yeates, who was there getting experience for her deployment to OP CABRIT later in the year. Despite the windy and wet weather, the experience for the RAP was overwhelmingly positive with really useful training and great feedback. SO2 CSS FTU stated that the RAP was 'the best he had seen' in his 3 years in role. A real credit to the team and their performance.

Post EX WESSEX STORM two members of the RAP (LCpl Pickard and Cpl Siddall) moved on leaving the RAP rather depleted. However, we soon had Cpl Berryman posted in to bolster numbers. Then COVID-19 hit. This slowed down a lot of activity for the RAP in the firm base as through the initial lockdown, FHP and patient contact largely stopped. The RAP did what they could to support DPHC and the contract staff from the local North Elmham surgery. Morale was kept up with a bake-off style cake competition, quizzes and internal training.

Eventually restrictions were lifted, and life began to move back to normal with FHP for members of Casino Troop deploying on OP CABRIT, medical range covers and the odd exercise. The RAP juniors have excelled themselves

by taking over the old morgue on camp and converting this into a team medic training facility. They have invested a huge amount of time and effort and this has paid off with the excellent feedback they have received from course students.

The whole RAP deployed onto EX EVASION EAGLE in October with Cpl Newbury also working as a SERE instructor. The harsh conditions of the exercise provided the CMTs with plenty of opportunity to use their core skills and integrate with the unit. There were some really significant MEDEVACS that saved lives and ultimately were used as an example of good practice by 1XX.

In addition to mentoring the RY med Sgt we have also had 2 of their CMTs through, for extended periods, the DPHC medical centre. These placements have helped to boost the RY medical capability as well as the individuals core skills. In addition, it has been great for the

RAP to have juniors to bring on and mentor. Into the final part of the year and the focus is back to delivering vaccinations and other FHP in preparation for 2021 and the multiple deployments that will keep us all busy. With good news on the horizon of the RAP approaching full manning with 2 new members to be posted in.

CLP



SO2 CSS FTU stated that the RAP was 'the best he had seen' in his 3 years in role





Gymnasium

Introduction

2020 has been an interesting year for the gymnasium as we had Covid-19 affecting us all. As a department we have had a big influence in various areas such as physical development, a major regimental deployment, and event organisation for the unit.

Gym Reopening

It was important as a department to get the facility open as soon as it was safe to do so, as we could see it was starting to affect the soldiers mental and physical wellbeing. Due to the restrictions placed on gymnasiums it was challenging but rewarding task. As a department we ensured that we had all the rules and regulations in place so we can have a covid-19 safe facility.

As soldiers it's important that we have physical training facilities, as this aids our deployability, mental and physical health.

PNCO Cadre

As a department we delivered a successful Potential Non-Commission Officer course. As this is the first step to becoming a junior commander the course is designed to be testing, the soldiers are tested mentally and physically. These include elements such as Role Fitness Test specifics which the soldiers need to be successful in to remain on the course. The physical training element is arduous, to see them develop as potential junior non-commission officers.

New Physical Training Instructors

As a teeth arms unit it's important that we keep our physical fitness to a high standard. As a department it's important that we have a constant flow of new instructors coming in so, we can ensure that we keep the unit physically fit and ready for any task that arises. The newest member of our team is LCpl Pitt who has completed his 9 week All Arms Physical Training Instructor course at Aldershot.

Regimental Christmas Day

Even though we had an uncertain year with Covid changing the way we do things as a unit, we still had a good closing to the year with a bit of fun, before we sent everyone off on Christmas leave. The gym planned



As a teeth arms unit it's important that keep our physical fitness to a high standard



LCpl Pitt prays for divine intervention



The IR promises Arty investment



And delivers



a good Turkey Trot where we see the regiment chasing the RSM dressed as a turkey.

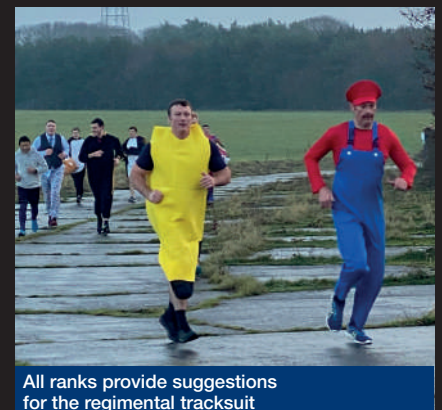
End Note

It has been yet again another successful and rewarding year for the Gymnasium and the staff on a whole. Rolling into 2021 with pre-deployment training commencing early in the new year preparing C Squadron for their deployment to Mali. Physical Development for the regiment in 2021 will see the introduction of the Non-GCC Physical Employment Standards which replaces the AFT. The Department aims to ensure that physical readiness of the unit remains to a high standard.

CE



RSM Turkey



All ranks provide suggestions for the regimental tracksuit

The Guardroom (Regimental Duty Staff)

2020 has been a barmy year by anyone's standards, not least because it has seen the Regimental Duty Staff actually do some work! With the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the RDS remit has expanded from chastising people for walking on the Queen's grass to strictly enforcing the government's social distancing measures.

The year began with Sgt Grey handing over responsibility of RDS Sgt to Sgt "Sonic" Davies, who was immediately joined in his tyrannical reign as 'trouser-twister enforcer' by Cpl "Wolfy" Thomas and LCpl "Receding" Sims. Being that Sgt Davies is a PTI, there's no prize for guessing what punishment was administered for any and all minor indiscretions.

Midway through the year and – as a siren to a sailor – the call of the gym proved too much for Sgt Davies to resist, as he took a posting which enabled him to do what he loves best everyday: wear tight shorts. The proverbial baton was then passed to his 2iC, and natural successor to the throne, Cpl Thomas,



The provost take delivery of their 2m spacing pace sticks

which will provide him with invaluable experience as his QDG career draws to a close, and he embarks upon a career more befitting his age...with the MPGS. September saw LCpl Sims exchange the warm, fatherly embrace of the guardroom for the cold, indifferent step-uncle that is Warminster as he embarked upon his Javelin Det. Commanders' course, in desperate search of a way back into a

sabre squadron. Adding some diversity to HQ Sqn, LCpl Sims was replaced by LCpl Al-Ameri.

Despite the turnover in personalities, the overarching message of the Duty Staff has been a much-needed beacon of consistency to The Regiment in these uncertain times: "Stay two metres apart, [insert expletive]!"

HA

The Weight of Waiting

How long, Lord God Almighty, ...restore us, God Almighty; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

Psalms 80 Verses 4 & 7

'How long, Lord?' – I am pretty sure we have all uttered those words. Whilst stuck in a traffic jam, in a queue or waiting for something. Possibly the Editor of this year's journal, as he waits for submissions of content that are well overdue (I have repented!). I have certainly asked the question, as I am sure have many of you, as we have travelled the turbulent pathways of COVID this year.

'How long, Lord?' This is the cry of Psalm 80, a community prayer which depicts extreme national distress. There is a continued cry for restoration throughout this psalm, and particularly in the repeated refrain of 'Restore us, God Almighty'. These words from Psalm 80 seem to resonate in our world today.

Advent, the four week period leading up to Christmas is traditionally a time of waiting. It is a time both to reflect on the year that we are leaving behind and to anticipate what is coming and what lies ahead.



**These words
from Psalm
80 seem to
resonate in our
world today**



As we began 2020, none of us could have imagined the year that lay ahead of us.

Many of the things that we would have liked to have done this year were cancelled or postponed.

Just before lock-down, in March I welcomed the Bishop of Norwich, The Right Reverend Graham Usher to Robertson Barracks. Bishop Graham had a tour of the Officers' Mess and was introduced to Lance Corporal Jones by the Farrier Major. Bishop Graham very much enjoyed his visit.

On the 11th November, a small group of us were able to gather at the War memorial at All Saints Church in Swanton Morley to hold an Act of Remembrance and lay wreaths. We then held another short Act of Remembrance and laid Wreaths at the Memorial in Swanton Morley village to Soldiers from the Light Dragoons and attached LAD, who lost their lives in the service of their country in Afghanistan.

We find ourselves at the end of this year back in lockdown, as cases of COVID rise once again, with second strain. It may be tempting to write 2020



LCpl Jones takes communion

off and I think that there is an element in all of us who feel this way. As the world around us gears up for new strains of COVID and new constraints on our lives, it is easy to forget that there is hope.

There is no shame in asking God 'how long?' Whether that is the cry of loneliness, of unfulfilled dreams, of grief, or of despair, but we must remember that lament – our sense of loss and hope go together. Without one the other makes little sense.

2021 promises to be another busy year for 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards and those who are deployed are very much in my prayers, as are those who are preparing to deploy. May this be a year of hope, of healing and of restoration. Every Blessing to you all.

**The Reverend Stephen Wilson CF
Chaplain**

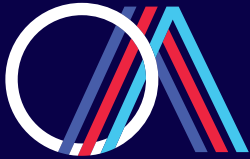
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**OFFICERS'
ASSOCIATION**

Officers' Mess



2Lts Fullaway, Al-Khameri and Upward being 'bloodied' on the Mess shoot



Lt Maxwell stocking up for lockdown!



Lts Lewis and Groome having a rough day



Lts Cooper and Rixson stealing the silverware



2Lt Dillon 'improving' the mess furniture



Cpts Kite, Russell and Hind reflecting after a tough exercise

2020 has been a difficult year for everyone, but the Officers' Mess has remained stalwart in its role as the home of the QDG's young officers and the guardians of the Regiment's historical treasures. January saw the Mess Shoot take place on the Keith's neighbouring estate, the return of the Winter Sports teams from Switzerland and France and the arrival of 4 newly commissioned 2Lts who were thrust immediately into the fray with Ex WESSEX STORM as a recce for their Crew Comd's course.

On return from exercise in March, COVID was in full swing, and the Officers' Mess formed their household in the safe confines of rural Norfolk, with a host of new rules and regulations to comply with to remain COVID secure. This led

to some ingenious ways of keeping fit and active. Notably the 'Officers Press' garage gym and outdoor fitness sessions designed by Lts Brockless and Lewis, as well as Swanton Morley's first 9 hole golf course, designed by our long-suffering Gardens Member, Lt Cooper.

Many of the mess members took up interesting hobbies, Lt Barham as a budding mechanic fixing his kit car, whilst Lt Maxwell and 2Lt Dillon borrowed some tools from their Sqn Ldr to 'fix' the garden furniture. Spike Ball made its first appearance, and is



2Lt Dillon borrowed some tools to 'fix' the garden furniture

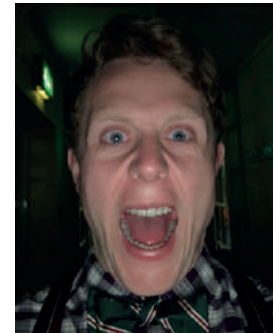


now considered an outdoor alternative to Squash, and Wimbledon was brought to Norfolk this year in the tennis courts next to the mess. April saw the arrival of 3 more 2Lts to the mess ranks and we started to get up to full Platoon strength of living in members. With Cavalry Memorial weekend cancelled in London, the mess conducted its own remembrance parade, with Capt Campbell playing a faultless Last Post on the mess trumpet, followed by a socially distanced lunch in the back garden.

By June however the Regiment was



Alpine Skiing Team welcoming the rest of the RAC to the party!



Capt Campbell's calm demeanour shining through



The Livers in



Senior Subaltern enforcing COVID measures



Capt Chaplin unimpressed with the Cav Mem lunch



C Sqn Officers lost on Wessex Storm

committed to Op RESCRIPT and many of our young able 2LTs were spirited away to support the nation in its time of need. This quiet period allowed the mess some time to reflect and take note of what was going on in the world, with Capt Chaplin and Lt Groome organising some current affairs quizzes to stimulate the minds of the young thinkers in the mess. We also waved goodbye to 4 of our steadfast veteran living in members, Capts CE Carter, Hind, Layzell-Payne and Russell.

As the summer came to a close, QDG activity picked up and after deploying to Warcop Ranges, an arduous survival exercise in Otterburn and Op CABRIT pre-deployment training it was time for the Christmas season to begin.

The mess was back to full strength and as we prepared for a season of hosting guests and the arrival of a vaccine to give us hope, the north of the country took a turn for the worse. A Sqn officers dutifully donned their Pontins polo shirts and sped to Liverpool's aid to assist with the mass testing of the city's inhabitants.

With Op MOONSHOT being hailed as a success and C Sqn having completed some chilly exercises on STANTA as they prepared for the desert conditions of the Sahel, the Mess was ready for its final weeks...

A Sqn officers dutifully donned their Pontins polo shirts and sped to Liverpool's aid to assist with the mass testing



example for the country to follow.

Alas, COVID always has a vote. The Officers' Mess was struck down by none other than the Senior Subaltern testing positive for the virus and the officers were forced into isolation to finish off the year.

In summary, this unique experience has shown that in the face of adversity, a global pandemic, near economic ruin and a Brexit deal just about making it through the Commons, the QDG Officers' Mess has and will continue to set the

JDK

WOs' & Sgts' Mess



Sgt Chater gutted he hasn't got a WO on his other side

2020 has seen a massive shift in work and social patterns for all. Noticeably greater for the WOs' & Sgts' Mess as work and social settings are what bond and unite the members. Luckily there were two major events that encapsulated the ethics and camaraderie of the Seniors and Warrant Officers of the Regiment before COVID-19 measures took hold.

Exercise Wessex Storm 20 saw the Seniors and Warrant Officers deploy in their various roles supporting the Regiment who performed to a very high standard, as expected. Proving the viability and employability of QDG and light cavalry. This exercise took place from January to the beginning of March. Swiftly followed by the last social event of 2020, a Generations and dine out weekend 13-15 March.

After a last-minute risk assessment adjustment due to the COVID-19 updates the weekend started with a meet and greet in the mess. Thankfully stocks of hand sanitizer were available for Russ Gallagher to slyly pump into anyone's coke if they asked for vodka. Usual bar antics ensued, and the atmosphere gradually relaxed as the alcohol started to block the "when I was in" stories. Family members genuinely seemed enthused by being in the mess and interested in the history and their QDG associate's involvement.

Saturday's activities kicked off with an excellent brunch and an even better safety brief. A round robin of military style stands made up the bulk of the day with the afternoon put aside for the rugby. Unfortunately the rugby was cancelled so the bar without the rugby on was the next best thing. Before the alcohol however mess members escorted their guests around the 25m range – pistol and rifle shooting, capability stand, equipment stands and shotgun shooting. All of the stands were put together brilliantly, big shout out to Sgt Aaron Morgan – civilians on a range is never an easy prospect! True to his roots Danny Glover demonstrated his C Sqn heritage by gaining the accolade of best shot, like he'd never left. Ben Schofield similarly took the shotgun title, absolutely nothing to do with his police firearms training.

Early afternoon pie and chips preceded regaling of the day's activities in the bar with all members until late afternoon. A quick change into mess dress and black tie saw guests arrive for a champagne reception to kick off the formal dinner and dine outs.

Capt Dez O'Connor has commissioned and is currently posted to LD. WO1 Wayne Davies, WO1 Rob Jones and



Unfortunately the rugby was cancelled so the bar without the rugby on was the next best thing

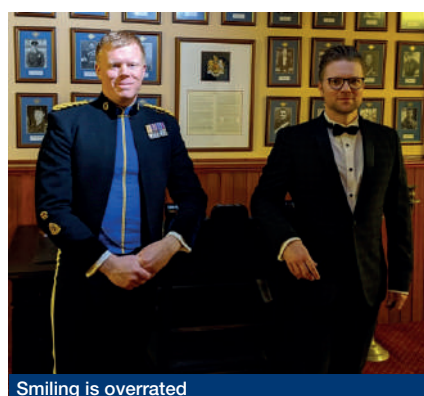


WO1 Barney Costello have all completed their military service. Having the Dine Out combined with the generations weekend meant that those that have completed their time in the mess could share this special occasion with chosen guests including family. This was an extra special element. WO1 Rob Jones had a full cheerleading squad which included Maj Tim Moore and other golden oldies. Speeches are an integral part of dine outs. On this occasion they demonstrated the varied and distinguished careers that all involved have held, a genuine honour to listen to them and have something to aspire to. We wish them the best of luck and look forward to many an RV in the Diff.

Normal formal dinner night etiquette ensured all of the guests and members had an excellent time, including Scouse Ananins who lost his seat due to having a peanut sized bladder. The next day all gathered for a brunch before parting ways into the magical mystery tour that is 2020.

Hopefully 2021 will see the mess members be able to gather socially at some stage. Noting that as ever they will be busy supporting the Regt on Operational commitments and training.

MAR



Smiling is overrated



The force of opening his wallet causes Gally's tie to come undone



Who knew the Right Said Fred lookalike group were made up of ex-forces

Corporals' Mess

Unfortunately, it has not been a very sociable year for the Cpls mess due to the COVID-19 restrictions. However, this has not stopped the admin that happens behind closed doors.

New Year, new committee. As the old PMC has promoted into his new role, a new PMC has been appointed by the RSM. Whilst fulfilling the CO's intent of flooding the RAC with quality instructors from the Regiment, the Mess had to reform a new committee that fully supported each other and are keen to get their hands dirty. PMC (Cpl Pugh), PEC (Cpl Bernard), Treasurer (Cpl Casey/LCpl Purvis) Bar Manager and Wines Member (LCpl Lewis/LCpl De-Bie), Property Manager (Cpl May), Fire NCO (LCpl Simms). All the names listed have worked incredibly hard during these times to ensure as soon as we are able to open again, we will be able to have a fun and safe function.

It became apparent that during all of our previous years of working hard and partying harder that the mess was due a deep clean! We utilised this time of the mess being shut to get our good friends of ESS to come in and clean everything. We voted it in, and turns out that mess members are more than happy to employ someone externally to come in and clean the mess, who would have thought it? The Cpls Mess is now spotless!

Mess members have been proactive in sorting property out and have found some brilliant photos of some of the "old and bold" and are currently in the process of getting photos framed. This is all in the hope that in the New Year we can invite the hierarchy for a socially distanced pint,



Summer Ball 2020



The Cpls' Mess flex their financial might

they will be able to relive some of their memories in the Cpls Mess.

Quotes are in the pipeline to renovate the rooms where we spend most of our time. We are keen on the idea of having more traditional theme, all walls will be your standard Army magnolia, the PAD's will feel right at home. But also with a QDG blue border around hip height to represent the stable belt.

People have commented on the Mess being dark, so in line with the painting, new blinds have been purchased and are awaiting fitting.

The Cpl's mess has supported the LAD in this year's charity event. The LAD does a fantastic job inside and outside of the Mess. This year the LAD celebrated St Eligius Day by conducting physical and engineering tasks. The Eligius 588 challenge marks the patrons birth year and plays a vital role in raising money for the REME charity.

Christmas is cancelled! I know, horrible to say, this will be the first year we have

seen the mess not opening for Christmas day. We are absolutely gutted. When the new year arrives and guidelines permit, we will find a day where we can invite the Troopers and have a delayed Christmas Day.

On a good note, because the treasurers have done such a fantastic job on ensuring people are on top of their payments, we were able to have a massive Christmas Prize draw. We spent £15,000 on prizes which gave the odds of a 50% chance of winning a prize. Never has something like this been done. Rumour has it that LCpl Purvis is still shopping to this day.

COVID has obviously played havoc with our functions this year. However, in the new year we are anticipating being able to open the Cpls' Mess as a bar in line with Government Guidelines. Everyone is looking forward to when we can socialise again as a regiment and I foresee it being over a few pints.

DP

**We spent
£15,000 on
prizes which
gave the odds
of a 50%
chance of
winning a prize**



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Troopers' Bar



Back Street's back, Alright!

The old and bold amongst us will no doubt remember the great nights spent propping up the various Squadron Bars around camp. From the Bars in the Osnabruck Squadron offices to the basement bars of Dempsey Barracks, they started to seem like a distant memory. The newer members of the Regiment have heard the tales of the infamous C Squadron green blow up chair and quick midnight dashes to the guardroom wearing nothing but a slither of toilet roll.

Every climate assessment that the Commanding Officer and RSM held mentioned the need and want for a bar that the Troopers could run and socialise in. A plan was hatched! With the QM, Capt Homewood, spearheading the charge; the old and unused NAAFI bar was gifted to the Troopers to set up and use as their own. SSM A, Mr Hopkins, and 4 Troopers from each of the Sqns were selected to form the core committee of the new Troopers Bars.

Tprs Lewis, Furlley, Roberts, and Taylor were selected by their peers to represent them in the set up and running of the bar. Selection criteria set out by their fellow Tprs fell along the line of "good on the sesh" or "once applied for a job at Wetherspoons".

Nevertheless, their tireless efforts and the support of their friends enabled the grand opening of the bar by the CO. With



Simon Cowell's new boyband was ideally suited for radio

the walls adorned with recent memorabilia and items gifted by their fellow Tprs, the stage was set. There were drinks flowing, songs being sung and even a dodgy DJ in the corner. They did themselves proud.

The bar continued to run seamlessly for a few weekday evenings and weekends. Tpr Tyler Roberts was promoted, with Tpr Walker taking his place as the lead for B Sqn.

Then COVID hit like a tonne of bricks!

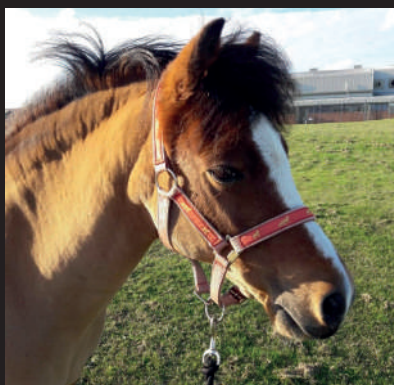
Unfortunately, the Troopers bar has had to fall in line with the guidance like the rest of the UK hospitality industry. But it is not the end, far from it... lockdown has given the committee plenty of time to continue to decorate whilst planning theme nights and parties post COVID. We wait for the next opening with bated breath.

RDH

LCpl Emrys Jones 959

This year has been a slow and challenging year with COVID-19 taking the toll on the country. With almost every event being cancelled due to local lockdowns as well as country wide lockdowns. LCpl Jones has spent this year in two locations. The first location being Lulworth in Dorset with his other field buddy Rodney. LCpl Jones attended Bovington Camp to meet some of the new QDG soldiers making their way through their phase two training this was always a challenge as we had to maintain the two-metre rule. The second location is the home of the Regiment Robertson Barracks in Swanton Morley where he has carried out his regimental duties in camp.

LCpl Jones was also invited to attend a pass off parade held in Harrogate (Army Foundation Collage). This was one of the largest parades that he had attended for some time where there was 400 phase one soldiers passing off. LCpl Jones had a key role to play in this event as he was given the task of marching on the VIP guests. It was also a great opportunity



for the Commanding Officer Lt Col Simon Farebrother MC (QDG) and Brigadier Alan Richmond OBE to once again meet their regimental mascot. I would say the highlight of the event was meeting Capt Sir Thomas Moore and having the honour of having a photo taken with him.

On the 17th December LCpl Jones was in Wales attending three different hospitals with the Unit Welfare Officer Capt Davies, supporting the charity Dreams & Wishes where gifts will be dropped off for the children that



LCpl Jones and his field buddy (Disco) attempting to assist the Farrier Major in his duties



are under the support for the charity Dreams & Wishes.

MH

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WESSEX
STORM**

The first battlegroup exercise since 2013 was always going to be a steep learning curve but, as ever, the QDG Battlegroup pulled out the stops and on Salisbury Plain in February gave the enemy a notably bloody nose, achieving validation at the first opportunity.

We managed to deploy three squadrons, BGHQ and two echelons with B Echelon holding the fort in Westdown Camp. The scale of the exercise was unprecedented with 2,000 troops on Salisbury Plain, three battlegroups being validated and Brigade HQ getting a runout, albeit from the comfort of Westdown Camp.

After a cheery welcome to Westdown Camp from the QM Capt Homewood and his B Echelon team, the training progression kicked off with an excellent range package run by Sgt Maj Beal.

After Mr Griffiths got back into his natural role as TES LO with his sidekick Cpl Cullen, the Sqns were tested on Battle Exercises, which included a raid on Keevil Airfield, allowing



The battle exercises provided a lot of training value



Sqns to push the boundaries and rehearse their integrated mounted and dismounted assaults. The battle exercises provided a lot of training value, especially after months of being unable to train with Jackals.



BFAs ruin photos

Maj Ruggles-Brise had managed to procure an abundance of equipment from industry including sights and ground sensors that enabled troops to site observation posts up to 2 km off the target.

The combined arms live fire exercise (CALFEX), although not really combined



Where did I leave that Jackal?



Cold hands warm hearts



Non-Tac use a track



Bad hair day



"And over there, Col, you can see A Sqn getting bogged in"

arms at all, was approached with gusto from all Sqns, and the infantry safety staff were shocked by the firepower Light Cavalry could muster, particularly on the night serial.

BGHQ had returned from CSTTX in Germany with a week turnaround before deploying to Salisbury Plain but nothing could quell Maj Tyson's zeal for putting up DRASH and taking it down again on what would be his last exercise in the green Army.

Wintery conditions on Salisbury Plain were exacerbated by the deluges and strong winds of Storms Ciara and Dennis which did not help with seeing the targets but did provide plenty of opportunity for troop-level vehicle recovery.

Reinforcements from the Royal Yeomanry arrived in time for the Commanding Officer's runout consisting

of a TEWT, raid and a Rearward Passage Of Lines. This was the first time many of the troops had worked in a Battlegroup context and it was phenomenally useful.

Exercise ARCHER was the first exercise run by the Field Training Unit and gave an insight into just a few of the frictions to be encountered in the coming two weeks as well as a chance to rehearse OPs and our anti-armour matrix. In all the chaos, Mr Ruddy's crew managed to capture two Warriors and their crews.

Exercise ODIN was the final training exercise and saw several encounters with the enemy's armoured reserve. Battlegroup advances both directions across the plain, numerous CTRs and complex raids made for a challenging couple of weeks. We made good use of our anti-armour screen and Sgt Maj Hamil-

In all the chaos, Mr Ruddy's crew managed to capture two Warriors and their crews



ton's elaborate network of rebros gave us workable comms in a very contested communications environment. Unlike other Battlegroups, the QDG managed to achieve validation quickly. This not only achieved the main aim, which was to be certified as fit to deploy on operations, but also triggered the start of the optimisation phase, where the enemy became more freethinking, enabling us to innovate and develop our battlegroup practices.

As ENDEX was being called, the Adjutant inadvertently volunteered the Commanding Officer for a further tasking, but it soon settled down. The hard work began for the LAD and QM Department



...nothing
could quell Maj
Tyson's zeal
for putting up
DRASH and
taking it down
again



to get the fleet of Jackals and support vehicles back to their home locations all over the UK in good order but not before the Brigade photograph where camcream was reapplied (or applied for the first time).

WESSEX STORM was an excellent training opportunity for the Sqns, BGHQ and the Echelons. It marks a significant achievement in our training progression and, despite Salisbury Plain throwing its worst at us, it will be remembered nostalgically for years to come.

ADC



Never further than an arm's reach...

Pontins

This was the third round of COVID testing that the QDG have carried out over the course of the pandemic, the second for A Sqn. As you can imagine, the Sqn was extremely excited about the prospect of more COVID testing and the opportunity to stay in Pontins, Southport which SSgt Comley assured us was the place of dreams...

As with many of these MACA taskings, you tend to be rushed off to wherever it is that you have been sent with great urgency and short in numbers too, to find that when you arrive at that specific task you haven't been assigned the role that you are to undertake. After a short wait, it became apparent that we would be taking over the RLS (Real Life Support) of what is now been called Pontins camp, housing some 1,758 (although changing daily) soldiers. For those that are unaware this is where the Army was based in order to carry out the Whole City Testing across Liverpool City in the Autumn.

Running Pontins camp was a small blessing in disguise for A Sqn, with Maj James Curry as camp commandant and SSM Hopkins as camp Sergeant Major, day to day life started to run smoother, which

enabled some of the Sqn to get back to RBMS to successfully run a fantastic PNCO Cadre organised and executed by 2Lt Zaki Al-Khamiri (but actually we all know it was Sgt Pitt).

As the weeks went by, the testing was having a positive effect on Liverpool's COVID infection rates. However, we were still chasing the laundry company for one of the coach drivers washing that had gone missing for the third time that week, the odd few

fireworks that the locals sent over the fence which went down like a lead balloon the next morning, and 2Lt Alex Allington moving the odd COVID positive SP into the isolation block enabling the MO to be so accurate at predicting who would test positive next we almost wiped the virus from the camp entirely!

With the entirety of the A Sqn command all working together out of 'The Queen Vic' which was Pontins very own spin off of Peggy Mitchell's famous watering hole it enabled

an enormous amount of Planning to take place for Ex Gao Eagle in Cyprus (January) which has amazingly still taken place even during lockdown Mk3, Ex Rattlesnake in Louisiana (March) before starting PDT (June) and Op Newcombe in the Autumn.

It goes without saying, that although the Whole City Testing in Liverpool was a huge success it cannot be left without a quick mention of the laughs that were had by all when reading the reviews left on TripAdvisor by some 'miscellaneous' soldiers which even received national media attention. Well worth a look!

Although it can be frustrating to be pulled from exciting courses and training exercises, it is clear that everyone within the QDG and Army as a whole, understands the importance and hard work that the military and all of our 'key workers' across the country are doing during this pandemic and I know for a fact, we will all look back with fond memories knowing that we did our part to help.

EC

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“
...and the
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Pontin's TripAdvisor reviews will never recover





Over the chin, nose and eyes, apparently

COVID-19

COVID-19 had a significant impact on the QDG this year and throughout the year we deployed on a number of tasks associated with the military response (OP RESCRIPT). Some had expected to be on a training mission in Nigeria for the summer but instead they made it to even more exotic locations such as Cromer or Dereham. The luckiest even managed to have an extended stay at Pontins Resort! Whilst it might not have been what many expected, everyone involved gave their all to support OP RESCRIPT, whether that was driving ambulances, working on testing sites or providing Real Life Support for the Army's support to mass testing in Liverpool.

The first large task was Task Force DOOGAN, where we aptly provided mounted support to the East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST). The aim was to transfer patients in critical care between hospitals (generally from areas near London to the more rural hospitals) to prevent the East of England requiring a Nightingale Hospital. QDG were perfectly placed to do this as the C Licence required to drive JACKAL was necessary to drive

ambulances. 60 personnel deployed along with Lt Cooper and Sgt Evans to provide the command structure. Drivers took a two-day 'crash' course in ambulance driving (no they weren't allowed to use the lights or sirens!) before TF DOOGAN began taking the strain off EEAST. Luxury was absolute in the Cambridge Holiday Inn, a big improvement from cot beds in Colchester gym which was one plan! The Task Force ran for about three weeks and although everyone wanted to make transfers we were (luckily) underused as the hospitals didn't have anywhere near the congestion predicted. EEAST were great to work with and QDG, as ever, made a great impression on all that they worked with.

Military Testing Units also used a lot of the QDG workforce during the summer. Teams deployed across the East of England and though not the most glamorous of jobs, all recognised the necessity and went about their work with good humour and professionalism. In a quest for good news stories Sergeant Morgan's Military Testing Unit fixed a car that had broken down at their site. Luckily it wasn't at Lt Barham's MTU that

Some had expected to be on a training mission in Nigeria for the summer but instead they made it to even more exotic locations such as Cromer or Dereham



they broke down, it's unlikely his kick of the tyre and hope it starts, would have had much effect. During this period many of those that had been stood down from TF DOOGAN began delivering and collecting tests at care homes.

A Squadron hit the jackpot when they were tasked to support mass testing in Liverpool! A month in Pontins at the taxpayers' expense as Real Life Support (RLS) was apparently not as glamorous as it sounds... It's unlikely that QDG will be booking many more winter trips to Pontins where locals firing fireworks into the camp and the battlefield promotion of Capt. Brockless by the Camp Commandant (A Sqn Ldr) indicated tough times. Although they did all get a free Pontins polo shirt which must have raised morale for at least 15 minutes! Some even have the Pontins logo on their Linked In profile to this very day....

PNCO Cadre 2020 (C Squadron)

This year's initial Potential Non-Commissioned Officer (PNCO) Cadre had a difficult delivery, with a series of false starts caused by COVID-19 placing significant restrictions on training. It eventually got underway on the 25th June 2020 and ran until 8th July 2020. This also included a week on exercise in Thetford training area.

As training staff, we were keen to try new approaches to the delivery of the course, which saw a greater emphasis placed on allowing the Troopers to take responsibility and the initiative early during the course. This also saw the Troopers design their own training package to suit their individual and collective requirements. The in-camp phase saw the Troopers undertake the mandated Leadership and the 'Roles and Responsibilities' lessons and then practise these in Command Tasks and presentations held throughout camp. It was not without a good amount of 'green' training too, with Corporals delivering lessons on core reconnaissance and Basic Close Combat skills ready for the exercise. There was also a very demanding bayonet lane to develop mental and physical robustness; one which proved a very enjoyable, if not exhausting phase for the young leaders. These were conducted within the strict safety guidelines and under the watchful and experienced eye of the Regimental Sergeant Major!

On the exercise the course continued with lessons in urban warfare and Basic Close Combat skills in a Troop/Platoon context. The candidates undertook a 'round robin' of patrols and section attacks; the results of which went onto develop the scenario as they then began the reconnaissance phase. They were required to conduct a series of Close Target Reconnaissance and Observation Posts on the Afghan Village at Bridge Carr, Thetford training area, to set up for a final attack to clear a series of compounds. This was designed to test the Troopers in a high pace and complex environment, once which reflects the congested and connected battlespace



End of Cadre Photo



Platoon Attack Lessons



Patrols



Patrols

these young leaders will find themselves in as they progress in the future. This final raid was a huge success and the majority

of the Troopers finished the exercise with a large grin on their face, albeit tired!

The course closed out with a final parade with Colonel David Wakefield, Deputy Commander 7th Infantry Brigade, as the Inspecting Officer. Special mentions must go to the now Lance Corporals Murphy and Roberts, who achieved Top Student and Most Improved Student respectively. Delivering the course would not have been possible without the support from Sergeant Evans and the hard work of the other instructors, Corporals Pugh, Griffiths, Bould, Hugo and Lunness. It was a great privilege for all of us to train the next generation of Junior Leaders within the Regiment.



Section Level Orders

BENM



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Ex MULLENS CUP



Riding into the sunset



The direction from the Regimental Second-in-Command for Ex MULLENS CUP 2020 was to achieve what no competition in recent memory had achieved before – to integrate vehicles into a patrol format. After a fair amount of head scratching and more planning conferences than General Montgomery had ahead of Operation OVERLORD (thank God he didn't have JAMES and BAMS to contend with!), the Intelligence Officer, Captain Chaplin and Sergeant Welfoot had devised a competition which saw teams use both Jackals and their 'black-taxis' over an arduous 60-hour patrol.

The patrol started in the early hours with Troops arriving at Exercise Control and receiving a vehicle fleet which was to carry them over Salisbury Plain for the next 24-hours. Whilst Troop Sergeants were dealing with the bin bags, torque wrenches and hoovers, Troop Leaders got on with the tactics and manoeuvre. Following orders, the first task was to complete a Route Recce, assessing a



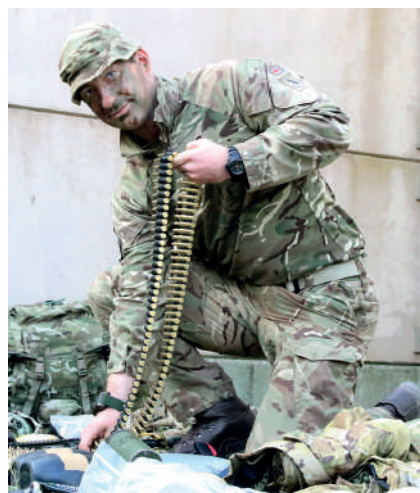
After a fair amount of head scratching and more planning conferences than General Montgomery had



conduct a mounted advance in which they had both mounted and dismounted enemy contacts; a scenario made ever more complex by the numerous other units conducting training on the area. The first evening of the patrol consisted of an Observation Post, assessing the ability to select and occupy a Hide/OP, observe the target and recover back to Exercise Control. The final mounted challenge was to prepare and deliver a handover of their fleet to the next callsign, under the watchful eye of the QM(T) and his

15 km route for follow on forces. At the 10 km point, the Troops were faced with their first 'command task': recovery. It was here that the REME took charge, and under the careful eyes of Corporal Brown and Corporal Kirby, Troops were tasked to recover a stricken Jackal with the emphasis on speed and safety. Following successful vehicle recovery, the

Troops' next task was to



department. This scrutiny was by far the hardest for some!

Once vehicles had been dispatched the Troops had nothing but their bergans and boots to take them the remaining 30 km. In addition to the physical challenge, the dismounted patrol put Troops through their paces conceptually with more 'command tasks'. First up was the RSWO's communications stand, in which Troops had to erect a 12m mast and establish comms. Following this was C-IED, in which Sergeant Hazelwood put everyone through their paces in a route



Despite the clear hurt in their faces, the CBRN stand did provide some of the more light hearted elements of the patrol



clearance and VP360 chaos. The final stand of the daytime patrol was everyone's favourite, the Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear (CBRN) stand. Following years of Mullens Cup feedback specifying less sleep and more CBRN, Corporal Newbury RAMC ensured that individual skills and drills were pushed to the limit, culminating in a casualty in a CBRN environment. Despite the clear hurt in their faces, the CBRN stand did provide some of the more light hearted elements of the patrol as personnel realised the absurdity of fighting in a

melted welly. As last light came, Troops found themselves in a harbour preparing for a close target reconnaissance patrol under Mr Davies, the Training Wing, Warrant Officer and his support crew nearby in a local layby.

Following a patrol back brief, Troops stepped off for home. However, it wouldn't have been much of a patrol competition without a good old fashioned casualty evacuation to finish. Approximately 1 km from the extraction point the troops came under small arms fire and saw themselves recover

uphill back to Exercise Control. Once at the notional Helicopter Landing Site, the Troop Leader and Troop Sergeant were questioned on elements of the last 60 hours before loading their callsign onto a TCV for one last final surprise during the extraction. Finally, it was ENDEX and Troops breathed a sigh of relief, Ex MULLENS CUP 2020 was over. A big well done to 3rd Troop C Sqn, led by Lieutenant Lewis and Sergeant Humphreys, for winning the competition overall – the QDG knives are in the post!

HHC



Rugby

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards RFC started 2020 on a massive high. They had finished 2019 with 6 wins from 6 and had completed a successful tour in Wales. QDG RFC had turned Robertson Barracks into quite a fortress, they have not been beaten on their home ground since arriving from Sennelager in 2015. On Jan 8th 2020 QDG RFC weren't going to allow the visitors 4th Regiment Royal Artillery take their undefeated crown for the season away from them. QDG thumped the away side 66-14 and notably team Captain Cpl James Casey rampaging 3 tries in 30 minutes before taking a knock and having to be replaced. Lt Will Groome can't go without a mention after some impressive kicking converting 8 out of 10 attempts at the posts.

The win against 4th Regiment Royal Artillery meant that QDG were a well deserved top of the Championship North league for the 2019-20 season. This now meant that the top 2 teams from Championship North and Championship South will meet for competition semi-finals. QDG RFC had been drawn against the Defence Academy at Robertson Barracks. This became an issue as the Defence Academy had been given authority to play all their games at home due to the nature of their players' roles. QDG had already played most of their games away in the 2019-2020 season, had come top of the league and were about to leave on Ex Wessex Storm but

“

QDG managed to win a very hard game even with a familiar face Maj Duncan Wiggins coming off the bench for the Defence Academy; we couldn't be stopped

”



still we jumped on the bus and headed to Shrivenham. QDG quickly put the issues of where and when the semi-final was going to take place aside. It was a cold and damp evening, with the floodlights missing a few bulbs when the match kicked off. Unfortunately, QDG RFC lost the team captain Cpl James Casey due to injury in the first few minutes of the game. QDG managed to win a very hard game even with a familiar face Maj Duncan Wiggins coming off the bench for the Defence Academy; we couldn't be stopped. QDG won 14-5 with tries scored by Cpl Bobo and George Barham which were converted by Lt Will Groome. A well warranted Man of the Match went to SSgt Gaz Roberts who put everything



Special delivery for the EME

he had into the game.

Beating the Defence Academy meant that we were to meet our toughest opponents of the 2019-20 season 2 Rifles in the final. 2 Rifles were very fortunate and ended with a bye into the Championship Final. With the Regiment preparing for Wessex Storm it became very difficult to arrange a window for this game to be played. The rugby team even packed their kit and took it to Salisbury Plain with them on the off chance that the fixture would happen with no joy. Unfortunately with the outbreak of Covid 19 the fixture did not happen. The 2020-21 season hasn't had chance to start and we have had minimal training sessions. That said we still have a large squad of rugby players who are keen and ready to go. An unfortunate end to an absolutely brilliant season from 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards RFC.

Boxing

Following the success of individual boxers during the 2019 season, the CO was eager to maintain momentum and ensure the pugilistic art remained a solid fixture in 2020. This would consist of a weeklong inter-SQN competition, culminating in a Regimental fight night in late November. To generate genuine competitive rivalry, each boxer would be trained by coaches from their respective sub-unit (or anyone under 40 in the case of HQ SQN). Subsequently, the winner of each weight division would represent QDG at the RAC Championships in December. As expected, there was substantial interest, Dragoons of all ranks were eager to go toe to toe with their opposite number. Even the Adjutant expressed an interest, until it was made clear that 'no punching in the face' was not recognised in the Queensbury Rules.

As opposed to most team sports, individuals don't play boxing and the safety of fighters is paramount. Therefore, there was a requirement to formally train coaches; This was no mean feat given the lack of white space in the Forecast of Events. Royal Engineer attached, Sgt (Cat) Stevens and QMSI Sgt Taylor organised a coaching course to be run at RBSM. This was the gold standard solution and meant 15 coaches in total would undertake the ABAE civilian accredited L1 coaching course.

Former GB women's coach Mick Gannon BEM put potential coaches through their paces over the course of a week. The emphasis was placed on understanding the duties of a coach, instructional techniques and a sound understanding of boxing basics. At the end of the course students underwent

a summative test. They were required to explain and demonstrate recognised attack and defence techniques as a drill, familiar territory to the bright reconnaissance soldier. Although some displayed the coordination of a baby elephant, the course was a success with a 100% pass rate. The fossil of the course C SQN SSM was immediately offered a fast track to attend the L2 course (those that can't do, teach).

"The punch you don't see coming is the one that hurts the most" this old cliché was the perfect analogy as COVID 19 arrived in the UK. The ABAE and Army Sports Control Board directed that all boxing training be stopped, and all competitions cancelled. This was a devastating blow to everyone involved. None the less, the resilience and positive attitude of the team leaders and coaches alike focused on the freedoms of the situation as opposed to the constraints. Time spent in lockdown conditions was the perfect opportunity to further



Even the adjutant expressed an interest, until it was made clear that 'no punching in the face' was not recognised in the Queensbury Rules



develop coaches. Sgt Stevens would bombard coaches weekly with links to virtual coaching classes. Furthermore, with the help of the gym staff he would transform part of the Leathersellers Suite into a dedicated boxing gym, complete with ring, heavy bags and of course, an overabundance of mirrors.

As ever QDG Boxing will continue to roll with the punches thrown by the current climate and operational commitments. For now, at least, the conditions are set for big fights under the lights in 2021.

MR



Despite all the effort there was only one volunteer

Golf

This year's golfing season got off to a slow start due to the regiment's deployment on Exercise Wessex Storm but also began with some uncertainty due to the ongoing pandemic. Golf courses around the nation remained closed until May with play restricted meaning only two balls were permitted until the peak of summer. Nevertheless, there has been a considerable number of individuals across all ranks taking up the sport. Most of the play has been restricted to social rounds due to many Army Golf Association events being cancelled. Despite this, QDG soldiers were out in droves around the many beautiful courses that Norfolk has to offer.

Outstanding feats were achieved, Cpl Lewis Mather being a novice of the sport shot his first hole in one, an amazing accomplishment for any golfer with odds of 12,500 to 1. WO2 Tom Hughes's gym sessions resulted in him driving numerous par 4 greens from the tee and SSgt Kieran Taylor managed an eagle after finding the wrong fairway. Another novice with no such luck is Maj Paul Jones who was struck in the head by a member's wild tee shot. Luckily no serious damage was done, he continued his round sporting a sock tucked under his cap as an improvised bandage. The Officers' Mess creativity was shown by designing their own nine-hole golf course around

Robertson Barracks sports pitches. Complete with scorecards and hole layout courtesy of Google Maps. By all accounts Lt Ed Cooper remains the man to be beaten while Capt Jason 'Butch' Davies now has many of his clubs submerged in the numerous lakes and rivers around Wensum Valley.

SSgt Taylor and Sgt Dave Watson went on to represent the regiment at the Eastern Region Army Golf Association championship held at Swaffham golf club. Sgt Watson had success in finishing runner up in division 2. He was narrowly beaten on count back, frustratingly not for the first time. Sgt 'Sonic' Davies, Cpl Ash Greenwood, LCpls Ian Owen and Stuart Finlay participated in Macmillan longest day golf challenge raising £435 for cancer support. Four rounds of golf back-to-back equating to 24 miles is a stern test for any golfer.

The culmination of this year's season was the inaugural Luck Cup golf competition held at Barnham Broom GC.

Cpl Greenwood organised the event resulting in a fantastic day enjoyed by all participating, he was rewarded for his dedication by winning division 1. Division 2's victor was Sgt Steven Panks who put a remarkable round together. Other winners were WO2 Hughes, Tpr Beth Parker and Pte Stephen Gibbons in the closest to the pin challenges. Capt Nath Rixson took great pride in accomplishing the longest drive of the day. Overall winners were HQ Squadron who narrowly pipped C SQN by a single point.

Looking ahead there are plans for a Ryder Cup style inter mess tournament as well as numerous regimental and Army Golf Association events forecast. Plans are in the early stages for a golf tour and having narrowly finished second in the last two RAC championships, the focus is to better that and bring the

title back to Robertson Barracks. The year ahead promises to be both challenging and exciting for QDG golf.

KPT



Lt Ed Cooper remains the man to be beaten while Capt Jason 'Butch' Davies now has many of his clubs submerged in the numerous lakes and rivers around Wensum Valley



Basketball

This year has been a frustrating one for the Basketball team with their ability to train and play together as a team massively reduced. However, individuals' commitment to the sport has meant that the Basketball team continues to thrive. The team has seen the departure of Tpr Old as Team Captain with LCpl Al-Ameri stepping up to lead the team.

The team started this year with high hopes of a tour taking us to Texas to test our skills against a collection of US Army teams. Once it became apparent that this was unlikely to go ahead, the team set their sights on a two-week training camp in Gibraltar. With excitement growing for this a new spate of restrictions saw all overseas travel banned and the trip was off.

With the QDG being one of the largest contributors to the RAC Basketball team with at least 4 players normally making the cut we decided that the next best thing would be to organise a two-week training camp during the weeks leading up to the RAC try outs in October. This would have seen us move down to Aldershot for a week to practise everything from individual skills such as dribbling and shooting to team formations and tactics. We would have then moved to Maindy Barracks in Cardiff for a week and played 3-4 friendly games against some civilian teams. The team was particularly looking forward to taking on some civilian teams and testing ourselves. Unfortunately, Covid-19 managed to thwart our attempts once again. Having cancelled the Aldershot and Wales tour we set our sights on the RAC try outs



and while we could not practise as a team, individuals were training on their own in the build-up to this. Rather predictably the RAC try-outs was not to be and this saw the end of our year for the Basketball Team.

Throughout the year the team has remained optimistic and keen, with many individuals continuing to train their individual skills on the outdoor courts throughout the year despite myriad restrictions. Hopefully, 2021 will bring more opportunities to train and compete so that we can continue to improve the QDG Basketball team.

FLJH

QDG Squash

Like all Regimental sports, squash had a promising start in 2020, with the Regimental Squash Team, consisting of: WO2 Chant, SSgt Pope, Sgt Dell, Sgt Rai, Cpl Thomas, LCpl McSween, LCpl Murphy and Tpr Finlay. With a healthy number of players and previously wiping the floor with the rest of the RAC in Nov 19, all personnel were eager to begin playing in the New Year.

In preparation for the RAC Championships and further competitions in 2020, the team had established regular structured training sessions and practice games on sports afternoons. These sessions were instrumental in improving the overall standard of squash within the team.

The high standard of QDG squash was evident during the next major squash event in the calendar, with Sgt Dell competing in the Army Individuals Squash Championships. Held over 21-23 Jan 20 in Winchester, Sgt Dell placed fifth overall in the Army Open Championship category – a remarkable result!

The team had plans for a busy year ahead, intending to compete in the Army Squash Inter-Unit Championships and attending a Squash Advanced Skills course, both timetabled for March 2020. However, it was at this time that COVID-19 struck and unfortunately both were cancelled. Future fixtures were also cancelled or postponed in-line with the England Squash COVID-19 policy. With courts closed, the team have struggled this year to maintain any form of court based training, but have continued to look to develop their skills elsewhere.

In Sept 20, Sgt Dell attended the first Level One, Army Squash Coaching course, held on 15 Sept in Aldershot. This pilot coaching course was designed with the intention of enabling individuals across Units to train and coach other soldiers, developing their squash skills and generally encouraging the uptake of the sport. This course was conducted during the pandemic due to strict social distancing and



the team looks positively to what 2021 will bring



The RSM and his informants

hygiene procedures. These measures were implemented by Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre. Coaching was not just based on one-on-one training, but focused on skills and drills incorporating multiple players of varying levels on court simultaneously. This maximises the number of people that can train at once and aims to make the sport more accessible to entry-level players – something we now implement on a Wednesday afternoon.

As 2020 comes to a close, the team looks positively to what 2021 will bring. With funding now allocated for new kit and the courts due to be refurbished, the team are set for the New Year and will start off in the best possible manner.

Although still dependent on the global pandemic, the intention for next year is to welcome as many new players as possible and build the Regimental Squash family. These new players will be encouraged to attend Army Squash courses, including Basic and Advanced Squash skills, as well as the option to qualify as a referee by attending the Squash Referee course. Once training is able to resume, the team looks forward to competing in future competitions and representing the Regiment.

CD

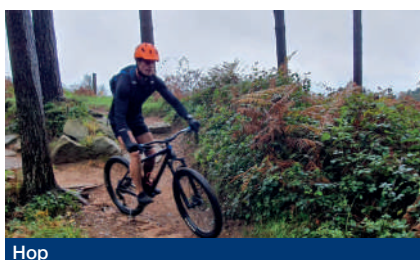
Mountain Biking Adventure Training

Due to the unfortunate circumstances of COVID-19 this year, the adventure training which was put in place for A Squadron had to be adjusted to follow guidelines set by the government and to keep participating members safe. Unable to use areas in Wales for mountain biking as initially planned, A Squadron utilised a more local and feasible approach to make sure that members of the squadron could still manage to take part and have fun. High Lodge in Thetford Forest was used as the area in which mountain biking would take place and offered some fairly

decent trails which riders of all abilities were able to ride and practise their skills. 6 riders a day were able to get out and around the routes with 1 instructor for the week. The trails which were used at High Lodge consisted of a blue route of around 10 miles and a red route of which was around 9 miles. This was split down into the morning and afternoon, in which the group would ride the blue route first. The blue allowed the riders to practise on the easier more basic route slow time especially for people who had not done mountain biking before and also allowed

them to try basic technical parts before we attempted the red route in the afternoon. The red route allowed everyone to have a bit more fun and really go for it with a few small drop offs, technical sections and some tight wood block areas to finish off the day. The weather for the week was very wet with lots of rain on most of the days but that did not hinder any of the groups and made it more fun getting muddy and filthy sliding round the area.

TPH



Hop



Skip



Jump

Field Sports



Sgt Chilvers with the biggest catch of the day

As for everyone this year, Field Sports and related activity has taken a significant hit. However, there have been some significant highlights, notable the Subalterns Shoot kindly hosted by Lt Barham and the renovation of the Swanton Morley Fishing Lake, led by Sgt Canning (and a chainsaw).

After a long wait the much-anticipated day arrived and after a thorough day at work one Friday the Junior Officers jumped in their cars and headed south across the country to Lt Barham's back yard. A large dinner and a late night later we awoke on a beautiful Kentish day to begin the day's activity. A successful day for all, specifically Lt Lewis (accused not proven) who managed to shoot the only bird on the land that was not up for grabs. Photographic 'evidence' above. Crucially to it all though we ensured our currency and competency on armoured vehicles and get some driver and commander training done while we were at it.



Plans are in place to uplift the amount of activity as soon as the go ahead comes



Much to the dismay of many in the Officers' Mess the STANTA Shoot was not taken this year due to risk and it not being in line with the activity being conducted by the Regiment. However, we were able to get the annual Mess Shoot in early in the year due to the kindness of our neighbours, the Keiths.

All in all, it has been a slow but successful year with a busy first quarter. With the restrictions in place causing problems for people everywhere, we are all looking forward to when they lift. Plans are in place to uplift the amount of activity as soon as the go ahead comes.

On the fishing side, Sgt Canning has been undertaking a huge project in his own time with the help of the QDG fishing club. Thankfully they have been able to remain busy throughout the year which has resulted in the upcycling of the lake at Swanton Morley.

SRBM



Commander and Driver training



Mr Lewis, innocent until proven guilty



Four cocks and three hens



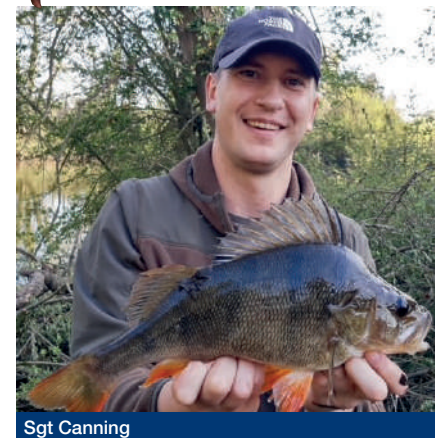
That thing is huge



Another fish



Pte Gibbons with a cracking pair of specimen Roach and Pike



Sgt Canning

During early 2019 members across the Regiment and Attached Arms came together with an idea of creating a fishing club. We came up with a plan of turning the disused and well overgrown pond near the assault course into something useable for all to enjoy. The idea soon hit its first hurdle as the first COVID-19 lockdown hit. This only strengthened the appetite for bored soldiers to do something constructive in their spare time. This wasn't a small feat to say the least. The area was so overgrown and had been somewhat of a dumping ground even from the pre-existing days of the RAF being at Robertson Barracks.

We knew it was a big job from the start and the work undertaken was quite difficult due to the thicket of brambles and thorns and the steep sides which we had to shape out to make stable platforms. The lads and girls of the club donned gloves and shovels and got to it no messing about. The Team soon identified the potential of the pond after a few members began catching rather large specimen perch. We knew though that we could make it even better, so we invested in some carp to add some variation and something a little more difficult to target.

As we move into 2021 the work to

improve the pond will continue and once we are out of the colder months, we will be looking at putting in more stock of larger fish and getting out fishing more often.

Many members of the club do take their Angling very seriously and quite a few are well known for their participation in the local area. It has taken us fishing in many beautiful locations throughout Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. The local area has so much to be explored and it is good to see and hear that our soldiers are passionate about their sport. Anyone who wishes to join in is most welcome!

JC

7th Infantry Brigade HQ

In July 2020, I was given the opportunity to switch my grenades for pens and night sights for pencils. HQ 7 Brigade (7X) was my destination and legendary QDG OC and CO, Brigadier Jasper de Quincey Adams OBE my Commander. 25-30 brews a day my purpose.

Despite the disappointment of being removed from the front line of the imaginary battlefield I was delighted to be given the opportunity to gain experience in an environment that many young officers do not.

Upon taking command of 7X in August, Brigadier Jasper has been steering the ship towards passing the test of Exercise CERBERUS (a 3UKXX validation exercise to prove the HQ is fully fit to go to war, and win). This has involved training progression and numerous build up exercises with a learning ethos being employed rigidly. For me personally, it resulted in long days and nights where sunlight was not witnessed for hours upon end to achieve planning excellence. The readers will be pleased to know that 7X passed the test of Ex CERBERUS in October and that I will not mention it again in this article.

It is impossible to write about the activities of the HQ without giving an honourable mention to COVID-19.

Boring I know, but relevant. Since the start of the pandemic, the HQ has had a fully manned Ops Room working for 24 hours per day at peak times. This has resulted in the deployment of thousands of troops across the east of England to provide key services to local authorities in the fight against the disease. This came in the form of deploying QDG soldiers (amongst others) to testing centres, care homes and as ambulance drivers - as I am sure you have read in the Sqn articles.

Unsurprisingly, the HQ has balanced the above challenges with its day-to-day tasks of enabling deployments of personnel across the globe. Notably, the RY-QDG mobilisation of CASSINO Tp to Poland and the joint 2 Royal Anglian and QDG deployment in 2021 to Mali on Op NEWCOMBE 2. The G3 team has worked exceptionally hard to ensure soldiers from the Bde have deployed as far away as the Cayman Islands and as close to home as Thetford Forrest. Concurrently, the G5 team have ensured that the Regimental forecast of events remain full so there is

plenty to look forward to in this new year.

For me personally, I have had the pleasure to learn from Brigadier Jasper and his operationally proven command style. Alongside becoming a genuinely credible barista and an exceptional tea maker (if I may say so myself), it has been thought-provoking to see how a higher formation formulates effective plans, capable of winning battles, even if they are only hypothetical scenarios. It has been incredibly interesting to interact with some of the senior leaders in the British Army as well as government ministers during a particularly tumultuous period in the nation's history. With this, I am also proud to say that as a Brigade, we only lost the Chief of the General Staff once

Staff once – see The Telegraph and most other national media for further details.

Next year will see the HQ deploy on further training exercises to America and Salisbury Plain as well as other challenges here at home – only 4,567 brews to make before I deploy to Mali where I will make approximately 8,789 more.

WG



...as a
Brigade, we
only lost the
Chief of the
General Staff
once



Field Training Unit

On the return to work in the New Year, FTU were planning for the largest WESSEX STORM attempted on Salisbury Plain Training Area – what was normally a BG exercise had grown into accommodating the majority of 7X.

Effectively running two WESSEX STORMs concurrently, R ANGLIAN and QDG with the Light Brigade Support Group also in the offing, the largest training estate in the UK suddenly felt very small; battered by three actual storms (Storm Dennis and co.) the resilience and determination of the troops on the ground was admirable to observe and did little to affect their high standards of training.

The first tentative dip back into the Army's training for FTU amidst COVID was Ex TALLINN DAWN in June, ensuring 5 RIFLES were validated before deploying to Estonia – a reduced exercise heavily constrained by COVID measures with focus on the 5 RIFLES ISTAR Gp and QRH augmented Advance Guard training.

In the last quarter of a blighted 2020, 2 PARA augmented with a company



There are no straight lines in nature

of 2 Régiment Étranger de Parachutistes (French Foreign Legion) switched the Kenyan plain for that of Salisbury. With COVID an ever-present risk, FTU were at their maximum ensuring 2 PARA were validated and maintaining their high readiness state whilst also keeping 2000 exercising troops socially distanced.

For any QDG considering this as a future job role, FTU has provided an

inimitable experience in gaining an insight into a variety of BGHQs when they are at full-tilt in a planning cycle; being part of a small SME team helping observe and mentor a variety of ISTAR and Recce assets and delivering Sqn and BG After Action Reviews has been a challenging and rewarding experience in supporting the wider Army's training development.

GESJ

RATD

Although a slightly quieter year for the Reconnaissance and Armoured Tactics Division in Warminster, it has still been a hive of activity and had a continuing QDG presence. Capt Max Carter handed over to Capt Ed Hind just before Lockdown 1.0 and Sgt Panks handed over his role later in the summer. Both individuals were instrumental in making the Light Cavalry Commanders Course as relevant and as testing as it is today.

Whilst the rest of the Division were working from home during the summer, the Light Cavalry Training Team were preparing to deliver a Reserve Commanders Course predominantly for the Royal Yeomanry ahead of their deployment on Op CABRIT later in the year. This came with its own difficulties, mainly COVID related but also having only

two weeks to train the students ahead of the required standard their Pre-Deployment Training. Ten newly qualified Royal Yeomanry Troop Leaders and Crew Commanders returned to CASSINO TP and are currently deployed as part of eFP(P).

Shortly after summer leave a bumper Regular course was upon the Light Cavalry Training Team, many of whom had had their course cancelled earlier in the summer. Twenty-three students from across the Regular Light Cavalry Regiments headed to Warminster for the final element of their

training. After the gruelling six-week course, seven young, thrusting Troop Leaders returned to QDG ready to take on whatever was put in front of them.

The Light Cavalry Training Team are looking ahead at a busier year, delivering bigger and longer course to both Regular and Reserve Commanders. The main effort remains delivering safe and relevant training but will continue to adapt the courses content in line with how the field army is operating both in the UK and overseas.

EJMH

“
After the gruelling six-week course, seven young, thrusting Troop Leaders returned to QDG
”

ATC Pirbright

2020 has been an unusual and challenging year for us all, Basic Training was no exception during a COVID Pandemic and National lockdown. Training had to be quickly tailored to online learning to keep Recruits as current as possible, enabling them to continue training when they returned. Most learning switched to Zoom, making the instructors feel more like teachers in a school rather than instructors at Phase 1! Lessons were conducted, from fieldcraft basics all the way to 'Joe Wicks Style' PT Sessions. Capt Byrd was fundamental in the planning and implementation for the return of Recruits to camp post-lockdown. This included strict Force health Protection measures and a rigid sanitation and briefing area for over 1,600 Recruits. Sadly, this was to be one of his final acts as he leaves the army to see how many feathers he can ruffle in London! Best wishes and good luck from us all at ATC(P)!

This year, Maj Jones 'The involver' moved from Initial Training Group to the Defence Academy at Shrivenham. Now that both Maj Jones and Capt Byrd have left ATC(P), it has been up to Sgt Warner to hold the QDG flag high. By the end of 2021 he will have trained over 350 Recruits, an achievement in its own, even more so during a pandemic.

“
Lessons were conducted, from fieldcraft basics all the way to 'Joe Wicks Style' PT Sessions
”



Sgt Warner describes the topography of the lunar surface

While Training Recruits, Sgt Warner has also helped re-design the Navigation training pan-Army and pilot a new Basic Training course for the Army as a whole.

An unusual year all round, providing a multitude of challenges that both Capt Byrd and Sgt Warner have risen too, ensuring the QDG name is continued to be held in high esteem at ATC Pirbright.

TW



The last 6 inches



1st Reconnaissance Regiment Sri Lanka Armoured Corps

The year 2020 kicked off with optimism as the Regiment was performing exceptionally well with the tasks entrusted. In the field of rugby, the Regiment became the champions of the Inter Regiment Rugby tournament of year 2020. Further the Regiment was honoured to present a Guard of Honour to the visiting Russian Land Forces Commander in March 2020. Yet with the Covid-19 pandemic engulfing the nation the Regiment had to adjust as per the prevailing situation and assist the national requirement.

The 36th Commanding Officer Lt Col S J Samarasinghe psc continues to command 1st Recce while Maj A S B Hapuvinna USP psc is in Second in Command and Capt D T R Dantharanyana holds the appointment of Adjutant. HQ, A and B Squadrons are located within the Rock House Camp premises while the C Sqn continues to be located at Keravalapitiya just north of the capital city, providing security to the vital economic and energy hub. Continuing its operational commitment from 2018, 11 BTRs along with the troops of A Sqn are being deployed in Mali as the Armoured Column of the 2nd Combat Convoy Company. The rest of the A Sqn is entrusted with deploying Commandos attached to the Regiment, in response to any security threats that emerge within the Capital. Though the B Sqn HQ is located at Rock House, 1st Troop of the Sqn has been deployed and is co-located with the Special Forces Camp in Seeduwa closer to Bandaranaike International Airport to facilitate the rapid deployment within the area and the 2nd Troop is deployed at Dombagoda co-located with the Regimental HQ of Sri Lanka Army Ordnance Corps in view of quick response to the natural disasters which occur in the area.

Representing one of the largest contributions of Sri Lankan Forces in United Nations Peace Keeping Missions, the 2nd Combat Convoy Company is deployed in Mali providing protection to the UN convoys which are continuously targeted by the rebel groups and this mission is considered as one of the most dangerous UN Peace Keeping Missions ever to undertake. As the deployment of the 2nd Combat Convoy Company comes to its end, the 3rd Company is gearing up to its task with continuous training on convoy protection. They have been training on mock convoys running through the country and had been training on threat simulations based on the experiences of the 1st and the 2nd company. Apart from the inherent duties tasked, in addressing the national requirement in

the wake of the pandemic situation the Regiment was tasked in establishing and operating a Quarantine Centre at Siyane National College of Education, 30 kms from Colombo and has been successfully managing the Centre since October 2020.

Though the 65th Anniversary of the Regiment was on 15th October 2020, the re-emergence of the pandemic halted all the planned celebrations and the award of the Queen's Dragoon Guards Trophy which is annually awarded to the best all round Squadron of the Regiment.

We envisage that the next year will be a year where we can continue our long-lasting traditions and wish to congratulate 1st The Queens Dragoon Guards the best on their anniversary and the coming years ahead.



The Leathersellers' Company

On 17th March 2020, The Company, in common with the rest of the UK, was engulfed by the Covid-19 pandemic, we went into the first of several full-scale lockdowns and tier restrictions, which has had quite an impact on our business, members and staff.

With minimal notice, we were able to establish a remote operation from our own homes, which have included the re-distribution of post by e-mail and setting up the many remote meetings of Committees and Court. Who would have thought 12 months ago, Teams and Zoom meetings would become such an integral part of our daily office work? It has been quite a challenge, but the Company and its staff have shown a remarkable operational agility and the ability to transition quickly and effectively.

At the time of writing some 10 months later, most of the Office/Hall staff continue to work from home, with exception of the Gate Staff, John Clark and Spencer Carter, our new caretaker Robert O'Donnell, the newly appointed Beadle & Estate Manager, Terrance Jones and Paul Jupp who are busy looking after the Estate, controlling the access in and out of St Helen's Place and manning the Company Offices.

Covid-19 consequences have affected all areas of Company business, particularly in our asset management and the disbursement of philanthropic grants which will be covered in more detail later in this article.

Philanthropic giving from the Leathersellers' Company in 2019-20 exceeded all expectations, reaching over £3.7million. With the distribution of these funds to charities, educational establishments and individuals, the lives of hundreds of thousands of people have been enhanced.

Faced with the repercussions of a pandemic eight months into the financial year, the three grant making committees (Charity, Education and Leather) sought to respond to these challenges in a timely and thoughtful manner, it was vital to use the remaining available resources to greatest effect.

With the urgent rise in need for basic humanitarian support paired with a loss of £4bn of income to the charity sector within the first 12 weeks of lockdown, the Charity Committee immediately agreed an emergency giving strategy for April – July 2020, focussing on relief of homelessness, the provision of food and essentials, direct nursing care and domestic violence support.

Our budgeted funding was further bolstered by an additional donation from the Charitable Fund and personal support from some very generous Livermen. Almost £400,000 was distributed



Leathersellers Ski Team

as a direct response to Covid-19 in under three months.

Covid-19 posed many challenges for both the Leathersellers' Federation schools and Colfe's School, requiring them to transform their teaching to mostly online in a matter of days. To aid in this process The Company provided funding for laptops and Wi-Fi for at least 110 pupils, allowing them to carry on their studies whilst at home.

With essential needs a top priority, we committed to providing weekly Free School Meal Hampers for ten weeks, to be delivered to 75 of the most vulnerable families.

We should never underestimate the essential role charities play in our communities, which has been brought to the fore like never before. Whilst we know the demand for our resources will continue to rise in the coming year, we have a clear understanding on how we wish to proceed, to make the Leathersellers' Company forward thinking, and a credit to those who have gone before us.

2020 Leathersellers' Inter-Livery Skiing Team was led by the Master Christopher Barrow, whilst leadership and racing advice was left to (El Capitano) Past-master Antony Barrow, ably assisted by Hamish Williams.

Having done very well in previous years, this year was no exception as The Leathersellers' came away with a raft of individual and team medals and trophies. With all the other events being cancelled, sadly there is nothing else to report on the sporting front.

Several staff changes have taken place during the last year. We said farewell Beadle, Dave Marshall, Senior Maintenance Man, Hugh Rougvié and Housekeeper, Barbara Rougvié.

New members of staff include, in the Charities Department, Head of Grants Natalia Rymaszewska and Grants and



The Clerk, David Santa-Olalla

Digital Administrator Charlie Bostock. Caretaker, Robert O'Donnell takes over the Maintenance duties.

The new Beadle and Estate Manager is Terrance Jones. Terrance comes from North Wales and his previous career included 22 years' service in the Welsh Guards, and he is also a member of the Queen's Bodyguard of the Yeomen, a prestigious honorary role.

As I write this article The Clerk, David Santa-Olalla DSO, MC, after 12 years distinguished service is handing over to Clerk Designate, Matthew Lawrence. There is probably nothing I can say that would do David justice, so I will leave it to him in his own words.

"The role of Clerk to the Leathersellers' Company is to be at the heart of all the developments and events, contributing to the process of thinking, interpreting ideas and then developing plans in order for initiatives to come to fruition. In a sense, the Clerk keeps the plates spinning, whilst also monitoring the mood and attitude of Livery and staff, plus providing guidance and support to the Master and Wardens as they play their part in the life cycle of the Company. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as Clerk during this busy and formative period, the most recent chapter in our Company's long history. I am delighted to have been able to play my part and am grateful for the support and friendship of so many Livermen and members of staff over the past twelve years".

Paul Jupp MBE

1 Special Service Battalion



Lt Col D.L. Romain addressing the parade

Monday 23 March 2020 President Cyril Ramaphosa the president of the Republic of South Africa announced a total lockdown after the first case of the coronavirus pandemic was reported in Wuhan, a city in China in December 2019.

The lockdown period was supposed to last only for 21 days, however, today, we still find ourselves under lockdown. That's how devastating the COVID-19 was and still is.

The South African National Defence Force in conjunction with the South African Police Services had to be the driving forces in support of the State Of National Disaster. 1 Special Service Battalion was tasked among other units to deploy under OPERATION NOTLELA (means to lock), which had the responsibility to curb the spreading of the coronavirus.

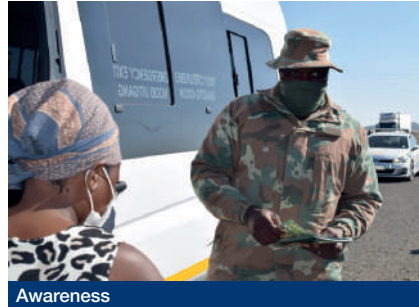
The unit was deployed from March 2020 to October 2020 in the Free State Province, of which the Tactical Battalion Head Quarters was situated in Bloemfontein. The main aim of the deployment was to enforce the lockdown regulations and to communicate information to the communities regarding the virus, and how to curb the spread and to protect those around us.

Awareness was done daily through social media and the distribution of pamphlets in different vernacular languages to reach the entire public. The media showcased our men and women in uniform on a regular basis working tirelessly.

To conclude, the most important thing and which was pleasing during these difficult times, was to observe the positive response of our communities towards the curbing of the spread of the virus.

Thank you for the friendship and bond that we as armour can share. God Bless the Queen Dragoon Guards.

DR



Awareness



SANDF with SAPS



R702 road block



Giving out of pamphlets



Assistance of health workers



Medical personnel doing temperature checks



Giving to the underprivileged



E Squadron

Dyfed and Glamorgan Army Cadet Force

2020 – Well, what a bizarre year that was... and what a plethora of new skills The CFAVs (Cadet Force Adult Volunteers) and Cadets have all learnt here in Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire!

As mentioned in the last Journal which we were kindly invited to submit to, we have 12 Detachments including the Corps Of Drums across our area and have approximately 180 cadets between the ages of 12 and 18 on strength along with 35 Adult Volunteers. We have all had to adapt very rapidly to the world of 'Zoom' and improvise the Cadet Force Syllabus lessons to a virtual environment. Most have embraced it immediately whilst some others unfortunately do not have capabilities at home to do such which is a frustration as I'm sure you can appreciate!

However; we did manage to squeeze the ACF National Football Competition in February and a Syllabus training weekend event at Penally Camp in March prior to the first Lockdown. During the weekend we conducted training at different levels on Drill and Turnout, Military Knowledge, Skill at Arms, Basic CIS (Communications Information Systems), Navigation and Shooting to name a few and relevant awards were presented on the Sunday Afternoon by the Squadron OC, Major Protheroe.

Since then, we have had an impressive effort conducted by the CFAVs to engage with the Cadets in a virtual learning environment where we have seen Camouflage and Concealment, Care of Kit, Navigation (utilising Google Streetview), Vehicle Maintenance on PI Gideon Carpenter's Series 3 Land Rover, Introductions to various Corps and Regiments roles (Power Point, You Tube and Forces TV were a great help with these!),

Military History and Traditions, Physical Training (phenomenal selection of presentations done by SSI (Staff Sergeant Instructor) Thomas, Country Code, CIS (which concluded with the setting up of a Signals Voice Procedure Assessment with the Scenario of a Whaling Station being taken over on Skomer Island and relevant Forces being tasked!) as well as Quiz nights and other fun activities to keep them engaged as Syllabus lessons on Zoom can be monotonous as we all know too well!

As well as the Cadets, the CFAVs have also had to adapt to Zoom for Training, including Courses at Frimley Park which are normally residential now being conducted online. We have had several CFAVs successfully complete these as well as the normal annual mandatory training. We had a huge input from all Detachment CFAVs to complete relevant on-line courses so we were

able to return to Face to Face training with the Cadets (Masked and Socially Distanced!) albeit only for 4 weeks prior to going into a further Lockdown. We were amazed by the healthy return of Cadets all keen to get progressing and back to Detachment Training which was mentally very rewarding for all and in fact, we even had some new recruits turn up in that short time!

Remembrance Parades this year were attended by a Single CFAV and some locations had a single Cadet (with parent) at the traditional locations with Social Distancing being adhered to and Wreaths laid to pay respects to the fallen. The Cenotaphs and Memorials were very quiet this year which was a reminder as to the World we live in currently.

I'm pleased to announce that a handful of our Cadets have joined the Forces

even in these difficult times; Cadets George Holroyd, Sasha Bates, Evan Davies, Taya-Leigh White and our Cadet SSM (Squadron Sergeant Major) Rhidian Rhys-Jones have all taken the oath and are well underway with their Army Careers!

To finish the year off, the Cadets and CFAVs of E Squadron participated in a charity event for "Walking with The Wounded" which saw many of us "Walking home for Christmas" - 24 miles during the 24 days leading up to Christmas Day. The Cadets gained Sponsorship and Donations from friends, family and others which gave us a total of £738.16 toward the Charity which specialises in supporting mental and physical injury health issues with veterans and their families. A fantastic result for a great cause which I am sure you will agree!

Hopefully later in 2021 we can look forward to catching up with members of the Regiment, maybe on our Annual Camp at Sennybridge and please do remember, we are always on the lookout for new members for the Squadron, both cadets and CFAVs, so if you live locally to us and feel that you and/or a family member would benefit from the fun and enjoyment that can be achieved by being a member of the Army Cadet Force, then please call Squadron HQ on 01554 756777. Aspire to Achieve!

MM



The Cenotaphs and Memorials were very quiet this year



Regimental Comrades Association

President: Colonel of the Regiment, Brigadier AS Richmond OBE

Chairman: Mr C T Gibbons

Regimental Home Headquarters

Regimental Secretary: Mark Hawtin

Assistant Regimental Secretary: Kate Cox

Subscriptions/General Enquiries: Catherine Symons

Shop/Lottery/General Enquiries: Sophie Poeton

Regimental Curator: Mark Evans

Regimental Assistant Curator: Hannah Searle



Sully laying our wreath at Cardiff City Stadium

What a year! Due to the pandemic Home Headquarters has found itself experiencing multiple lockdowns, with the team spending the majority of 2020 working from home alongside home schooling. We are endeavouring to keep the home fires burning, the office has been and will continue to be manned Monday to Friday, please be patient if we don't answer your phone call or email straight away, we will get back to you!

Sadly, but rightly, all of our association events have had to be cancelled this year. I would like to thank those who organised and assisted with these events, keeping their fingers crossed until the last possible moment. A special mention to Chris Gibbons, Dave Maltby, Martin Orde, Mark Evans, Dave Way, Martin Ruscoe and Mark Ashley-Miller, who held out, but all had to cancel at the last minute. Hopefully the second half of 2021 will see some semblance of normality returning and we will all be able to gather at Cardiff in the Autumn to celebrate in style, wearing our new regimental woolly pullies and polo shirts.

This year also saw all Remembrance Parades cancelled, however, many of our comrades were still able to place Regimental Wreaths at their local Cenotaphs. Stephen 'Sully' Sullivan wins the prize for laying in the most unusual location, placing his on the turf of Cardiff City Stadium and Richard 'Benny' Hill up in Cumbria for best salute. If you would like to request a Regimental Wreath for next year's Remembrance Day, please

contact HHQ before mid-October, enabling us to order the correct amount and post them out to you in time.

One of the beneficial side effects of the lockdowns has been the need for many of us to embrace online video conferencing and meetings, whilst it doesn't compare to socialising physically it has enabled us all to keep in touch and look after each other. I would like to thank all those comrades who have contacted HHQ, signposting a comrade or their immediate family member who has been struggling during these difficult times and enabling the Regimental family to give assistance. It has also enabled us to carry out our RCA Committee and Regimental and Heritage Trust meetings ensuring that the many projects, from branch flags to regimental history books were able to continue.

I would once again like to thank all those of you who donate to the Regimental Benevolence Fund, either via the 1 Days' Pay Scheme or through our Virgin Money Giving page on the RCA website. A big thank you to Bob Edwards, who asked everyone to make an online donation instead of buying him a beer on his 70th birthday, he raised an amazing £700 for the fund.

So far, this financial year we have dealt with 16 general benevolence grants, we have also awarded quarterly, annual, fuel and Christmas grants and distributed Christmas Hampers to members of our Regimental family.

The total value of grants awarded by the Regimental Benevolence Fund in 2020 has been £9,824.72. We have also once again received great support from the ABF, RBL, H4H and SSAFA.



A big thank you to Bob Edwards, who asked everyone to make an online donation instead of buying him a beer on his 70th birthday, he raised an amazing £700 for the fund





As you have read, your support is vital in assisting those comrades, serving and retired, or their immediate families that find themselves in times of need. 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. HHQ can't financially assist individuals directly, all Regimental and Corp Benevolence Funds utilise the services of SSAFA and RBL caseworkers, most of whom are volunteers. These organisations are currently struggling with a lack of case-

workers and mentors, if you find yourself with some spare time and would wish to volunteer please contact us at HHQ for further information.

To finish I would like to thank all who have supported the HHQ team over this difficult and challenging year, if you have any queries or questions please don't hesitate in contacting the team, or once our lockdowns are lifted if you find yourself in Cardiff pop in for a cup of tea and a chat.

MLH



Benny, saluting in style!

Regimental Trust

The last non-virtual Trustees' meeting was in Robertson Barracks on 20 November 2019, when it was envisaged that the Trust would be able to support a wide range of activities that the Regiment was planning. These included skiing and a number of sports tours. Unfortunately and not surprisingly, these activities were Covid casualties and the biggest call on the Trust by the Regiment was to assist in upgrading the QDG sportswear. The Trust agreed to top up personal contributions to enable everyone to get the new style kit in the first order.

However, the Trust has made some good progress on the heritage assets although Covid measures restricted access to the messes. Some of the restoration programme has therefore had to be delayed. The team from the Museum had fortuitously visited Robertson Barracks just before lockdown and this enabled the exercise to transfer heritage assets from the messes to the Trust to continue as planned. The Corporals Mess Heritage assets were gifted to the Trust and loaned back in the same way as the Officers' Mess and the Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess had been previously. For the latter two messes, additional items acquired or found since the original deeds were executed were transferred to the Trust.

The other main heritage activity, which is covered elsewhere in the journal, was the underwriting of the proposed new history of the Regiment since the amalgamation. The Trust has paid the author's advance.

Otherwise the Trust made annual grants for a number of

routine items that help improve quality of life for all ranks. Sadly, because of Covid, many of the activities that are carried out under the umbrella of the Trust through the RCA and Home Headquarters were cancelled or postponed. However work has continued behind the scenes to ensure everything is in good shape once events can start again.

For benevolence, the principal point of contact is the Regimental Secretary, and he coordinates our cases with other charities, which are mostly service ones. 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. During the year requests for benevolence have been running at levels slightly below average. They have not picked up because of Covid during 2020, that at least is welcome.

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

RCA Christmas Delivery to Cassino Tp Families

The tradition of the RCA delivering hampers to soldiers on operations over Christmas was a bit different in 2020! Due to the Covid virus, none of the soldiers deployed on Op Cabrit in Poland could come home on R&R breaks, so it was decided to put most of the energy into the families back home.

With enormous support from Royal Yeomanry RHQ and in particular Lt Col Simon McMenemy, a 5 Star deluxe food hamper was prepared by the Ludlow Farm Shop, which has strong family connections with the Shropshire Yeomanry. Each item in the hamper was branded with the QDG and RY cap badge – simply brilliant.

138 of these smart baskets were distributed around the whole of the UK. Many were via RY Squadrons and 103 Bn REME bases, but nearly half were driven to the doors of the families by a team which included serving QDGs and the RCA committee. The gift was particularly poignant as the majority of the QDG-led Cassino Troop were reserv-



Mark delivering to Mrs Fisher in Devon



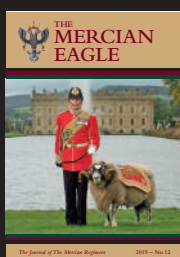
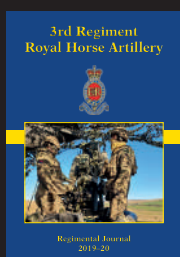
Delivering to Mrs Brown in Norfolk

ists who had not only never been away from home on operations before, but certainly not away for six months over Christmas. Smiling faces and some tears were caught on camera from Devon to Kent and from Wiltshire to the Isle of Arran. It was a real privilege to be a small part of Cassino Troop!

If you would like to get involved with Christmas Hampers for the Mali deployment please get in touch with Chris Gibbons and the RCA via our Facebook Page.

MAM

This is what we do...



and who we are...

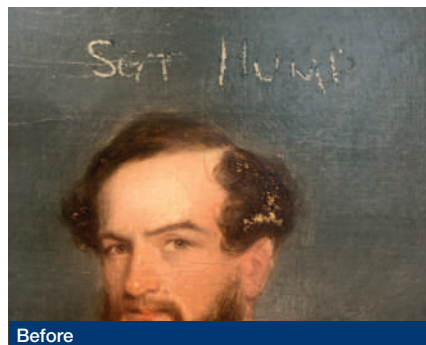
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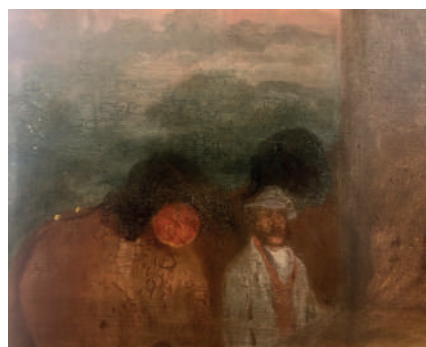
Heritage Trust



Before



Before



After

As everyone has found, 2020 was marginally challenging. The Museum shut, revenues dried up and at one stage, everything was looking distinctly 'dodgy.'

Our new Museum Curator stepped nimbly up to take on the challenge and I am glad to say that, as a result of Rachel's hard work, the Museum is in fine financial shape and preparing to reopen sometime this year. The rejuvenation plan for our exhibits is coming along well. Gareth Jones, known to many from his days at the BBC, has nearly completed filming the new exhibit "The Living Regiment" and I would like to thank all those who gave up their time to be interviewed. The aim of this exhibit is to show how the Regiment differentiates itself from the rest of the Army and to spotlight our dashing lads and ladies. Apart from providing a historical snapshot of the Regiment for future generations,



The Museum shut, revenues dried up and at one stage, everything was looking distinctly 'dodgy.'



we believe that it will increase our profile and aid our recruitment. We are currently working on another major exhibition, Op Granby, being spearheaded by the Colonel of the Regiment, which will hopefully be complete in time for the anniversary.

We have continued to add to our collection. This has included acquiring a collection of cross belts from the Georgian and early Victorian era, two mounted drum horse tails (!) and two portraits from Indian Mutiny days. The portraits were not in the best of shape but they are being restored and will look splendid.

Given the inscription scraped above the head of the second painting, we believe that both pictures probably belonged to the Regiment and could have been part of the collection stolen during WW2.

But not everything is from times past. We have had made a new QE2 helmet – the first ever made for the Regiment since amalgamation. (It does beg the question why it took so long.)

We have adopted the KDG custom of the scroll under the helmet which is unique and looks really smart. The finished product will shortly be dispatched to the RSM!

We have also commissioned some helmet plates for the new Regimental Trumpeters. It is well known that when Franz Josef was appointed Colonel in Chief, he gave us our cap badge. He also gave us a silver trumpet and, according to folklore, a unique Trumpeter's helmet which instead of the star and numeral 1 had his crest. It was believed that up until the Second World War, the Regimental Trumpeter always wore the helmet. To establish the truth of this was difficult as there was no sign of the helmet in recent times. A few years ago, we were approached by an American collector who said that he had a helmet which he believed belonged to the Regiment



since the helmet itself was imprinted with KDG on the inside rim. But it had the Hapsburg eagle instead of the KDG helmet plate. He kindly donated it and it is now on display in the museum. (Another casualty of those artefacts stolen from the Regiment?)

A cast was made from the original with male and female die, enabling us to make six new helmet plates, so that the trumpeters can carry on this tradition.

We have also been busy with our restoration programme. Having completed the restoration of Brighthelm and The Charge of the King's Dragoon Guards at La Haye Sainte by Peter Archer, we have two other paintings being restored professionally by Valentine Walsh.

This unknown portrait of a KDG officer has been completed.

The portrait of George, Lord Carpenter, 2nd Dragoon Guards (The Queen's Bays), 1692-1704 is a work in progress. An inscription on the painting says it was painted in 1731, but there is no signature.

George Carpenter Commanded Third

Regiment of Horse (The Queen's Bays) 1692-1704. He went on to serve under Marlborough at Ramillies and Oudenarde during the Wars of the Spanish Succession and played a leading role in the suppression of the Jacobites at Preston Moor in 1715.

The painting was presented by Major D F MacCallan who served in The Queen's Bays 1940-1958. He was a contemporary of Gen Sir Jack Harman, GCB, OBE, MC, Colonel of the Regiment from 1975 to 1980.

Major MacCallan was 2i/c B Squadron during the attack on the Gothic Line in 1944, the last German defensive line in the Apennine Hills in Northern Italy. He led two troops in the attack on Montiano Ridge, successfully capturing it, crossed the Rubicon and then drove on to capture Casale. The Germans never recovered from the breach of this defensive position.

After leaving the Regiment, Major MacCallan became a Director of BP.

The Bays participation in the campaign has been written up in 'To War with the

Bays: A tank gunner remembers' written by Jack Merewood and can be bought from the Regimental shop.

The next major restoration project focuses on all the watercolours in the collection, many of which are in Swanton Morley. New framing techniques have identified the need to ensure that any backing to these pictures is acid free, preventing corrosion of the pictures. They will also be reframed with UV glass to prevent deterioration from sunlight.

This valuable work is part of a major programme to protect and manage our collection so that it will be in pristine condition for future generations of the Regiment.

Firing Line

Well, where to start this year? I must admit that as we moved into January 2020, we had so much to look forward to, another busy year, visits to the Regiment and new exhibitions. Then the pandemic struck and as I am writing, the museum has been shut for almost ten months.

2020 started well, with preparations for new exhibitions and a visit to the Regiment. We completed a temporary exhibition on the modern-day Regiment, which was installed and unveiled at the beginning of March 2020. This was set to run for six months and should continue for the designated time once we reopen.

In March, myself and the Assistant Regimental Curator visited the Regiment for the first of three yearly visits; at this time, we were totally unaware that this would be our only visit in 2020. This visit was another positive one, with the focus being on auditing the Corporals' Mess assets to transfer the ownership of these assets to the Heritage Trust. This is in line

with the assets of the Officers' and WO's and Sgts' Messes which have been transferred previously. While we were there, we were lucky enough to enjoy the Regiment celebrating a belated St David's

Day. As always this was a great occasion - all the Squadrons participated in tasks throughout the day which were presented in the Gymnasium in the afternoon, followed by a Regimental BBQ to finish. It was great to see the Regiment continuing with this great occasion.

Within a week of returning to the museum,

we were informed by the Castle Manager that the museum was to immediately close alongside the castle, with the 31st May 2020 being the possible date to return. Of course, this was not quite what happened! As I write this, the museum remains closed with no reopening date planned at present. All our museum floor staff were put on furlough in March 2020 and are set to remain on furlough until,

possibly, March 2021. The only staff that have remained working during this time are the management team consisting of Mrs. Rachel Adams (the Managing Curator), myself (the Regimental Curator) and Miss Hannah Searle (the Assistant Regimental Curator).

Work behind the scenes has continued to remain busy, mostly via working from home with the occasional return to our offices when we are given permission. Regular checks are carried out in the museum and the archives to make sure our collection is safe and serviceable. We have been posting on social media throughout the pandemic to continue to promote the museum and our online shop has remained open in the hopes of raising some much-needed funds.

Looking to the future, we are working towards a variety of new on-site exhibitions with the aim of having them ready for when the museum reopens, possibility with some new online exhibitions depending how long we remain closed. The plan for exhibitions is as follows:



Work behind the scenes has continued to remain busy



Ongoing Exhibitions:

March 2020 – present

Modern day Regiment equipment

This exhibition shows the modern-day equipment that the Regiment uses now and will stay in position until 2021 as it was opened just as the museum was closed.





June 2019-present – KDG in Afghanistan 1919

This exhibition was set up to commemorate the last cavalry charge by the KDG in Afghanistan in 1919. There are several artefacts from that time and some particularly good personnel accounts.

Future Exhibitions:

The History of the Regiment Through Its Campaign Medals

This exhibition will be an interactive exhibition allowing visitors to scroll through the years of conflicts, the medals that were issued, stories of recipients and artefacts that we have on display and in our collection.

The Living Regiment

This is an exhibition of the modern-day Regiment; interviews were carried out on

several Regimental personalities and will be another interactive exhibition.

Gulf War 1990/91

This will be an online exhibition and a short-term exhibition in the museum.

Waterloo Exhibition

The present Waterloo collection in the museum will be updated and new artefacts incorporated into the present cases.

We have quite a few exciting new exhibitions and projects to look forward to. Hopefully, we will reopen in 2021, dates

to be confirmed and I also ask serving and RCA members to support your Regimental museum in order for us to move forward after the pandemic. We are always looking for volunteers to work in the museum and to assist in research. The museum is always available to serving and RCA members for talks and visits. Please feel free to contact me for details.

The staff and I look forward to welcoming you back to our Regimental museum in 2021.

ME

Regimental History Book

The last Regimental history was written by Michael Mann and was published in 1991, thus almost half of QDG 60 years of history have not been researched, consolidated and published in an authoritative book. This is now being addressed and the respected military historian, Peter Caddick-Adams, has been commissioned to write a history of QDG from amalgamation to the present day. Whilst an authoritative history, it will also be well illustrated and include interesting anecdotes and facts about our people, places and property.

The project is being driven by a committee chaired by the Colonel of the Regiment and made up of representatives

from each era: John Mackley, Brian Bell, Alfie Corfield, Eric Grounds, Clive Morris, Basher Brace, Dickie Goldsbrough, George Clegg, Stewart Burman, Howard Smith, Mark Hawtin, Jerome Tyson and Duncan Wiggins. You will have a far greater chance of featuring if you offer up copies of your best photos or write some interesting or amusing (and clean!) recollections. Please send your offerings to Home HQ QDG, Maindy Barracks, Cardiff, CF14 3YE.

The plan is to have the book published and ready for delivery in time for the QDG RCA Cardiff Reunion in October 2022.

J B-H

Obituaries

Major General Sir Desmond Rice, KCVO, CBE

Desmond Rice died on 14th July 2020 aged 95. After Marlborough and Sandhurst he was commissioned into The Queen's Bays on Armistice Day 1944. He arrived in Naples in the last blacked out ship and joined his Regiment just prior to the end of hostilities in Italy. Life then became fun. The Bays had many captured horses; a race course was built at Aiello and polo started.

In 1947 he went with the Regiment to the Canal Zone and then to Chester. After a tour at AG17 in the War Office he rejoined the Regiment in Fallingbommel where he was responsible for training intakes of 50 National Servicemen who arrived every two months. In 1957 he commanded C Squadron in Libya and, continuing after the amalgamation and on conversion from tanks to armoured cars, in Wolfenbuttel. Subsequently he did a spell commanding HQ Squadron before being sent to the Joint Services Staff College at Latimer. He returned to the Regiment as Second-in-Command, his third tour in Wolfenbuttel. His final posting at RD came in 1967 when he was appointed to command The Royal Yeomanry, newly formed from 5 former Yeomanry Regiments: their squadrons widely dispersed - Westminster, Croydon, Wiltshire, Nottingham and Northern Ireland. This was a challenging command, requiring tact and firmness, and for which he was awarded the OBE. He received deserving praise from all the Honorary Colonels. His citation recorded that "he has worked unceasingly and travelled continually to weld these diverse elements together and to create an efficient and united Armoured Car Regiment." Throughout equipment was a major problem, fortuitously on a visit to the squadron in Nottingham he had time to call on the local workshops where they were awaiting Saladins, Saracens and Ferrets returning from Aden. As the cargo ship was sent round the Cape there was spare capacity at the workshops. In no time Desmond seized the moment and got every vehicle of the Regiment re-built and up-to-date radios fitted.

Probably 1954 was the pivotal moment in his life and career. He had met his wife to be, Denise Ravenscroft, whom he married after a successful year at the Staff College. Thereafter he did a series of exacting, high profile staff jobs where his analytical mind, quick grasp of the key problems and a stickler for detail made him ideally suited to these appointments. He always took a measured approach before he was convinced what the best way forward should be. Progressively he was GSO 2 in the Military Operations Directorate at the War Office, DAA and QMG in 11 Bde in Minden and MA to GOC Berlin, Major General Sir John Nelson, who was responsible for political as well as military matters



and who tasked Desmond to restart polo. Thus, in 1966, the Maifeld, where polo was last played at the 1936 Olympics, was back to pre war standards, and was the venue for an annual tournament involving many cavalry regiments from BAOR as well as German teams from Dusseldorf and Hamburg.

Later he became Col GS of the 4th Division in BAOR. In 1973 he returned to England and was appointed Brigadier General Staff in the Military Operations Directorate, responsible for the operational employment of the Army. When the Turks invaded Cyprus in 1974 his General was

on holiday in France. Desmond at once deployed two Brigades as requested and told his General all was well and not to hurry back! He was awarded the CBE at the end of this tour. His citation recalled that he played a major part in the Defence Review and in its aftermath the re-structuring of the whole Army. "His concentrated hard work and detailed application have been invaluable and he has never spared himself in the common effort. Furthermore the resolution of many of the Army's difficulties has been entirely due to his skill and dedication without regard to the very heavy load he has borne in consequence".

After a year at the Royal College of Defence Studies he was posted back to the Ministry of Defence as a Major General, firstly, as Director of Manning for the Army and, then, as Vice Adjutant General. This was an awkward and fraught period for the Armed Services as a whole with morale at a low ebb due to successive pay freezes leading to undermanning and poor retention rates. In 1979 he retired from the Army after 36 years service.

He then joined the Royal Household as Secretary of the Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood, a post for which he was tailor-made. Here he was responsible for all the investitures and the Chivalry services in St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey and St George's, Windsor. Her Majesty The Queen invested him as Knight Commander in the Royal Victorian Order.

When he retired in 1989 he became an Extra Gentleman Usher to Her Majesty The Queen.

From 1980-1986 he was the Colonel of the Regiment and, he oversaw some memorable events - The Regiment celebrated its tercentenary in the presence of Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, the granting of the Freedom of the City of Cardiff to the Regiment and the establishment of the museum in Cardiff Castle.

Desmond's wife died in 2016 and he is survived by his daughter, Juliette, who married William Crosbie Dawson whose father, Bing, was Desmond's first Squadron Leader.

RWW



His concentrated hard work and detailed application have been invaluable and he has never spared himself in the common effort



Colonel RFM Windsor CBE DL

Colonel Rodney Windsor who has died on 21st October 2020 aged 95 years was a distinguished soldier and hard-working farmer.

Rodney was born in 1925 and went to Tonbridge. He joined the Army in 1943, and was commissioned into The Queen's Bays in 1944. He was won in a game of poker at Sandhurst by the then Captain Jackie Harman, who was an instructor there, from the Welsh Guards representative. So perhaps he could have been a Guardsman, but for a Full House, Aces on Kings!

He joined The Bays in Italy in 1945 and was the last officer to join before the war in Italy ended. He enjoyed life to the full, playing polo in Rome and at Aiello, at a time when little soldiering took place. He went on to serve in the Canal Zone and Chester, where he was Technical Adjutant. He then spent two years 1949-50 as ADC to the GOC-in-C British Troops Austria.

He re-joined the Regiment in Fallingbowl, serving in HQ Squadron and then A Squadron, where he was Second-in-Command. He was Honorary Secretary of the Wessex Hounds, the regimental pack whose Master was Charles Armitage, and he played polo in the Regimental side.

He was in charge of a draft of hounds and before being brought over to Germany he assembled them in London, "borrowing" the Roughriders Headquarters in Handel Street for the purpose. The story goes that he converted the cellars under the Drill Hall into kennels put his charges safely "to bed". In unfamiliar surroundings the hounds wailed all night disturbing the sleep of the local inhabitants. Rodney collected the hounds the following morning leaving RSM Folwell (also a Bay) to face the complaints. Via Carter Paterson, a special train carriage, ferry and a further train journey the hounds arrived in Fallingbowl.

He played number two for the Regiment at polo and was in the winning side in the Inter Regimental in Germany in 1950 when he scored two goals in the final against the 7th Hussars. Sadly in the final in 1951 the Regiment lost to the 3rd Hussars, who fielded a strong side under Dick Hobson and had better ponies.

In 1951 he married Deidre Chichester. Not being eligible for a married quarter, being too young, he joined three other families, similarly placed, in a house in Walsrode, which was known as "The Main Earth". In it lived as well as the Windsors, the newly married Powells, Wilsons and Smarts. They all shared the same kitchen and the Powells' bedroom was approached through the Windsors' bedroom. It was well named!



In 1952 Rodney decided to resign his commission and he and Deidre went to Ireland where he started a pig farm. This was extremely hard work but he persevered and made a success of it. He joined the North Irish Horse in 1959 and rose to command it from 1964-1967. He then became Colonel Territorial Army Northern Ireland, a post which he held until 1971 when he earned a thoroughly deserved CBE (Military). The citation extols his virtues as TAVR Colonel in that he "has had a particularly heavy responsibility since the Army became involved in internal security", which he carried out "with exceptional

energy, drive and skill". His citation continues: "he applied his great experience, his enthusiasm and a strong personality to every facet of the TA and VR's work; with equal sureness of touch he would represent a case with cogent argument to higher authority; he was known personally to every man in the force; he was quick to scent trouble and nip it in the bud. These things he achieved with the humour and charm which endeared him to everyone". Despite earning his living by running a large farm almost single-handed he had set

about his TA and VR businesses at the end of his working day. He was further rewarded by being made ADC (TA) to Her Majesty The Queen in 1970. He was also Deputy Lieutenant of County Antrim from 1967-97.

He left Ireland and bought a farm in Buchan, near Inverness, where he had cattle and crops. He farmed there until 1994 when he handed over to his eldest son. He was a Deputy Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire from 1989 - 2020.

Rodney always cared deeply for his men and was a great supporter of the underdog. His disarming directness enabled him to get on with the highest and the lowest. His practical approach to problems made him a man in demand for special tasks both in and outside the Regiment. He was a natural leader and a firm friend with a great sense of humour. He was full of fun and got the most out of life. Seldom in the limelight he was always there to be relied upon when needed. He was a regular attender at the Regimental Dinners and a loyal supporter of the Regiment.

He was a keen and able horseman and enjoyed a game of golf in later years.

He married first Deidre Chichester, who died in 1991. They had a daughter and two

sons. He married secondly Angela Stainton in 1994 who pre-deceased him.



he was known personally to every man in the force; he was quick to scent trouble and nip it in the bud. These things he achieved with the humour and charm which endeared him to everyone



RWW

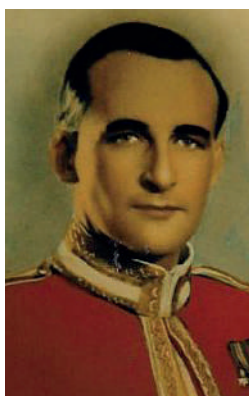
MAJOR de BERNIERE-SMART

Piers Smart, as he was known in The Bays, was a wartime soldier and, later, became Director of The Shaftesbury Homes and Arethusa. He was a master of prose and wrote powerful and moving poetry, much influenced by John Betjeman, as well as nonsense verse. He retained the ability to quote Shakespeare, undimmed by age.

Piers died on 14th March 2020 aged 96. He was educated at Bradfield College and during the holidays he worked as a junior Air Raid Warden in South-East London, seeing service during the Battle of Britain. From Sandhurst he was commissioned into The Queen's Bays, joining his regiment in Algeria in 1943 – at a time of cessation of hostilities as victory in North Africa had been declared.

He served throughout the Italian Campaign of 1944 & 45 as, successively, recce troop leader and regimental signals officer. He was subsequently Mentioned-in-Despatches in recognition of his command of the Recce Tp, the most prestigious appointment for a subaltern in the Regiment. His troop spearheaded the advance in close country and over difficult terrain particularly during the chaotic approach up to Coriano and beyond. He, ultimately, had an excellent view of the ground ahead from Montecicchio Ridge and witnessed what was an heroic and futile venture demanded by Higher Command. The two leading squadrons paid a high price in men and tanks after coming under heavy anti-tank gunfire. Later Piers was given the unenviable task of recovering the dead and organising the temporary burial on the San Martino in Venti Ridge. His troop continued to lead the advance during the Autumn 1944 battles after which he became Regimental Signals Officer.

After the war and in between various ERE postings he was Adjutant 1952-54 and commanded A Squadron



in 1958/59 before retiring from the Army. Whilst in Fallingbommel in the 50s he was the author of the "potted" Regimental history, revamped the "new look" journal and, with his wife, Jean, designed what was termed the "London" Bays tie in 1954. He organised two high profile and successful parades, the second of which was for the Colonel-in-Chief, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother in Tidworth in 1954. He was an early follower of the Wessex Hounds and played polo. Not particularly interested in sport he was a cross-country skier and a highly competent dinghy sailor.

After a brief experience in industry he worked for The Shaftesbury Homes and Arethusa as general secretary and then as director for 18 years. During this period he developed three dated units into nine purposeful, modern social work and adventure training groups.

In retirement Piers had a number of charitable and church commitments, and his wide range of interests included literature, theatre, militaria and history as well as religious and moral issues. However the writing of poetry transcended his life. His book, "Golden Apples", is the outcome of a long life of experience and reflection, revealing his politically conservative and deeply religious outlook. He was loyal to all, generous and kind by nature. He was strong on morals and bore no malice.

He married Jean in 1951. Not being eligible for a married quarter, being too young, they joined three other families, similarly placed - the Powells, Wilsons and Windsors - in a house in Walsrode which was known as The Main Earth. Jean died in 2010 and they had three children, one of whom, Louis is the distinguished author of many books, the most well-known being Captain Corelli's Mandolin.

RWW

Major A T Marsden

Andrew Marsden, affectionately known as Tubman, died on 14th March 2020, aged 80. He was exceptionally gifted and brought a range of talents unusual for an officer in the Regiment – first-class brain, chess master, piano player, gastronome, games player, raconteur and a unique style of marching! He played Rugger, Cricket and Hockey for the Regiment.

Whilst still at Downside he became a Somerset County Chess player and a member of the West of England Orchestra. He gained a scholarship to Oxford studying Classics and after graduation, he was commissioned directly into 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards in 1961 without attending Sandhurst, unusual in itself, and possibly explains his subsequent military idiosyncrasies. Turning up to 1st parade with an umbrella springs to mind. Andrew joined A Squadron serving as a troop leader for three years. He then spent another three in RHQ, firstly as RSO and training officer in Omagh and secondly, in 1969, as assistant adjutant on the operational tour in Aden. Whilst in Detmold and after a short period as 2i/c C Squadron he was posted to Headquarters 20 Armoured Brigade as GSO 3 (Int).



Andrew re-joined the Regiment, now in Catterick, becoming C Squadron Leader before attending the staff college in 1972. From there he moved to the Defence Secretariat, MOD, as GSO 2. From 1975-76 he commanded B Squadron in Hohn and on an operational tour in Ireland – based in Middletown. His final posting was to the School of Infantry as a DS on the Combat Team Commanders Course. He retired from the Army in 1978.

Andrew launched his civilian career with Tricentrol, an oil company, which diversified into running a caravan business and garden centre. His many responsibilities included travelling worldwide, mainly New Zealand, Australia and Canada getting business for the company. He then joined AFRI Freight, a firm supplying arms to Zimbabwe. Finally he became secretary to the Royal Mid Surrey Golf Club – another sport at which he excelled.

To Olive, Victoria and Edward we extend our heartfelt sympathy.

RWW



MAJOR JA MORETON, MBE

John, universally known as "Mouse", died on 21st October 2020 aged 91. He was a true regimental officer, at his best when the going got tough and an intrepid sailor. These attributes came to the fore in the Fastnet Race of 1979 when he skippered his yacht, Polar Bear, with a crew including his wife, Biddy, John Coleman, John Hick and Robin Roberts. Attempting to go to the aid of a stricken yacht in atrocious conditions they had to abandon ship themselves, and were rescued from their lifecraft by a Dutch destroyer acting as a race guard ship. It was a miraculous escape.

John was commissioned into the King's Dragoon Guards in 1949 as was his father in WWI. He served with the Regiment in Omagh, Hamburg, Neuminster and Malaya. He quickly established himself as an all-round sportsman representing the Regiment at Athletics, Cross Country, Rugby, Skiing and Rifle and Small Bore (.22) shooting. He was a fine sailor on all ranges of boats from 50 square metre to dinghy. In 1954 John and Tony Aylmer, with two others, took it upon themselves to form the first Army team to compete in the Inter-Services' Championships on the cresta at St Moritz, finishing a close second to the RAF at their first attempt.

On the amalgamation with The Queen's Bays there were some enforced cuts in both Regiments. John was one of the first KDG officers to be made redundant and he transferred to the 9th Lancers only to return to the new regiment, Queen's Dragoon Guards, in the following year – a gap made possible on the retirement of John Griffin. After a spell as Training Officer he took command of C Squadron. During this period he made a massive contribution to sailing and small bore shooting. Whether sailing on Steinhudemeer in his diminutive Prout or on the Baltic in a 30 or 50 square he was always encouraging, training and imparting his skills to many members of the Regiment. Similarly he coached and captained the Regimental small bore team, becoming BAOR Champions in 1963. He and John Pocock were the undoubted mainstays, both finishing in the top three places at the BAOR and Army Individual Championships. He and John were also selected for the RAC team competing at the Army Full Bore Championships at Bisley.

From 1964 – 65 John carried out a tour at the Royal



Australian Armoured Corps School before returning to command C Squadron in Omagh and Aden during those difficult and exciting days in the last months of British rule in Aden. His citation for his MBE awarded in 1977 reflected back, "he showed not only the highest degree of personal courage, and always put the safety of others before himself, but also his cool calm, cheerful and completely unflappable manner when in a tight position always went a long way to restoring the situation."

John spent the rest of his Army career from 1969-83 at ERE and seven postings.

He was 2i/c Castlemartin Ranges which gave him much pleasure and scope for shooting and sailing. His two years at the gunnery school allowed him "time off" to compete in the Fastnet Race and, in the following year, in a restored Polar Bear with virtually the same crew, the Royal Ocean Racing Club British Island Race in which they came a creditable 5th on handicap out of 12. This race took place on a four yearly cycle on a course of 2000 miles round the islands of Great Britain and Ireland to be sailed non-stop. Not as perilous as the Fastnet Race nevertheless they had to compete against winds gusting force 8 and towering waves.

He also commanded HQ Squadron, 3 Divisional Headquarters and Signal Regiment for 3 years and during this period he was awarded the MBE. Part of his citation notes "his exemplary service" and reads: "he takes very considerable trouble to help over his soldiers' personal problems and has proved time and again that nothing is too much trouble for him. A great deal of the credit for the speed with which Divisional Headquarters has been able to administratively "take to the field" so soon after its arrival in Germany had been due to Major Moreton's determination and drive".

Mouse had endearing idiosyncrasies. He had an effective, highly individualistic style of working. Whilst he, at times, could be single-minded he was also caring and considerate for others. He never seemed happier than

operating and sailing under the most adverse conditions. He was utterly loyal. He and Biddy were regular attendees at Regimental Functions.

To Biddy, Mattie, Charlotte and Patrick we extend our deepest sympathy.

“he takes very considerable trouble to help over his soldiers' personal problems and has proved time and again that nothing is too much trouble for him”



RWW

Sadly the following deaths were notified to the Regimental Secretary throughout 2020.

Name	Regiment	Served	Dec'd	Age
D C Finnan	KDG	1950 - 1952	Dec 19	
B Simpson	KDG	1956 - 1959	Jan 20	83
WO1 (Bandmaster) T Royley	QDG	1975 - 1981	Feb 20	
Maj P de Berniere-Smart	BAYS/QDG	1942 – 1959	Mar 20	96
Maj A T Marsden	QDG	1961 – 1978	Mar 20	80
G A Ellis	QDG	1960 - 1982	Mar 20	80
J W Hall	BAYS/QDG	1954 - 1965	Apr 20	84
T M Fegan	QDG		June 20	
C J Holmes	KDG/QDG	1956 – 1959	June 20	
Sir Desmond Rice KCVO CBE	BAYS/QDG	1943 – 1979	July 20	95
P Hartwell	KDG/QDG	1949 - 1975	July 20	
Lt Col C A Eade TD DL	BAYS	1948 - 1949	Aug 20	90
Col R F M Windsor CBE DL	BAYS	1944 – 1952	Oct 20	95
Maj J A Moreton MBE	KDG/QDG	1948 - 1984	Oct 20	91
R.A. Opperman	BAYS	1956 – 1957	Nov 20	84
L Holmes	QDG	1960's	Nov 20	
T Davies	QDG	1986 - 1997	Nov 20	52
D R King	QDG	1970 – 1982	Dec 20	72
A P Sykes	Bays	1955 – 1957	Dec 20	85
A J Beavis	Bays/QDG	1956 – 1959	Dec 20	82
T Williams	QDG	1959 - 1983	Jan 21	82

Valetes

Captain Harry Russell

Harry Peter Russell was one of three who commissioned on 16 April 2016 in The Regiment. Harry is eldest son of a distinguished Royal Air Force Officer and so it was inevitable and much to his father's pride that he joined the Welsh Cavalry.

Harry left Kingswood School, Bath, in 2009 and after a cliché Gap Year began work on a Graduate Scheme for Amazon – little did they know that they would be welcoming him back years later. Here he learned a lot about himself and where he testifies his humbleness originated. Soon after commissioning, Harry and his peers started a summer Troop Leaders course in Bovington. Harry managed to avoid going on Platoon Commanders' Battle Course in Brecon by cunningly booking a holiday and seeking permission for said holiday whilst at Boisdales one Cavalry Memorial. So, whilst the other two QDGs were getting ready for sixteen weeks in Brecon, Harry was getting ready for a stint in the mess. To this day Harry insists that he was just as busy due to a one-week exercise in Slovenia and a two-day Cambrian Patrol Competition.

After completing tactics, Harry had the good fortune of transferring to C Squadron for Ex DIAMONDBACK in the summer of 2017. It was perhaps during AT after the exercise that Harry added most value by organising charity work for himself and two of his brother officers. He spent the day litter picking



around Yosemite National Park, demonstrating his grounding.

A few short months after returning from California Harry found himself on his way out to Sierra Leone. He spent four months there as the 7 Bde Defence Engagement Officer organising and leading multiple STTTs as well as acting as the battle captain for the first Democratic Elections. Harry's time in Sierra Leone was immensely successful, not due to the fact that he lost 12kg, but because of being awarded a Brigade Commander's Commendation. A year later Harry was back in Africa, this time as SO3 J3/5 in Kenya. He commanded the force protection platoon and

acted as a gofer for BATUK. Harry still found time to enjoy himself on safari and spend plenty of time fishing.

Harry signed off soon after returning from Kenya and proposed to his now wife India. Although he had signed off, Harry's hard work did not stop. He went on to organise a mess shoot and deployed on Ex WESSEX STORM as B Squadron 2iC's 2ic, never surrendering even to the end.

Harry now lives in Lincolnshire with India and their three dogs and enjoys the slower pace of life in the country.

We wish them all well in the future and look forward to welcoming him back as a Leatherseller.

EJMH

Captain Charlie Layzell-Payne

Charlie Layzell-Payne commissioned in April 2016 and joined the Regiment in Swanton Morley. On his first day at regimental duty, he came down for breakfast sporting his smart new blue stable belt and perfectly moulded beret, but it was his rank slide of which he was most proud. The night before arriving, he had asked his mother to sew on his first pip. As he was having a cigarette outside the front of the mess, it became obvious to everyone that, in the absence of precise instructions, his mother had sewn his pip square onto his rank slide. This was soon rectified and thus Charlie began his education as an Army Officer.

Timetabling issues with the Troop Leaders' Course created a gap where Charlie was able to attend the Platoon Commanders' Battle Course in Brecon. However, Brecon reminded him why he had joined the Cavalry and he struggled to convince his Infantry instructors of the merits of relaxed professionalism.

He joined 1st Troop B Sqn under Maj Ollie Braithwaite and began to prepare for Exercise DIAMONDBACK with the help of Cpl Speed as Troop Sergeant. Along the training progression, they even managed to pull off a Mullens Cup win, to the amazement of many, including themselves. On the ground in California, the Troop wreaked havoc with the American enemy's plan, harassing them with fires. Sgt Walker was flown in as Tp Sgt, allowing Cpl Speed to keep a closer eye on his Troop Leader in the OPs. Despite Cpl Speed's experience on operations and Charlie's numerous holidays in Africa, they found the 40-degree heat stifling for the four-man team underneath a single umbrella and chose to cool down by zooming around the Mojave Desert at night in MRZR dune buggies conducting so-called reconnaissance. AT in Yosemite National Park and a few Sqn smokers came and went but it was not until RnR in Las Vegas that Charlie came into his own. Throughout all the pool parties and even the mosh pits, he refused to remove his literal rose tinted spectacles.

Nordic skiing came naturally to Charlie, as a seasoned Alpine skier with a high level of fitness. This gave him more time to focus on his personal administration and by the end of three weeks in Norway he had learned to turn up for training with important equipment including his boots and rifle. Around training sessions, cooking pasta and time spent in the chalet's sauna,



he also managed to find time to distract himself with Norwegian women and make awkward phone calls to MT. Despite the frictions he caused for me organising the trip, including a rude awakening in the bunk bed in France, he proved his natural ability at the sport with excellent times on the World Championship Circuit in Austria and coming fourth best Novice in the 10km biathlon at the Divisional Championships in France.

Around his troop leading commitments, Charlie showed a penchant for champagne breakfasts, consuming one during a 1.5-mile run in under 10 minutes 30 seconds, a feat he embarked on after hearing that some Troopers were struggling to

pass the PFA. He even managed a cigarette on the way round.

Charlie returned to camp to take over 2nd Troop A Sqn and prepare for Op CABRIT. For this troop, the MRX in Galloway Forest centred on four days of digging the Jackals out of a swamp and a sheepish apology from Charlie to the Commanding Officer.

Op CABRIT was a short tour for Charlie as Nordic skiing beckoned once again. He did get time to undertake some cold weather training with the Royal Marines and will never forget his softie trousers again. Moving from Poland to Norway for a better-paid trip in the cold, he took the Nordic ski team to the next level, building on the previous year's success and qualifying the QDG team for the Army championships for the first time in a decade.

Charlie was next sent to C Sqn as their 2ic, where he helped them prepare for WESSEX STORM and Cambrian patrol. After a few months, and before he was forced to do his JAMES training, Charlie departed for high threat PDT to deploy as the OC of a CT training team in Africa, proving that good

things come to those who sign off.

Sadly, the Army could not hold the free spirit that is Charlie Layzell-Payne, and he is now working in London, making the best of every situation, as he always has. We wish him the very best in his life outside, where I have no doubt he will flourish and be incredibly successful. We will look back fondly on the days when he partied harder and ran faster than the rest of us. It has truly been an honour to serve with him and I could not have wished for a better friend in the mess.

ADC



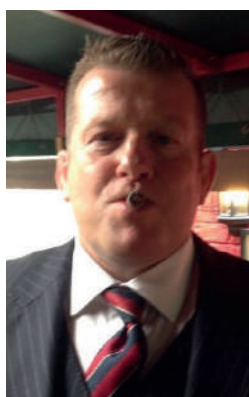
Sadly, the Army could not hold the free spirit that is Charlie Layzell-Payne, and he is now working in London



WO1(RSM) Robert Arthur Jones

In April 1995 Rob Jones was selected to represent The Welsh District Rugby Union, playing against Germany in Hannover. During the training period in Germany, they trained at Athlone Barracks, Sennelager, Paderborn. On Arriving he discovered his brother Paul was a serving soldier in the camp. Rob was Introduced to the then WO1(RSM) Howard Smith, one year later he arrived at ATR Winchester as a QDG soldier - under the watchful eye of his Troop Sgt Karl Dakin. 10 weeks later he moved to Bovington to become a Challenger 1 Tank Driver. PH2 training was an eventful encounter as he spent 90% of the time on the Rugby pitch playing for the RAC.

On completion of PH2 training, he flew straight out to Germany where the Regimental Rugby team were waiting for him to play for them in Gutersloh. Rob was informed he will



be part of the Rear Party in Command Troop. He spent most of his rear party duties playing alongside the Regimental Rugby Team which saw them reach the Final of the Army Germany Cup against the Signals Regiment.

When the regimental re-orbat took place after a successful tour of Bosnia he moved to A Sqn under Maj Richard Parry and WO2 Benny Bennett - during his time he was 2nd Troop Leaders Driver Lt Charlie Waggett during Prairie Thunder at the British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS). On return from BATUS the regiment was conducting Northern Ireland Training for a three-month deployment to the Maze prison in Lisburn (NI).

Staying in Second Troop as a Rifleman/Snatch driver and playing rugby for Lisburn RFC he spent many hours of his time arguing with then Tpr 'Butch' Davies (now Capt) who

was going to drive the Snatch, clearly winning on a few occasions. Towards the end of his time with A Sqn he was called into Maj Parry's office giving him the good news he was going to be the new OCs driver Maj Anthony (Spook) Pitman.

The Sabre Squadrons underwent a total reformation as the regiment re-rolled in 2000 from Challenger 1 to CVRT – The regiment was back in its recognised role as 'Formation Reconnaissance'. During his time working with Maj (Spook) Pitman he gained the reconnaissance experience that was required to become a Recce Crew Commander on CVR(T). However, it was known that 'Jones' was the only soldier that could cool the OC down during a heated moment – (not to be underestimated). Another Sqn re-orbat took place which saw him become Troop leader's operator for Lt Nick Brown in Bosnia learning how to look after a Cavalry Troop leader. Having been selected for Army Rugby he was moved to Command troop as a LCpl- to this date he believes it was to cool the new Regt 2IC (Spook) down when the steam was coming out of his ears.

TELIC 1 took place in 2003 where he was an operator on OD, quickly moving on to Sigs Instructor and Recce Crew Commanders course. TELIC 5 came around and he was troop Cpl for B Sqn 2nd Troop under Lt Hugo Lloyd and Maj DQA. This soon led to yet another operational tour on TELIC 8 as SHQ as a Cpl – on return from TELIC 8 he picked up Sgt and was posted to QOY, D Sqn, Fenham Barracks, Newcastle as the Signals PSI. After 2 years out of the Field Army he returned to Sennelager as B Sqn Troop Sgt working for Maj Paddy Bond. A very successful BATUS which saw him gain credit for looking after Maj Dom Coombes as the recce company on OPFOR. He soon promoted to SSgt as A Sqn SQMS in preparation for OP HERRICK 15.

During OP HERRICK15 – A Sqn were attached to 2RIFLES



However, it was known that 'Jones' was the only soldier that could cool the OC down during a heated moment



as part of the Brigade Advisory Group (BAG) Managing a split Sqn due to them being split into smaller advisory training teams around the province. Post tour he took over the role of the Assistant Regimental Careers Management Officer (ARCMO) ensuring the JNCOs within the regiment's careers were managed correctly. Rob covered the role of Training Officer (TO) for the Regiment during a very busy period – preparing the regiment for OP HERRICK 20. For his hard work and efforts working 2Up, he was awarded CLF Commendation. OP HERRICK 20 arrived, and he was promoted to Warrant Officer Class 2 as HQ Sqn Sergeant Major (SSM) and subsequently became the PMC of the Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess. He played an active role in the planning of the Regimental move to Swanton Morley. On Return to Swanton Morley he promoted to Warrant Officer Class 1 (WO1) and moved to Bovington as the AJAX RSMI. After 22 years he was recommended to the SSCP board and became the Station RSM at The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS). During his time at the Academy he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) for outstanding distinguished service as a Non-Commissioned Officer.

Rob will settle with his family in Wrexham, North Wales and finished his regular service at the RMAS in April 20. Having been successful on the Senior Soldiers Continuity Post (SSCP) he is now the Regimental Operations Support Officer (ROSO) for 207 Field Hospital in Manchester. He would like to thank everyone who has supported him through this epic journey especially his wife and family. He would also like to pay a special tribute to his brother Paul who is currently HQ Sqn Ldr, for making his time in the Armed Forces a true pleasure to be a part of – we are both very proud and loyal people and have enjoyed working alongside each other over the last 22 years.

WO2 Martin 'Dinger' Bell

WO2 Martin "Dinger" Bell joined the army in March 1990 aged twenty and was originally badged to the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards. He completed both his phase one and trade training on Chieftain tanks in Cambrai Barrack, Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire.

August 1990 saw him joining B SQN the Skins when he was sent back to Bovington to convert to the Challenger 1 MBT in preparation for a deployment on Op Granby 1, this however was delayed due to a rapid ending of the war in Jan 1991. March 1991 saw B SQN the Skins deploy for seven months on Op Granby 1.1 to relieve the fighting forces and assist the Kuwaitis with the security of Kuwait, the tour now known affectionally as Op Fag Butt or the tour that never was.

On returning from Op Granby he was posted to 2 Armoured Delivery SQN in Athlone Barracks Sennelager, Germany where he maintained the armoured vehicles held as part of the War Maintenance Reserve equipment for the army's rapid deployments. Whilst in Athlone he worked alongside the Regiment of his future, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards. In 1994, seeing the light, he transferred regiments and joining infamous Manny Burnham's MT



department as Trooper Bell, not knowing then he would become the MTWO of the Regiment for the 200th Anniversary of the Regiment, his proudest achievement to date.

1996 saw Tpr Bell join B SQN QDG for their deployment to Gornji Vakuf Bosnia with the Royal Green Jackets. During this tour it was soon noticed that he had a deep liking for Equipment Care and his beloved JSP 800, soon replacing the infantry's fleet Corporal to look after the aging Saxon fleet. This was the starting point in his career for a long and distinguished service in the world of transport, service support and support to the Regiment.

Throughout his career he served around the world in Canada, Poland, Germany to the Gulf with operational deployments to Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Dinger's career in the Army ended on the 6th June 2020 having completed 30 years of service, he now looks forward to settling into civilian life with his wife Claire and children, Sarah, Amy, Daniel, Justine, Katrina, Shaun and his numerous grandchildren that will no doubt keep him active for many more years to come.

WO1 Angus 'Barney' Costello

Barney grew up in Dunstable and joined the Army in September 1994, attending Winchester Training Regiment. During training Angus was given the nickname Barney because of his resemblance to Barney Rubble from the Flintstones, this name followed him throughout his career. Many believed that it was his first name. He was told that he would be joining 2 RTR, and then was later asked if he wanted to join QDG. The problem was that no one told him that they were Welsh! In training he won best recruit, and despite his little legs he also won best at PT (obviously a fix). Barney arrived at the regiment in Sennelager as a CR1 Driver in February 1995 along with Dave Armstrong. They were both known as the Cockney Wankers, but neither of them are from London.

During his career Barney went to BATUS four times. The first was in 1995, then 1997 with Recce Troop and once again in 1999 with A Sqn. His last time in BATUS was in 2010 as COEFOR.

Sometime in 1995 he was jailed for seven days for his part in the blockbusters. Barney's first operational tour was in Bosnia in 1996 with D Sqn. Then in 1997 deployed on EX Lion Sun in Cyprus. In 1998 Barney deployed to Northern Ireland in Belfast, working in HMP the Maze during the riots. It was the same year that Barney promoted to LCpl.

Barney went to Kosovo in 1999 to 2000, the Millennium Tour. In 2000 he broke his leg and tore his ACL playing football for the RAC. This however did not put Barney off from playing. During his time in the Army Barney played for the Regiment and for the RAC and won the Cavalry Cup in 2000. Barney also went on to be coach, manager and football officer. Barney also coached the RAC Team and Paderborn United Kids team. In September 2001 Barney left the Army and became a fibre



Barney finally left the Army after a very successful career



optic and data cabling engineer.

Barney rejoined the Army in July 2003 and went to C Sqn and was then promoted to Cpl in 2004. In 2004 Barney completed his CVRT DMI course. After his DMI course Barney deployed on Telic 5 as part of the Brigade Command Protection Team. In 2005 Barney passed his Crew Commanders and deployed on EX Swabian Eagle in surveillance troop. The next time Barney went to Iraq was on Telic 8 with HQ Sqn. In 2007 he passed the DMI Cadre in Bovington to become a schools instructor and was also promoted to Sgt and then returned to the Regiment in 2009 as a troop Sgt in B Sqn.

Barney was promoted SSgt in 2011 and returned to Bovington as QCC for the D&M School. During the summer of 2013 Barney returned to the Regiment as the Officers' Mess Manager. A year later in 2014 Barney replaced WO2 Davies on Herrick 20 as A Sqn/RCBS SSM. In 2014 he was promoted to WO2 and was moved to the training wing for the Regimental conversion from CVRT to Jackal. 2016-2017 was a busy time for Barney, he became HQ Sqn SSM and PMC for the WO and Sgts Mess. Still in 2016 Barney deployed on EX Suman Warrior (Malaysia) as the IntWO. In December of 2016 Barney came off the WO1 board.

For Barney's last few years in the Army he returned to Bovington at TDT, where he was the Lead Analyst for D&M from December 2017 to July 2020. Barney finally left the Army after a very successful career in July 2020 and now resides in Dereham with his wife Michelle and two kids Bethany and George.

25061962 WO1 JW Davies

25061962 Tpr Davies joined the army in 1997 at the age of 17 after completing Phase 1 Training in ATR Winchester, before moving onto Phase 2 training at Bovington where he completed the Challenger 1 driver's course.

Tpr Davies joined the Regiment in November 1997 at Athlone Barracks, Sennelager, Germany.

Wayne was quickly integrated into B Squadron and deployed to Northern Ireland, subsequently celebrating his 18th birthday patrolling the streets of Belfast. On return from Ireland to Germany, Jason moved with the Regiment to Cambrai Barracks, Catterick in 1998.

Whilst based in Catterick, Tpr Davies completed a Medicine Man Exercise in Canada on Challenger 1 MBT, before deployed to Kosovo in 1999 with A Sqn and was involved in the regimental conversion from Challenger 1 to CVR(T). Tpr Davies further completed a tour of Bosnia in 2001 as SQMS staff before becoming Sqn Ldr's driver.

Wayne completed his advanced drivers' course in Bovington in 2002 and whilst there, he was promoted to L/Cpl.

Now L/Cpl Davies deployed on Op Telic 1 in 2003 with A Sqn as Support Troop Leaders Operator on CVRT Spartan. On



return the Regiment was Arms Plotted to Imphal Barracks, Osnabruck in Jul 2003.

L/Cpl Davies promoted to Cpl before deploying on Op Telic 5 with A Sqn in 2004. A Sqn deployed to the port of Umm Qasr, 2nd Troop was deployed to the Al Faw out-station as Border Enforcement. A Sqn moved to Al Muthana for the remainder of the tour.

Cpl Davies completed crew commanders before deploying on Op Telic 8 in 2006 with B Sqn in Al Muthana. The Sqn deployed into the desert on CVRT and open top Land Rovers.

The following year, 2007 saw the Regiment make the move to Dempsey Barracks, Sennelager which would be its home for the next 8 years.

Cpl Davies deployed on Op Herrick 9 in 2008 with 2nd Troop C Sqn. The Sqn patrolled Helmand Province Musa Qala in a 26-ton MASTIFF armoured vehicle. On two occasions the vehicle proved fit for purpose having struck 2 IED's.

Cpl Davies was promoted to Sgt in 2010 and later awarded with the Queen Elizabeth trophy for recognition of his commitment and dedication to the Regiment. Sgt Davies deployed to Canada for three months with C Sqn conducting Mission

Specific Training prior to Op Herrick 15.

Sgt Davies deployed on Op Herrick 15 in 2011 as 3rd Troop Sgt. The Sqn deployed on an upgraded CVRT fleet called Scimitar 2. The troop deployed from FOB Price for 10 days providing route security on the main supply route North. Other tasks would be providing an outer cordon for C Sqn BRF to conduct their mission. In 2012, Sgt Davies qualified for and was awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

Sgt Davies was promoted to SSGT in April 2013 where he took on the role of B Sqn SQMS. During his time, he administrated a Mullens Cup and wives exercise. He deployed to Canada for 3 months, and then Herrick 20 as the BAT (Brigade Advisory Team) SQMS. SSGT Ananins took over the SQMS role in the last few weeks of the tour as SSGT Davies took over the role of Officers' Mess Manager at RD in preparation for the Regiment's return.

SSGT Davies was promoted to WO2 in April 2015 and took over from WO2 "Butch" Davies as A SQN SSM. The Regiment

was in full swing preparing for the move to Robertson Barracks, Swanton Morley in Norfolk. Wayne deployed to Sierra Leone to train the Sierra Leone Army in basic military skills and how to run up a massive hill after smoking half a pack of Lamberts, drinking a pint of coffee all with a hangover.

In April 2017 Jason promoted to WO1 and fulfilled the post of RSM Castle Martin, Pembroke which was his first posting from RD in 20 years and subsequently his last. Wayne retired from the Army in March 2020 and started his civilian career on the first day of the Coronavirus lockdown. Wayne has settled in Carmarthenshire with his Wife Nicola and two sons Liam and Adam and his beloved dog Alvin.

Over the years, WO1 Davies has been a keen rugby player for the regiment and participated in various adventure training in France, Bavaria and Canada. All that know Wayne will miss his beaming smile and friendly chat but look forward to catching up with him at reunions.



WO1 Davies has been a keen rugby player for the regiment



SSgt 'Billy' Thurston

SSgt "Billy" Thurston enlisted into the Army in August 1997. He completed his basic training at ATR Winchester and subsequent phase two training at Bovington. Once qualified as a Challenger 1 tank driver, he joined the Regiment in July 1998.

Billy has taken part in exercises all over the world, his initial deployment was to Canada which was prior to his 6-month tour of Kosovo in 1999 where he used the tour to master the vehicle and understand its limitations. Building on his D&M skills and now honing the ability to make a first-rate brew whilst travelling cross country in a main battle tank. Shortly after returning from Kosovo, Billy took part in the Army Boxing Individual Championships, in which he won. Billy was a natural at boxing and anyone that knows him can vouch that it's not just woodwork that he can turn his hands to.

In 2001 the Regiment converted from main battle tank, to formation reconnaissance and Billy again deployed to Bosnia, carrying out patrols along the Serbian border. Following his tour, Billy was selected to join the Army Boxing team in Aldershot. In 2002 SSgt Thurston completed the Junior Non-Commissioned Officer Cadre course, where he came top, and shortly after promoted to the rank of Lance Corporal. In 2003 he deployed to Iraq on Op-TELIC 1 as a radio operator where he worked with Iraqi POWs and as part of a rebroadcasting station. 2005 saw a return to Iraq after which he was promoted to the rank of Corporal. In 2006 he completed the Crew Commanders' course at Warminster. In 2007 Billy, a young Crew Commander, used this qualification in Iraq where he led convoys around Iraq and Kuwait, resupplying different areas within the Bde AOR.

Billy was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2009 and deployed this time to Afghanistan as part of a small Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT). During this time, he lived in Forward Operating Bases north of Gareshk where he was a mentor for the Afghan National Army conducting patrols in the Green Zone. On return from Afghanistan he was posted to ATR Winchester as a Platoon Sergeant where he applied his extensive experience to preparing junior



soldiers for their careers in the Army. Billy was always good at mentoring those around him and would approach all situations with a calm, level headed attitude, this made him an easy choice to return to Afghanistan in 2012 as a mentor to the Afghan National Army, conducting framework patrols and Operations in forward areas of Helmand where kinetic activity was granted as a daily norm.

2014 saw Billy complete his last deployment as part of the Afghan National Security Forces Liaison Team. Deploying into the desert to retrieve severely injured Afghan soldiers and extract them to coalition medical facilities. On return he was promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant and

employed as the MTWO, providing all aspects of transport services to his Regiment. In January 2017 Billy was posted back to Army Training Regiment Winchester as a Company Quartermaster Sergeant to draw a close to his career, where it all began.



all those that have worked alongside him will testify to his kind natured and uncomplicated can-do attitude that has positively affected all



The last 22 years have no doubt flown by for all that have worked alongside Billy. However, all those that have worked alongside him will testify to his kind nature and uncomplicated can-do attitude that has positively affected all those that have worked with him. Over Billy's time, he has been a staunch member of the Warrant Officers' & Sergeants' Mess and has made friends for life. We will all be very sorry to see him leave. All that have worked with him will only reinforce the great stories that are spoken and wish him well in his future. A great soldier that will no doubt become a great civilian.

Overall, Billy has had a busy and hugely varied career with one of the only constants being his Wife Leah and his Children Molly and George. They have all been unrelenting in the support in which they have given to him. Both the regiment and the Mess are entirely grateful for all his endeavours and we wish the Thurstons all the very best for the future.



